

**Great Power Intervention,
Domestic Bargaining Failure
and the Origins of the Chinese Civil War
1944-1946**

By Chen Zheng

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Waseda University

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates the origins of the Chinese Civil War (1946-1949) from a perspective of domestic-international interaction. Distinct from the dominant “Cold War and Revolution” paradigm, it attempts to “rescue” the study of the Chinese Civil War from the Cold War history. Setting the war back to the context of Chinese political developments in mid 1940s, it argues, the evolution of the conflict between the KMT and the CCP had its own domestic momentum. The intervention of foreign powers greatly influenced but not determined its process and timing.

Essentially, this study explores and evaluates the influence of great powers intervention on China’s failed domestic bargaining failure. On the one hand, it suggests, domestic factors were the basic causes of the civil war. Violence is an ever-present and ultimate arbiter of conflicts in Modern Chinese politics. Political conflicts are frequently resolved by military violence. For every peaceful, negotiated, or institutional resolution of a political conflict, the balance of military power plays a decisive role. It was the incompatibility between the two Chinese parties’ political aspiration, their conflict estimates of relative strength, and the lack of trust between them, that encouraged the two’s strategic preference of imposing political settlements upon their opponents through military victories, which made a civil war inevitable in China.

Nonetheless, on the other hand, the intervention of great powers did have great influences on these two Chinese parties’ bargaining process, which made the KMT and CCP’s interactions with each other more byzantine and unpredictable to reach an enforceable agreement. Imperial Japanese Army’s offensive disrupted the power distribution between the KMT and the CCP, which encouraged the CCP’s aggressiveness. The mediation efforts of the Americans brought a political solution which was unacceptable for the KMT leaders. Meanwhile, the assistance from the

Soviets made the CCP believe that they could secure a favorable political deal through fighting some decisive battles to deter their enemy. Without a comprehensive examination of the domestic-international linkage through the bargaining lens, we cannot adequately evaluate the influence of foreign powers in the origins of the civil war in China.

This study begins its narrative around the final stage of the Second Sino-Japanese War. The conclusion of the World War II Pacific Theater exerted paramount influence in the evolution of Chinese domestic struggle. Only months prior to their final surrender, Japanese armies' Ichigo offensive in mid-1944 delivered a fierce blow to the Nationalist regime. After the KMT's setbacks, the CCP accelerated its expansion and finally emerged as a formidable contender for national political power. The KMT-CCP rivalry escalated while its focus shifted to China's postwar political arrangement even before the Japanese surrender. Although the Chiang-Stalin treaty of August 1945 and the KMT's monopoly of the right of receiving the Japanese surrender disrupted the CCP's expansion plan, due to the large power vacuum in northern China, Chongqing also failed to impose its political program upon the CCP in the autumn of 1945.

After the collapse of the Japanese empire, the intervention of the Americans and the Soviets exerted prominent influence on Chinese politics. However, neither Mao nor Chiang was 'late comers' to the Cold War or helpless subordinates of their patrons. Instead, they keenly noticed the rising tension between Moscow and Washington, and tried hard to take full advantage of the contradictions to promote their own domestic course.

In early 1946, American General George Marshall's mediation helped the CCP and the KMT to reach some political and military settlements, which presented unprecedented promise of peace and democratization for Chinese people. However, these settlements based on western political/military ideal did not fit China's specific situation well. Both the Political Consultative Conference resolutions and the Army Reorganization Agreement provoked a fierce backlash from the conservative factions of the KMT, who tried by every means to interrupt the democratization process. The

political atmosphere quickly deteriorated.

When the chance for a political settlement became frail, in the spring of 1946, the Nationalist government failed to reach an economic cooperation deal with the Soviets in Manchuria to win the latter's continued assistance in constraining the CCP's expansion in the region. The publication of the Yalta agreement and the Red Army's brutal behavior in Manchuria provoked a series of anti-Soviets demonstration in China. Besides strong public opposition, the fierce struggle among its different factions after PCC disrupted the KMT's appeasement with the Soviets. Encountering severe domestic opposition, the Nationalist leaders could not reach a compromise with the Soviets, as they did months ago at Moscow.

After the breakdown of KMT-Soviet relations in Manchuria, the Soviets gave more assistance to the CCP, and the Chinese Communist adopted an even more aggressive military strategy in the northeast, which emphasized preemptive attacks and position defense. The CCP leaders estimated that with Marshall's mediation, a truce would come sooner or later. They thus tried to fight and win some decisive battles to force their enemies to accept a political settlement in their favor. However, this strategy of aggressive deterrence only provoked the KMT. The skirmishes between the two parties in Manchuria quickly escalated that buried the fragile peace in China.

Essentially based on newly released documents, this work argues that diplomatic history of the Chinese Civil War was not an ideological clash along Cold War lines. Instead, it was a tale of the two Chinese parties, on the one hand, striving to preserve and expand their own power base through accommodating foreign intervention, and, the foreign powers, on the other hand, seeking to promote their interests in China relentlessly, which in turn made the bargaining between the two Chinese parties even more difficult. The outbreak of full-scale civil war in China was the outcome of the complicated interaction between them, which cannot be explained solely by domestic or international factors in isolation.

A Note on Translations of Names

In the main text, Chinese names have been written in the Pinyin Romanization system.” Non-pinyin spellings were used for the names of a few individuals and entities where the official spelling in the People’s Republic of China differs from this system (Harbin, for instance) or whose names have become universally recognized under those earlier spellings, for example, Chiang Kai-shek (pinyin Jiang Jieshi) and T. V. Soong (pinyin Song Ziwen).

Transliterations from Russian and Japanese follow the Library of Congress system, without diacritics.

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- FRUS:** Foreign Relations of the United States, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State.
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In the notes, individual volumes in the series FRUS, ZZSC, ZZWX are referred to with year and (or) volume number only. For FRUS, as this annual series includes special volumes dealing with the major wartime Allied conferences, these latter, special volumes are referred to in both the notes and bibliography by the names of the conferences they deal with.

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Introduction: Studying the Origins of the Chinese Civil War

After China's "bitter victory" against Japan in August 1945, the never-ending conflict between the country's two contending parties, the Communists, and the Nationalists, quickly erupted into a full-scale civil war in June 1946. The Chinese Civil War (1946-1950) was one of the major conflicts in the twentieth century. Its results determined the life of Chinese people, which constitute one-fifth of all human beings, for generations to come. It also shaped the international relations in East Asia throughout the Cold War age. The significance of the war is difficult to overestimate.¹

Why did China fail in its transition to postwar reconstruction after its years fighting against Japanese aggression? How did the clash between the two Chinese parties escalate into a full-scale civil war? What did a role foreign powers play in this process? To answer these questions, this dissertation deals with two interlinked topics simultaneously. One is the effect of international rivalry on the struggle for domestic power in China. The other is how the conflict between the CCP and the KMT affected their relations with foreign powers.

The Civil War and the Cold War: Literature Review²

Despite its great importance, until now remarkably little has been clearly known about the Chinese Civil War. It remains a field full of political myths and controversies. While the international background is perhaps the best researched of all dimensions of the civil war, significant lacunae remain in our knowledge. Researchers have historically been inclined to analyze the civil war in the context of the emerging U.S.-Soviet rivalry. They generally concluded that the U.S government's assistance to the Nationalists and Soviet support for the Communists encouraged the two Chinese parties' aggressiveness, thus played important roles in the escalation of the conflict in China. ³ Beginning in the late 1980s, with the increasing access to primary Chinese sources, scholarly interest also shifted from great powers' China policy to the

CCP/KMT's foreign relations.⁴

Nonetheless, as will be discussed in later chapters, the effects of foreign intervention in Chinese political development and the interactions between domestic and international factors were much more complicated. For instance, studies mentioned above usually inclined to treat the KMT and the CCP as the follower of their foreign ally. However, as chapters below would show, the interference of foreign powers did not always bring their Chinese allies favor. Instead, they frequently put the CCP and the KMT in a very difficult situation. Meanwhile, the two Chinese often did not follow their foreign allies' advice. The discussion of foreign relations should not be separated from the domestic process. All of these suggest that we need a more comprehensive approach in investigating the interaction between external powers and domestic politics.

Thus, more and more scholars have recognized that only a multi-focused analysis can adequately explain foreign influence on the development of Chinese politics.⁵ Odd Arne Westad, now a leading scholar of Cold War history, published his Ph.D. dissertation *Cold War and Revolution* in 1993, which became now a classic in the study of the origins of the Chinese civil war.⁶ Unlike his predecessors, Westad firstly adopts a "four-corner pattern of analysis" approach. To elaborate his thesis that the Chinese civil war stemmed from the appearance of the Cold War, Westad focuses on describing the effects of the formation and collapse of the Yalta arrangement for China. As he argued, both Washington and Moscow desired to make China "a stabilizing buffer" between them. Meanwhile, Chiang Kai-shek "welcomed the Yalta agreement", as he tried to use this international endorsement of his authority to make the CCP leaders aware of the futility of continued opposition.⁷ As long as the Soviets and Americans cooperated in their China policy, the conflict between the KMT and the CCP was in check. However, Westad suggested, the emerging Cold War rivalry between Washington and Moscow in the spring of 1946 deprived Chiang of his ability to monopolize international support. As soon as the superpowers' interests came into conflict, the old enmities between the KMT and the CCP resurfaced with new intensity. The failure of his compromise with Stalin and the steadfastness of US

military support led Chiang to discard the potential for a negotiated settlement but to attack the CCP instead.⁸

By situating the origins of the Chinese civil war in the context of the Soviet-American rivalry that “helped shape its process and determine its timing”, Westad has shed new light on the Chinese politics. His work has inspired and influenced most subsequent studies, including many Chinese historians’ works.⁹ However, Westad’s work also contains some significant shortcomings. Firstly, his accounts of many important events are invalid. For instance, to show the Communists leaders’ “schematic and shallow” understanding of international affairs, he suggests that Mao Zedong urged the party to prepare for peace at the CCP’s Seventh Congress in the spring of 1945. However, after closely examining Mao’s various secret speeches, this study finds that, during the conference, Mao was mobilizing his party for the postwar conflict with the Nationalists.¹⁰

Westad also underestimates the two parties’ agency in managing foreign affairs. As will be discussed, neither Mao nor Chiang was ‘late comer’ to the Cold War or helpless subordinates of their patron. Instead, both of them had keenly noticed the growing tension between Moscow and Washington and managed to take full advantage of it. Due to his ambitious approach that treats four sides simultaneously, Westad did not give Chinese domestic dynamic adequate place for analysis. Most importantly, Westad and his peers overlook the political bargaining between the two parties in general and the debate among different factions of the two parties in particular. External influences were not unilaterally imposed. Without a deep understanding of the domestic dimension of the story, the role of foreign powers can never be adequately attributed. Without a correct understanding of the Chinese domestic momentum in these years, we may get inaccurate impressions of the origins of the war and the influence of foreign powers in this process.

In many places, Westad and his peers to some extent exaggerated the influence of the Soviets and Americans. The reason for those mistreatments came not from a lack of materials, but primarily from the researchers’ orientation and perspective. They did not study the Chinese civil war for its own sake, but subordinated it to Cold

War history in general, and they treated conflict between the KMT and the CCP as a local dimension of the Sino-Soviet rivalry. Attributing the origins of the Chinese civil war to the Soviet-American rivalry, claiming that both the KMT and the CCP were merely adjusting to the situation imposed by the U.S. and the USSR, to some extent, Westad and some others repeated an old pattern in Western sinology known as ‘western initiative, Chinese response’.¹¹

Thus, investigating the influence of the Cold War upon Chinese Civil War needs a better understanding of Chinese domestic political development. Nonetheless, the study of Chinese domestic politics during the Civil War period habitually overlooked the war’s international background. Suzanne Pepper’s *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle, 1945-1949* is widely regarded the best political history of the civil war in the English world. Defining politics as “a process of interaction and exchange between the government and the governed” (p.4), Pepper directed inquiry toward the two parties’ interaction with the mass. Thus, her focus was on Chinese public’s reactions towards the civil war but not the decision-making process of the two Chinese parties and breakdown of their relations. Meanwhile, her book emphasis more on the year of 1946 and 1947, while overlooked foreign influence on domestic bargaining.¹² Recently, Chinese historians Deng Ye, Wang Chaoguang and some others published some very innovative and insightful works that shed new light upon political struggles between and inside the KMT and CCP. However, their works mainly focused on domestic maneuvers, while inclined to downplay the influence of the foreign powers.¹³

Besides inspiring my own research, the flaw of Westad, Deng Ye and others thus convinced me that we need a more sophisticated approach. On the one hand, only an analysis that established domestic political dynamics as the main theme can adequately explain how the civil war finally broke out in China. In the final analysis, the success or failure of any foreign intervention is determined more by the social and political settings of the country in question. The evolution of the conflict between the KMT and the CCP had its own momentum while the foreign policy of these two parties cannot be understood in isolation from the broader domestic settings. However,

this does not mean to underweight foreign influence on Chinese domestic politics, but it manages to reach a deeper understanding of how international influence works in China's specific domestic setting.

The Struggle for Power in China and Foreign Linkage Management

This dissertation tries to present a multi-dimensional analysis of the intricate interaction between domestic and international factors to explain the origins of Chinese civil war. Its basic assumption is that foreign influence cannot be divorced from a particular domestic situation, and the interaction between the two is the key to an adequate understanding of the war's origins.

The contest for power in China during the Republican era was turbulent in nature. As in Mao's famous phrase, "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun", settlements of political problems must be based on the military power. After the 1930s, the major contestants for national power gradually became political parties who had borrowed from the Soviets organizational principles that emphasized 'democratic-centralist' doctrine and the party's control of military forces. Chief among them were the Kuomintang (KMT), and the Chinese Communists (CCP). Both the Nationalists and Communists believed that China's future rested entirely with their party while the best tool to preserve political power is the military power. Considering relative gains accrue over time, on the one hand, the Communists would not relinquish their military forces and territorial control unless the KMT's one-party rule was dismantled; on the other hand, the KMT was reluctant to concede its hegemonic privileges and it would accept legalization of the CCP only after the latter's military force had been fully incorporated into the central army. Moreover, as will be shown below, leaders of both the two parties expected that through winning some decisive victories on the battlefields, their parties could impose their political settlement upon their opponents. When the two parties became equal competitors, the nature of Chinese politics provided nearly no internal basis for a negotiated peace.¹⁴ The lack of mutual trust, the conflict estimates of relative strength, and the strategic

preference of preemptive strikes, all of these factors lead to the political bargaining failure and the escalation of the military conflicts.

At the same time, the poverty, weakness, and disorder of the country gave foreign powers a strong say in its national affairs. No Chinese political force was free from foreign influence, and none, even the central government, could monopolize international support.¹⁵ As been revealed in following chapters, both the KMT and the CCP regarded foreign assistance as vital to their political fortune. Both parties actively sought the intervention of their ‘protector’ to assist their struggle against each other. The superpowers could not determine the objectives of their Chinese allies, but they could intervene in their bargaining process to affect the scope and duration of the domestic conflict, through manipulating the quality and quantity of their assistance.

This is only one side of the story, however. The politics of foreign allies’ making was far more complicated than what Westad has suggested. As will be shown later, managing international assistances for domestic political needs was not an easy task either for the KMT or the CCP. Allies are also competitors who try to take advantage of each other for their own purposes. ¹⁶Both the Soviets and the Americans made their aid conditional to press recipients to make certain domestic adjustments in accordance with their interest or ideological concerns. For instance, as we would show later, under strong Soviet pressure in late August 1945, the CCP leaders reluctantly gave their expansion plan but went to Chongqing(重庆) for negotiations. On the other hand, Truman’s statement of China policy in late 1945 and General Marshall’s mediation mission raised unprecedented enthusiasm for democratic reform in China, which posed a severe challenge to the KMT’s one-party rule. For both Chiang and Mao, the intervention of international alliances was at best a mixed blessing.

Meanwhile, to attract foreign support, the domestic political forces had to grant certain political, economic, and territorial benefits to their patrons, which mean concessions of China’s national interests. However, the two parties would face strong domestic obstacles for such a maneuver. One of the most significant features of Chinese politics in this period was the tempering of nationalism, which had become

an imminent political force in China. Both of the two parties realized the force of nationalist sentiment. In the public arena, the KMT tarred the CCP as a Soviet puppet while the CCP depicted the KMT as a pliant vassal of this or that imperialist power. These debates, in turn, set great constraints on their counterpart's action as neither party could afford to be seen as betraying the nation. ¹⁷

Thus, while the needs of domestic competition meant that the two Chinese parties had to come to terms with the great powers hovering about China, the imperatives of public politics meant that they must also defend their own nationalistic legitimacy. The failure of the Nationalist government's economic cooperation negotiations with the Soviets in spring of 1946 is the pillar of Westad's theme while he suggests that the main reason was American intervention which forced Chiang to choose a side.¹⁸ However, as this study will show, what restrained Chiang to compromise with the Russians was not American pressure but strong domestic opposition, reflected by the nation-wide anti-Soviets protest.

Obstacles for Chiang's compromise with the Soviets came not only from the rising tide of nationalism among the Chinese public but also from the struggles among different factions within the KMT. This study contends that there is neither a unitary 'CCP' nor 'KMT'. Instead, it would highlight policy debates and power struggles inside the two parties. At the end, ironically, although both Washington and Moscow opposed a civil war in China, their interventions failed to bolster moderates and isolate extremists within the two Chinese parties. For instance, Marshall's mediation in spring 1946 brought political and military settlements which were unacceptable for those conservatives inside the KMT, while the American interventions in the Sino-Soviet economic cooperation bargaining gave these right-wing factions great opportunity to attack KMT liberals in the name of defending China's sovereignty. At the end, the involvement of foreign powers made the two Chinese parties even more difficult to reach a negotiated settlement.

The last but not the least, the great uncertainties in accompany with foreign interventions also add troubles for the two parties to evaluate their relative capabilities and willingness of fighting while adding their difficulties of signaling credible

commitments to reach a political deal. For instance, after the breakdown of Soviets-KMT economic cooperation talks, the assistance of the Red Army and the promise of American mediation encouraged the CCP leaders to adopt an aggressive strategy in the northeast, in expectation that they would impose their political settlement upon the KMT, which unfortunately paved the way to a final showdown between the two parties.

How did different domestic forces in China reacted to great powers intervention and tried to manipulate foreign influence to maximize their own political power? How did the two Chinese parties' evolving relations with foreign powers affect their strategy against each other, which in the end made their military clash inevitable? We need a better understanding of the influence of international intervention in the civil war of China, which focuses on the multiple-level strategic interaction between different actors. It is the interplay between different actors and different events that is central to explaining the origins of the civil war. It is the feedback effects of local conflict escalation which made the rivalry between Washington and Moscow even tenser.

Materials

The effort of this dissertation lies not in the documentation of Soviet-American conflict but in the dynamics of Chinese politics. Behaviors of the CCP and KMT can be better understood if we put ourselves into their shoes.¹⁹ Regarding the CCP, a large corpus of materials has become available in the past decades, including inner-party documents such as telegrams, resolutions, and directives of the party's central and local leadership, plus various memoirs, biographies, and chronologies of important personalities, not only leaders of the party center, but also regional leaders such as Deng Xiaoping(邓小平), Chen Yun (陈云) and Peng Zhen(彭真). Historical writings of those researchers who have privileged access to the Central Archives of the CCP also revealed many precious materials. For the study of the Nationalists, besides various valuable archives and documents, the diaries of Chiang Kai-shek and

responsible officials such as Wang Shijie (王世杰) and Zhang Jia'ao(张嘉璈) have been published recently. This corpus of new materials itself calls for a multi-dimensional approach to reevaluate the influence of foreign powers on Chinese domestic political development.

In constructing this narrative, the author has relied heavily on two kinds of sources. One is materials that had appeared in previous studies.²⁰ In fact, most materials used in this work are not quite 'new'. However, since many of them had not been seriously examined by previous writers, a different approach will shed new light on these documents and challenge traditional interpretations. For instance, this reading strongly disputes those 'black-or-white' interpretations (Michael Sheng's work as an example) in which the CCP was either Moscow's puppet or its dissident.²¹ Instead, it will show that the CCP was Moscow's independent partner, although it did willingly take a junior position in that partnership.

The other kind of valuable resources is documents and other materials from the People's Liberation Army (PLA) that had generally been overlooked by historians. In the past few years, the Press of the People's Liberation Army has published a series of collections of materials for the study of PLA history, including two volumes specializing in the transition period between the end of the Sino-Japanese war and the outbreak of the Civil War. Besides a detailed chronicle of events, the two volumes also contain many valuable directives, telegrams, memorials, and pictures, both in the central and local level of the CCP, which have never appeared in other places.²² In fact, former studies have paid insufficient attention to the military dimension of the CCP-KMT conflict.²³ Nonetheless, developments of political negotiation were inseparable from, and usually based upon, the military situation. To understand the conflict escalation process, we cannot neglect the military dimension. The lens of military history will also enrich our understanding of the two parties' political objectives and strategies.

Structure

The dissertation is divided into five chapters, each of which follows a thematic approach, although they can be read chronologically. Historians usually start their narratives of the civil war from the Japanese surrender in August 1945. Convenient as it is, this dominant periodization may also distort and erase the continuity and complexity of the historical process. Instead, the first two chapters of this study highlight respectively the influence of both the Japanese Ichigo campaign in 1944 and the sudden demise of Japanese power on the development of Chinese politics. The Ichigo offensive was actually the largest single operation that the Japanese army ever attempted. The most compelling consequence of the offensive was that it shook the rule of the Nationalist government while providing tremendous opportunities for the CCP's expansion. The CCP finally became an formidable competitor for the KMT.

Besides reexamining the Sino-Soviet talks at Moscow, Chapter 2 also reveals the great confusion that the quick collapse of the Japanese empire imposed upon the two Chinese parties. It was this unpreparedness and the KMT's monopoly of the right of receiving the Japanese surrender, but not the intervention of Stalin, which disrupted the CCP's military expansion plans, that providing the main background of the Chongqing Talks. However, due to the incompatibility between the two parties' political program, the talk achieved little.

Chapter 3 analyzes the development of Chinese domestic politics under the mediation of General George Marshall. After fierce military confrontations, the perceived military stalemate in the winter of 1945 provided a basis for compromise between the two parties. With his government's great influence, Marshall managed to nurture the Ceasefire Agreement, the Resolutions of the People's Political Conference, and the Army Reorganization Agreement, which presented great promise of peace and democratization. However, Marshall and those Chinese political liberal's commitment to western political ideals made these settlements they helped to reach unsuitable to the Chinese context. While the CCP welcomed these resolutions, they were unacceptable to the Nationalist leaders. Both the PPC resolutions and the Army

Reorganization Agreement provoked a fierce backlash from those conservative factions inside the KMT, who tried by every means to interrupt the peace process. The political atmosphere became poisoned very quickly. As the political negotiations reached a new impasse, military conflicts in Manchuria buried the fragile peace in China.

The final two chapters shift the focus to interactions among the four sides in Manchuria between August 1945 and May 1946. In fleshing out the international dimension of the civil war, Westad and most other historians paid great attention to the Communist-Nationalist struggle in Manchuria. However, how the contest for Manchuria fit into the overall contours of the civil war has not yet been well explored. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 thus deal respectively with the KMT-Soviet Economic Cooperation Negotiations and the evolution of the CCP's military strategy in Manchuria. Chapter 4 argues that it was strong domestic oppositions from both the Chinese public and those conservative factions of the KMT, but not pressure from the Americans, that made the Nationalist leaders reluctant to reach a further compromise with the Soviets in Manchuria. Chapter 5 suggests that, against a special domestic and international background, the CCP adopted an aggressive military strategy which emphasized preemptive attacks and positional defense. Expecting that a mediated peace would come soon inevitably, they tried to win some decisive battles to force the Nationalists to accept a political settlement favorable to their own party. However, this strategy of compelling deterrence provoked their enemy and pushed the conflict to a new stage and buried the fragile peace in China. The dissertation ends with some concluding remarks.

As the author suggest above, how the Anti-Japanese War concluded has paramount importance for the political development of China. Without a close investigation of the demise of the Japanese empire, we cannot adequately explain the later historical development in this region. Our narrative thus begins with the Japanese Ichigo offensive in 1944, which disrupted the balance between the CCP and the KMT, while drawing international attention to the struggle for power in China.

Chapter 1.

The Japanese Ichigo Offensive and the CCP's Ascendancy

Imperial Japan's aggression imposed an armistice on China's contending political forces in the mid-1930s. The two principal factions, the Chinese Communist Party (the CCP) and the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, the KMT) finally suspended their protracted fighting in early 1937. The CCP recognized the authority of the Nationalist government and the two parties formed a united front. However, actual cooperation between the two was always in doubt. Mutual distrust and antipathy never faded. A pattern of limited armed skirmishes and intensive political debates characterized the two parties' relations in the eight years Anti-Japanese War.²⁴

To adjust their chronically unstable relations, the two parties held several rounds of negotiations. The main topics were the authorized size of the CCP-led armies and their operation zone. No substantive agreement was reached, and the autonomy of the CCP increased daily.²⁵ As the year 1944 wore on, the defeat of Imperial Japan became only a matter of time. No longer was the struggle against external powers paramount. The conflict between the two party's different visions of postwar China soon rose to the surface. The Kuomintang expected to maintain its one-party rule. However, based on their party's rapidly growing strength, the CCP leaders advocated establishing a democratic coalition government in which their party would share power. In the summer of 1944, some significant, interrelated developments made a smooth transition to postwar order all but impossible. The CCP finally emerged as an equal competitor against the KMT and it adopted a more assertive posture in political struggles, which placed unprecedented pressure on the Nationalist government.²⁶

In January 1943, the Nationalist government signed new treaties with the U.S. and Britain that finally relinquished the Western powers' extraterritoriality in China. The historical mission of abolishing unequal treaties had been accomplished, at least

formally, by the Nationalists. To boast of his party's diplomatic success, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek published a booklet titled *China's Destiny* in March, in which he asserted that China's future rested entirely with his party and "there would be no China without the Nationalist Party". Chiang also harshly condemned the CCP's maintenance of separate armed forces and its claim of regional control. He warned that unless the CCP was willing to abandon its "feudal and warlord like ways of doing things", the "magnanimous" policy of the government would be of no avail.

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Chiang's statements aroused a vehement counterattack from the Communists. The dissolution of the Comintern in May 1943 further deteriorated the two parties' relations. Citing this as precedent, many KMT officials argued for the abolition of the CCP and its border area.²⁸ Meanwhile, it was also widely suspected that General Hu Zongnan(胡宗南), the KMT commander in northwest China, was preparing a surprise attack against Yan'an(延安), the capital of the CCP border area.²⁹ The CCP representatives at Chongqing, Zhou Enlai(周恩来) and Lin Biao(林彪), left Chongqing(重庆) in late June 1943. The negotiation between the two parties was suspended once again.³⁰

The quarrel between the KMT and the CCP quickly attracted attention from China's chief foreign allies.³¹ U.S. Ambassador Clarence E. Gauss repeatedly informed his superiors of China's domestic crisis. As he warned in October 1943, all political factors in China pointed to but one conclusion, "the continued struggle between the two rival parties – civil war at some undetermined future date."³² In the coming months, Washington persuaded Chongqing to abandon its offensive plan against the Communists while Moscow, for its part, warned Yan'an that it was "politically mistaken" to adopt a radical policy towards the Nationalists.³³

Against international pressure, both parties took some gestures to ease tensions in the spring of 1944.³⁴ Their negotiation finally resumed at Xi'an(西安) on May 4, 1944, but neither side showed real interest towards it. The first round in Xi'an achieved nothing.³⁵ It seems that these two parties had fallen into another stupor.

Japanese Strike

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, a great number of KMT officials had expected that the Americans would assume greater responsibility in fighting the Japanese, thereby easing China's burden. However, for Washington and London, Europe retained absolute strategic priority over Asia. As a result, the Allied powers could provide little direct assistance to China. In order to keep China in the war efforts, President Roosevelt managed to compensate politically for her sacrifice. He suggested that China must be recognized as one of the 'Big Four', and 'unequal treaties' with China should be abolished. With his efforts, both were accomplished in 1943.³⁶

The KMT's diplomatic success turned out to be short-lived, however. Chiang Kai-shek confessed in his journal entry only a few days after the Cairo Conference that his inner feelings were strangely dominated by fear and worry.³⁷ His premonition was soon realized. On December 7, Roosevelt and Churchill sent a message to Chiang, informing him that their discussions with Stalin in Tehran had committed the United States and Britain to a vast, combined operation in West Europe in the late spring of 1944. Thus, no amphibious operation would be carried out in the Bay of Bengal as Chiang had strongly advocated at Cairo.³⁸ China's strategic prospects declined even further.

Immediately, Chiang warned Roosevelt that Tokyo might take this opportunity to initiate a major offensive against him. However, his warning fell on deaf ears.³⁹ U.S. military intelligence suggested that a Japanese attack was unlikely in 1944. Thus, Washington saw no military or diplomatic imperative for strengthening its presence in China. Instead, in early 1944, President Roosevelt exerted unprecedented pressure upon Chiang to dispatch his elite troops to launch a massive offensive in North Burma.

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Thus, Chiang was forced to gamble on continued Japanese inactivity in China. However, he lost the bet. When American General Joseph Stilwell, in command of

China's best-trained and equipped units, launched his final offensive to capture the Burmese city of Myitkyina in April 1944, the Japanese started the Ichigo operation, their largest and most destructive offensive in China since 1938.⁴¹ The paramount aim of the Japanese was to destroy the American airfields in southeast China, which posed a severe threat to their homeland. They also tried to open a north-south corridor on the Asia mainland, thus providing an overland alternative to the sea-lanes.⁴² Eventually, the Ichigo operation involved half a million well-armed front line soldiers, the largest number of troops ever used in an offensive campaign in Japanese history.⁴³

The first round of Japanese offensive started with fierce attacks against Zhengzhou(郑州) and Luoyang (洛阳) in Henan(河南) province on April 19. Then, the Japanese armies swept south through the province along the Peiping-Hankou railroad. In front of these attacks, several tens of thousands of the KMT troops collapsed like a house of cards. Poorly fed and ill-equipped, many soldiers simply dropped their guns and fled. Casualties and logistical damages were enormous. The decay and corruption of the Nationalist regime were laid bare in front of the world. The Japanese offensive thus severely shattered the KMT's domestic power position, while attracting great outside attention to China.⁴⁴

Noticing the resounding defeat of the KMT troops in Henan, Yan'an quickly toughened its positions in the KMT-CCP negotiation. On May 16, Mao Zedong instructed Lin Boqu(林伯渠), the CCP negotiator at Chongqing, to raise a new 20-points proposal, which requested that Chongqing must implement "democratic" reforms, recognize the legal status of other parties including the CCP, and promote local self-government.⁴⁵ Mao's new proposal differed significantly from the party's former requirements.⁴⁶ Yan'an now asked for not only the autonomy of their actions but a share of power in the central government, a request which had no precedent in the KMT-CCP wartime talks.⁴⁷

When the negotiation resumed at Chongqing on May 22, the KMT negotiators were surprised when Lin Boqu raised those new requirements. They stiffly turned down Lin's proposal.⁴⁸ However, their troops' poor performance on the battlefield

did not support them well. On May 25, Luoyang was lost to the Japanese. Against such a background, the KMT representatives reluctantly offered some concessions to reorganize the Communist forces into four armies (including ten divisions), as Yan'an had required in the past years.⁴⁹ However, after the KMT's military disaster in Henan, the CCP's understanding of the negotiations had definitely changed and it would no longer be satisfied by such a compromise.⁵⁰

In the early 1940s, the Japanese "three-all" campaign in north China forced the CCP to disperse its regular troops and resort to guerrilla warfare. The party suffered great difficulties. Nonetheless, late 1943 and early 1944 witnessed a turning point in the party's fortunes.⁵¹ After the Japanese offensive started, the CCP leaders paid close attention to the developments in Henan. The extremely poor performance of the KMT major units induced them to expect that time had become ripe for the party to adjust its relationship with the Nationalists.⁵² Considering the negotiations with Chongqing, the CCP leaders decided that the party's proposals in the past years should be abandoned.⁵³ On May 31, Mao made a tactical accommodation by reducing his earlier requirements from twenty points to twelve. However, the substantive requirements, including reorganization of national government, were retained.⁵⁴

When Lin Boqu presented this new proposal to KMT representatives Wang Shijie and Zhang Zhizhong(张治中) on June 5, he was again rebuffed. Immediately, Wang and Zhang pointed out that those political issues should be discussed only after the military command issue was settled, which indicated that the CCP should submit its armed force to the control of central government at first. ⁵⁵

Apparently, the CCP's raising of the stakes at the negotiating table was based on new circumstances introduced by the Ichigo offensive. In fact, as late as in mid-April 1944, when the offensive was just initiated, Mao still emphasized prudence, warning the party's local leaders that the party was not strong enough, unified enough, and consolidated enough to "shoulder greater responsibilities."⁵⁶ However, only a few weeks later, Mao changed his mind. While the KMT armies were disintegrating under the enemies' attacks, the political, moral, and economic crises of the Nationalist

government were surfacing.⁵⁷ Meanwhile, the power vacuum left by the retreat of the KMT troops presented the CCP with an excellent opportunity to expand. Mao and his colleagues thus became more and more optimistic in the summer of 1944.⁵⁸ They estimated that the strength of their party was catching up with that of the Nationalists.⁵⁹ Those leaders even discussed on various occasions the possibility that the Nationalist regime would collapse before the conclusion of the anti-Japanese war.⁶⁰ As a result, they believed, it was time to adjust the party's strategy to prepare for seizing national power.⁶¹ For instance, after a meeting on June 5, these leaders decided to raise the party's urban work into a position of equal importance with that of the base areas. Yan'an emphasized that, from then on, its cadres must "learn how to administer the industry, commerce and communications of big cities." A special "urban work" committee headed by Peng Zhen was established accordingly.⁶²

The pace of the Communist military expansion also accelerated in the wake of the Ichigo operation. For the CCP, the most compelling consequence of the Japanese offensive was that it opened a vacuum of power across the breadth of the north and central China. The Japanese elite troops' move south depleted the ranks of the enemy adjacent to CCP base areas in north China.⁶³ At the same time, the retreat of the Nationalists' army gave the communists greater legitimacy and ability to expand their holdings. The CCP forces, which had gone underground in the preceding two years, were quick to reassert their claims. Their first opportunity came in Henan, where the Japanese started their offensive.⁶⁴ As the Japanese campaign wiped out the KMT troops from the central plain, the CCP swiftly poured their troops from nearby base areas into the region.⁶⁵ By the end of the year, a large new strip of Communist territory was created.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, a more ambitious plan of expansion gradually emerged. Yan'an was no longer satisfied with its rural bases being limited to northern China. In the summer of 1944, the party leaders formulated a new strategy of southward advancement. This strategy, which came out in September 1944, consisted of two major courses of action. First, some elite units of the Eight Route Army (ERA) were sent to the Wulin Mountain area, to seek connection with a small guerrilla force known as the East

River Column(东江纵队), and establish a new base area there to expand the struggle against the Japanese in south China's Guangdong provinces.⁶⁷ On November 10, 1944, 5,000 troops, the greater part of the 359th Brigade of the ERA, left Yan'an. The troops quickly crossed the Yellow River, burst through the KMT circle line, and marched southward. In June 1945, two months before the Japanese surrender, a second reinforcement of 6,000 troops was dispatched to the south, while a third one was under preparation.⁶⁸

At roughly the same time, several branches of the New Fourth Army (N4A) were dispatched to the vicinity of Shanghai(上海), Hangzhou(杭州), and Ningbo(宁波), which were the most prosperous region of China.⁶⁹ In December 1944, the N4A's elite First Division marched southward across the Yangtze River. In early 1945, under the leadership of Su Yu(粟裕), one of the CCP's most capable military commanders, a new military district was established in the region.⁷⁰

The goal of the CCP's ambitious southward strategy was two-fold. To justify its expansion, Yan'an stressed that its aim was to recover lost territory and to prepare for a potential link-up with the Americans. In Mao's own words, "U.S. army forces may land along the lower Yangtze, and we will cooperate with them."⁷¹ However, what lay behind these public claims was the party's preemptive action for a possible military clash with the Nationalists. Yan'an expected that after establishing a stronghold in southern China, these expedition troops could pin down the Nationalists on one additional front once the KMT launched a civil war. Meanwhile, the expansion of the party's military presence, by whatever means, would give Yan'an greater advantage in its bargaining of government reorganization with Chongqing. Thus, the southward expansion would have great strategic value, both as an instrument of policy (taking over Japanese-held territory or contesting with the Nationalists), and as a bargaining chip (since the terms of any negotiated settlement would reflect the realities of power distribution).⁷²

Mao's aggressive strategy was not only determined by his long-term revolutionary vision, but also by his deep suspicion of the KMT, his firm belief in the power of guns, and his optimistic evaluation of developments on the battlefield.

Regarding military conduct on a day-to-day basis, however, the CCP's southward expedition was extremely hazardous. As things turned out, Japanese and KMT resistance to the CCP advances led to heavy losses among Communist troops. When those troops finally approached their destination, the news of Japanese surrender came.

Involvement of the Americans

The Japanese offensive sent enormous shock waves through the Allied camp. The U.S. officials in Chongqing lost their patience towards the Nationalists. They loudly complained about the KMT's military blockade against the CCP border area and its passive attitude in fighting the Japanese. What they found more difficult to condone was that Chiang required the withdrawal of the Chinese Expeditionary Army from Burma, where it was located in battle with the Japanese, and redeployed these troops to defend southwest China.⁷³ Besides quarrels on military strategy, the political problems of the KMT were also glaringly exposed by the Ichigo offensive. U.S. officials' contrasting perceptions of the KMT and the CCP in the preceding years were confirmed.⁷⁴ Contradictions between Washington and Chongqing gradually surfaced.

The basic objective of President Roosevelt regarding China was to keep the country in war, thereby engaging Japanese troops that might otherwise be used to fight American forces. Military crisis in China raised his great concern.⁷⁵ However, in the summer of 1944, considering the magnitude and urgency of the operations in Western Europe, it was impossible for the Americans to increase their aid to China. Thus, any immediate amelioration of the crisis in China had to rely on an effective mobilization of the country itself.⁷⁶ In the second half of 1944, Washington made substantive efforts to bring the two Chinese parties together. The direct intervention of the Americans, especially the indication that they would push the Nationalist to cooperate with the CCP, exerted great influence on the development of Chinese politics.

Another event that raised Washington's great concern was the steady deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations. In March 1944, Moscow concluded an agreement with Tokyo settling the long unresolved questions of the Siberian fisheries and the oil and coal concessions in northern Sakhalin. The Nationalist leaders later complained that this agreement gave the green light to the Japanese Ichigo offensive.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, border incidents broke out repeatedly between the Chinese province of Xinjiang and Soviet-controlled Outer Mongolia in the spring of 1944. The Nationalists took these border incidents as evidence of Moscow's sinister intentions and tried to motivate Washington to take action on China's behalf.⁷⁸ The discord between Chongqing and Moscow posed a new challenge for Washington.⁷⁹

The collapse of the East China front and the worsening of Sino-Soviet relations thus attracted the direct involvement of the United States. Vice-President Henry A. Wallace visited China in late June 1944. Wallace's tour had its origins in the same set of considerations that governed American policy toward China through the war: the goal of enabling China to make a greater military contribution and to help harmonize Sino-Soviet relations. During his conversations with Chiang Kai-shek on June 22 and 23, the vice president suggested that Chongqing should implement political reforms to allow Chinese Communists to join the government so that the two sides could resolve their differences. Wallace also informed Chiang of Roosevelt's willingness to be called in as a "friend" to mediate the differences between the two Chinese parties.⁸⁰

In response to Wallace's suggestion, Chiang tried very hard to convince the American leader that, as part of the international communist movement, the aim of the CCP was to overthrow his government, and further, that Yan'an had never eased its activities to impede war efforts.⁸¹ While Chiang repeatedly emphasized the threat from the CCP-Soviet linkage, Wallace only suggested that although Washington was anxious to mediate the KMT-CCP relations in China, it was unwilling to act as a mediator between Chongqing and Moscow. At the end, Chiang renewed his pledge that only political measures would be employed in dealing with the Communists.⁸² He also expressed his willingness to accept U.S. mediation of the KMT-CCP conflict.⁸³

After Wallace's visit, the Americans quickly deepened their involvement in Chinese domestic politics. The U.S. officials in China used every available opportunity to impress upon KMT leaders their hope that Chiang would improve his relations with Yan'an.⁸⁴ Besides applying pressure on Chongqing, they also set about establishing cooperation with the CCP. In the preceding months, U.S. officials at Chongqing had proposed to Washington on multiple occasions that a military observer group should be dispatched to Yan'an to gather information and examine the prospects of future military operation with the CCP. As the military disaster in eastern China made the prospects of Chiang's regime rather dim, the U.S. leaders finally paid serious attention to these reports. Roosevelt conveyed to Chiang the observer mission request several times and Wallace pressed the same proposal upon Chiang Kai-shek during his visit.⁸⁵

The Nationalist leaders were anxious that direct communication with the CCP would "poison" the U.S. officials' mind and the Americans might initiate direct military cooperation with Yan'an. Washington's decision to support Tito in Yugoslavia further stimulated their fears. After repeated requests from American leaders, however, Chiang complied and granted his permission in June 1944. A U.S. Army Observer Group code-named Dixie Mission and consisting of 18 persons arrived in Yan'an in two contingents, the first on July 22 and the second on August 7, 1944.⁸⁶

In this way, the CCP finally established a quasi-official relationship with the U.S. government. The arrival of the Dixie Mission provided the Communists with an opportunity to appeal for American assistance directly. The CCP leaders showed great enthusiasms in dealing with the Americans. Besides the U.S. Observer Group in Yan'an, contacts were multiplying between U.S. military personals and CCP troops across China in late 1944.⁸⁷ The CCP cadres wasted no opportunity to widen the avenues of communication with the Americans and present both their military competence and political success. The general purpose of these cooperative activities was to win American sympathy and support, or, at least, to induce Washington to remain neutral in the KMT-CCP confrontation.⁸⁸

Judging from the arrival of the U.S. mission, the CCP leaders suggested that Western powers could no longer ignore their party and would have to take it seriously as a political force. The rapidly developing situation convinced the CCP leaders that it was necessary for them to formulate a more comprehensive foreign policy doctrine. On August 18, Yan'an issued an intra-party directive entitled "On Diplomatic Work". In this document, the party leaders labeled the work of "international united front" as "the most important thing at present". In fact, this document set forth the central theme of CCP's "diplomatic work" for the next two years: to secure more foreign assistance without compromising the gains of the party to date.⁸⁹ After its opponent's military disaster, the CCP finally emerged as an influential player in wartime cooperation between China and the great powers.

Both Yan'an and Washington were realistic when approaching each other. The impetus of the Americans derived mainly from their military needs. To defeat Japan in the shortest possible time with the least loss of American lives was their top concern while they believed political unity in China was the indispensable prerequisite to the effective military revitalization of the country. In fact, even General Claire Chennault, the commander of the famous Fly Tiger who generally adopted a pro-Chiang stance, proposed to President Roosevelt in September 1944 that Washington must sponsor a new attempt to bring the KMT and CCP together.⁹⁰ In President Roosevelt's own words, "When the enemy is pressing us toward possible disaster, it appears unsound to refuse the aid of anyone who kills Japanese."⁹¹ Meanwhile, the CCP's political and economic policies appeared to be moderate and enlightened in the eyes of the American officials in China. In their estimation, whether the CCP practiced democracy or not, the party did enjoy popular support in its control areas. Thus, these American officials were active in developing their relations with Yan'an. Some even called for immediate military assistance to the Communists troops.⁹²

On the other hand, the immediate purpose of the CCP's "united front" policy toward the Americans was to obtain a significant share of U.S. wartime aid to strengthen their troops while facilitating the southward expansion.⁹³ Intelligence from

various sources convinced Mao Zedong and his comrades that the Americans would fight the decisive battle against Japan on the Chinese mainland. In that case, they expected, the Americans “will have to cooperate with us, which will be to our advantage.”⁹⁴ Throughout this period, the CCP leaders held high expectations for U.S. military aid. Zhou Enlai even wrote a letter to General Stilwell on September 22, suggesting that the CCP should attain “at least one-half of the total U.S. ammunition assistance.”⁹⁵ The party leaders even tried to persuade the Americans to bypass Chongqing and send arms to them directly.

Facing the American suggestion to incorporate their troops into a unified Chinese army under the command of General Stilwell, however, the CCP leaders refused to promise immediate cooperation. Instead, they suggested that such an arrangement would be possible only after “American supplies and men are coming into China in significant magnitude and the counter-offensive is actually in sight.”⁹⁶ In other words, the CCP would not refuse to fight for Washington, but would do so only after its forces had been properly armed and trained by the Americans.⁹⁷

In the political arena, CCP leaders were fully aware of the American officials’ dissatisfaction with the KMT’s corruption and inefficiency and they thus tried to make use of the contradictions between the two in advancing their struggle against the KMT. Their tactic was two-fold. On the one hand, they vigorously advocated political democratization to oppose the KMT’s one-party political tutelage while creating a liberal image for their party.⁹⁸ On the other hand, they spared no effort in attempting to expose the KMT’s reluctance and inefficiency in fighting the Japanese. They were confident that U.S. intervention in the KMT-CCP dispute was to their advantage. At best, the Americans might persuade Chiang to accept political reforms and withhold their support to Chiang if the Generalissimo refused. At a minimum, Yan’an expected the Americans would send a portion of their military aid to its troops. As a result, Yan’an paid close attention to the change of American policies and tried all means to influence it.⁹⁹

In order to court the Americans, CCP leaders could be very flexible and friendly. However, they had never given up their revolutionary commitment and they were

always vigilant against the potential danger in dealing with the Americans.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, the U.S. government's involvement did not have its intended moderating effect on the KMT-CCP relations. Instead, it constituted a special international condition in which the CCP turned even more assertive in dealing with the KMT. The CCP leaders steadily raised their conditions for a political settlement.¹⁰¹

While Wallace was visiting China, the Japanese offensive proceeded swiftly. Within a month, Japanese armies occupied Henan province and cleared the Ping-Han Railroad(平汉路). Their operations then concentrated on clearing the Canton-Hankou Railroad(粤汉路). By late May, the Japanese moved southward and attacked Changsha(长沙), the capital of Hunan(湖南) province. Though three times previously it had successfully defended against Japanese offensive, the city fell into the enemy's hands on 18 June. ¹⁰²

Again, the Communists tried to make use of their domestic competitor's military failure to advance their own requirements in political negotiations. Besides the demanded increase of authorized CCP troop size to sixteen divisions, the CCP representatives in Chongqing now suggested that the next round of KMT-CCP talks be held at Yan'an, which would illustrate the equal status of the two parties ¹⁰³ The Nationalist representatives did not concede, however.¹⁰⁴ With no progress at the negotiating table, Mao Zedong, in an intra-party directive on 19 July, asked his comrades to wait. As the military situation deteriorated further, the Chairman suggested, Washington would exert more pressure on Chiang. ¹⁰⁵

Mao did not wait long, as the Nationalist armies still could not organize any effective resistance against the Japanese. In July and August 1944, the initially unconcerned attitude of Washington quickly gave way to an outright panic. Between July and October 1944, Stilwell repeatedly informed General Marshall of Chiang's intransigence about cooperating with the Communists in the fight against Japan. In fact, he expected the crisis would be an opportunity to pursue his long time program of the reformation of the Chinese army.¹⁰⁶ Under Stilwell's suggestion, Marshall finally sought President Roosevelt's approval to ask Chiang to give Stilwell the

authority to control Chiang's military forces. On 7 June, President Roosevelt took a drastic action, asking Chiang to place Stilwell in command of all Chinese armies and to "coordinate all the Allied military resources in China, including the Communist Forces".¹⁰⁷ Only a week later, the President appealed to the Generalissimo again, asking him to reach a "working agreement" with the Communists.¹⁰⁸

In the eyes of Chiang and his followers, these requirements were serious insults to their regime's dignity. Despite his longstanding discontent with Stilwell, however, Chiang did not completely reject the proposal at the beginning. Instead, various sources reveal that Chiang and his advisers seriously discussed the option of placing the CCP troops under the command of Stilwell, which they expected might be a feasible way to contain the CCP expansion.¹⁰⁹ However, the Generalissimo also knew quite well that if Stilwell got control of the Chinese military system, political power in China would slowly, perhaps, but surely slip from his grasp. Thus, Chiang did not immediately refuse, as he could not afford a rift with Washington. Instead, he replied to Roosevelt that he could accept the President's suggestion in principle, but he emphasized that there must be a preparatory period while the CCP forces must not be incorporated until they had accepted his authority. He also requested the stationing of a personal emissary of Roosevelt in Chongqing to discuss the terms of Stilwell's investiture.¹¹⁰

Meanwhile, the Generalissimo pressed his subordinates to revitalize their fighting and stem the tide of enemy attacks.¹¹¹ From late June to early August, the KMT troop fought bravely at Hengyang(衡阳) in southern Hunan and the Japanese offensive was temporally stalled. This was the single instance during the entire Ichigo offensive in which the Nationalist forces staged a large-scale, sustained resistance. However, their defenses finally collapsed on August 7, only days after Stilwell had taken Myitkyina. In September, the Japanese launched the Guangxi-Guizhou(广西-贵州) campaign, the third stage of the Ichigo operation. They pushed southward further to destroy the Americans' major air bases at Guilin (桂林)and Liuzhou(柳州) in Guangxi province. By November 1944, the Japanese had smashed Chennault's air bases and formed a pathway through central China. They then penetrated deep into

southern China and moved westward to invade Guizhou province. In the closing months of 1944, the Japanese armies seemed unstoppable while Chinese troops were rushing into the breach.¹¹²

When the military situation deteriorated even further, the Nationalist government suffered another round of diplomatic crises. The Sino-Soviet relations showed no signs of improvement in the summer.¹¹³ Chiang's proposal to send T.V. Soong (宋子文) to Moscow for conversations with the Soviet leaders was coldly received.¹¹⁴ Chiang's relations with the Great Britain also became strained. Neglecting the strategic importance of China and having no inclination to treat her as an equal, London had long been dissatisfied with American aid to China. In his report to the House of Commons on September 28, 1944, Churchill bitterly criticized the Nationalist government's military failure, which gave rise to strong resentment among the KMT elites.¹¹⁵

Chongqing's diplomatic crisis reached its peak in September 1944 when Stilwell finally convinced Roosevelt to send an ultimatum to Chiang, which threatened to end all American aid unless Chiang "at once" placed the American general "in unrestricted command" of the KMT forces. On September 18, President Roosevelt again pressed Chiang to reinforce the armies in North Burma and initiate their offensive "at the earliest possible date", while placing Stilwell in complete command of all Chinese forces at once.¹¹⁶ The tone of the message was stern, as the American president warned Chiang, "with further delay, it may be too late to avert a military catastrophe tragic both to China and to our allied plans for the early overthrow of Japan" and the Generalissimo must himself be "prepared to accept the consequences and assume the personal responsibility".¹¹⁷

Regarding this message as a move toward the complete subjugation of his leadership, Chiang Kai-shek adopted an uncompromising line toward Washington. His distrust and antagonism toward the U.S. reached a peak as he suspected that the Americans might replace him with Dr. Sun Ke, the son of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who was then the chairperson of the Legislative Yuan.¹¹⁸ On September 25, 1944, the Generalissimo sent a formal reply to Washington in which he argued that Stilwell

must be replaced immediately and that he would welcome any other qualified U.S. general to fill Stilwell's position. He also implicitly blamed the Americans for the military failure in eastern China.¹¹⁹

Learning of Chiang's stern attitude, Stilwell, for his own part, twice offered concessions on the question of arming the Communists in the following days. However, Chiang would not budge.¹²⁰ Roosevelt finally made the decision to relieve Stilwell of command on October 19 and appointed General Wedemeyer to replace him.¹²¹ Although Chiang was successful in removing Stilwell, the damage of his regime's public relations in America was irreparable.¹²²

Coalition Government

As the Japanese offensive continued alongside the deepening of U.S. involvement in Chinese politics, the KMT-CCP negotiations entered a new stage. While Chinese troops suffered one defeat after another at the hands of the Japanese offensives, the CCP received a golden chance to broaden its political appeal by promoting "democratic" reforms.

On August 10, Nationalist representatives finally gave a reply to the CCP's proposal of political reform in the past weeks. They promised that within a year of the end of the anti-Japanese war, the government would initiate the constitution-making process.¹²³ The KMT negotiators also demanded that the Communists stop their empty talk of democracy.¹²⁴

However, the Communists did not refrain from raising their price. After the fall of Hengyang, the CCP representatives requested in late August that, not only the 16 divisions that they had proposed in May but all of their 470,000 troops, should be recognized by the Nationalist government.¹²⁵ In response to the KMT's promise of constitutional rule after the war, they required Chongqing to implement it immediately.¹²⁶ In early September, Chiang finally agreed to dispatch Wang and Zhang to Yan'an for further negotiations with the Communist leaders.¹²⁷ However, at this time, a more ambitious while concrete proposal was raised by the CCP, and

therefore Wang and Zhang's trip was postponed.¹²⁸

The Japanese offensive shook the whole enterprise of the Nationalists regime. Even before the Japanese offensive, Chiang and his government had been caught in a profound crisis. Beginning in 1941, the KMT forces began experiencing serious shortages of provisions. To keep its army at a minimal level of fighting capacity, the KMT government had to rely on increasingly intrusive methods of labor recruitment and resource extraction. These methods, together with subsidizing the war effort by printing more money, led to a rapid loss of popular confidence and support. Economic production decreased sharply. Inflation was out of control. Government officials and party cadres were corrupt and ineffective. Political discontent suffused all levels of society.¹²⁹

The Ichigo offensive was the final straw. Nonetheless, the Generalissimo and his followers were still reluctant to implement substantive political and economic reforms.¹³⁰ The military debacle thus provoked a mounting discontent for the KMT's one-party rule. There was covert criticism by officials, intellectuals, and citizens for the government's failure to adopt any constructive measures in the crisis. It was widely believed, both inside and outside the KMT, that the Generalissimo's concentration of authority and his reactionary policies were the root causes of territorial losses, economic difficulties, and national disunity.¹³¹

Around this time, Chiang's dissidents were nearly everywhere. While the Nationalist regime had long been viewed with some misgivings both in the Chinese public and among the Allies, the collapse of its troops drove people to seek other alternatives. At one extreme were the provincial militarists of the southwest provinces, especially General Li Jishen from Guangdong province and General Long Yun of Yunnan province. These former warlords tried hard to maintain their own military forces to ensure postwar positions. As the Ichigo offensive rolled on south and southwest, these militaries believed that Chongqing was on the verge of collapse, and they were the first to consider forming a separate regime. A coalition of them, in concert with some radical leaders of the small parties, incongruously became partners

in a scheme to overthrow Chiang's rule. They even appealed directly to the Americans for supply and help. In the end, however, their plotting bore no fruit. ¹³²

Meanwhile, political activists wedged between the Communists and the KMT, those small parties in particular, became more and more active. To magnify their political influence, some small political parties and splinter groups came together to form the China Democratic League in September 1944. Proclaiming itself to be a "third force" - neither KMT nor CCP - the league took democratization as its political cause.¹³³ Although the League still lacked a popular base and was by no means a unified movement, its political activists and intellectuals, many of whom received education in the United States and Great Britain, could exert significant influence upon public opinion and foreign observers despite their limited numbers. ¹³⁴

The Nationalist's military failure encouraged these political activists to launch a popular movement in the KMT-controlled area. They vigorously argued that what China needed was profound reform and that democratization was the only way to rescue the country from imminent crisis. Besides intellectuals and students, industry circles also joined the movement.¹³⁵

This new trend gave the CCP leaders even more ammunition in their political struggle against the Nationalists. Throughout this period, Yan'an followed a united front strategy of winning over the middle-of-the-road groups. For the most part, the CCP was content to let the "third forces" speak in their own voice. On the one hand, if the KMT granted concessions, the CCP would be a true beneficiary. On the other hand, if the Nationalists stalled those political elements, they would further compromise themselves as reactionary. ¹³⁶

In fact, military debacle also caused widespread dissatisfaction inside the Nationalist party. The relatively liberal officials again advocated reconciliation with Yan'an. Some high-rank officials even openly suggested democratic reform as the only way to regain public confidence and the support of the middle class. The most active among them was Dr. Sun Ke, who tried to enhance his own political prestige by adopting a popular position. Sun's public callings of reform, especially his close contact with the Americans made Chiang very uneasy during the period of the

Stilwell incident, as the Generalissimo suspected that the Americans might replace him with Sun.¹³⁷

For the CCP leaders, these events formed a clear and promising pattern. The “third force,” the left wing of the KMT, and a wide range of liberally oriented students shared with their party the immediate goal of reforming the government on a broadly representative basis. Even the more conservative warlords would become their partners. Taken together, as Reardon-Anderson suggests, these developments offered “a large and attractive audience” which would respond favorably to the CCP’s callings of a restoration of the united front and construction of a coalition government.

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The call for governmental reform in China also came from her foreign allies. Westerners staying in Chongqing, official or unofficial, had clearly noticed the corruption and ineptitude of the Nationalist government that KMT media censorship tried to conceal. In the summer and autumn of 1944, their views finally gained a hearing at the highest level of the U.S. government. The KMT’s failure to provide any effective resistance to the Japanese offensive made many foreign leaders, including those who were sympathetic to Chiang, believe that the Nationalist government, at least in its present form, could no longer claim a monopoly on national power. To make the country more effective in resisting Japanese aggression, they all agreed that China should have political reforms.¹³⁹

These new developments greatly encouraged the CCP leaders. They estimated that “all the democratic countries of the world”, which means not only the Soviet Union but also Great Britain and the United States, were “helping” them. Mao Zedong once asserted, “This is a big change, and one not anticipated in Marxist writings” and “in one hundred and four years since the Opium War there has not been such a favorable environment.”¹⁴⁰ This sort of highly optimistic assessment induced the CCP leaders to change their political tactics in dealing with the KMT. As a result, in September 1944, the current of the Ichigo offensive, American interventions, and widespread anti-Nationalist dissidence all swirled together to push the CCP to initiate a new political program of a coalition government.

On August 12, Mao Zedong told the CCP negotiators in Chongqing that the critical task now was to dismantle the KMT “one-party dictatorship.”¹⁴¹ On 17 August, the Chairman, for the first time we know yet, raised the idea that the party should discuss with the Democratic League for the program of a coalition government.¹⁴² On the next day, Zhou Enlai dispatched an order to Dong Biwu (董必武) and Li Boqu, asking them to raise the idea of a multi-party conference and government reorganization in Chongqing. Zhou also asked Dong and Lin to probe the attitude of those small parties first.¹⁴³

Two weeks later, on September 4, CCP leaders finally concluded that “the time is now ripe for us to propose to the KMT and the domestic and foreign audiences that the government must be reorganized.” Their new plan was to request the KMT to convene a national affairs conference immediately, in which representatives of all parties and mass organizations would participate, to reorganize the central government and to abolish the one-party rule. After the conference, the new government would convene national assembly and launch counteroffensives against the Japanese. ¹⁴⁴

At this stage, the direct purpose of the CCP in advocating coalition government was to use it as propaganda bullet to fend off the KMT’s program of constitutional rule.¹⁴⁵ In fact, Yan’an stood to gain substantial benefits from advocating coalition government. If the KMT would agree to the power-sharing scheme, which Yan’an suspected it would not, a coalition government would mean the end of the KMT’s monopoly of power. If Chongqing rejected the proposal, however, it would not only offend those small parties and regional factions, but also the Americans. In either case, the CCP would be a winner.¹⁴⁶

At the same time, the CCP’s promulgation of a coalition government was also a key component of its attempts to win good will from Washington. In the second half of 1944, CCP newspapers tried hard to court the Americans by identifying its political program with American democratic values.¹⁴⁷ On August 24, Mao delineated his program of a coalition government to John Stewart Service, an important member of

the Dixie Mission. Receiving encouraging responses from Service and other Americans at Yan'an, Mao was even more confident in making coalition government the catchword of his party's new political program.

In fact, long before the CCP formulated its plan of the coalition government, Roosevelt had already proposed to Chiang during the Cairo Conference in 1943 that the Nationalist leader should allow the CCP to participate in government.¹⁴⁸ The acute military crisis in 1944 made active cooperation from the Communists and political reorganization more urgent. The U.S. staff in Chongqing repeatedly attempted to persuade Chiang to initiate reforms. In his report submitted to Roosevelt on July 10, Wallace also suggested that his government should not limit its assistance to the Nationalists, but must use its aid as a lever to promote a "new coalition" in China. Thus, to revitalize China's war efforts, the American leaders believed Chongqing should take steps to broaden their base of support.¹⁴⁹

At Chongqing, Ambassador Gauss repeatedly urged the KMT leaders for reforms. He told Chiang that the American government was interested in seeing a prompt solution of China's internal problem and suggested that, as a first step toward the unification of China, "some form of responsible war council" should be established. Chongqing should give representation and a share of responsibility to various parties and groups for carrying out resistance to Japan. His efforts received encouragement from Washington and the ambassador attempted again to persuade Chiang to form a "united council of all Chinese parties" on August 15.¹⁵⁰

On September 5, 1945, the People's Political Council (PPC, 国民参政会), a wartime public forum for airing the views of all political groups, convened in Chongqing. Never before had delegates to the council spoke so sharply to the Nationalist government of its corruption, inefficiency, and repression.¹⁵¹ Against this background, on September 7 Yan'an decided to raise the suggestion of government reform in the conference.¹⁵² Meanwhile, under Mao's instruction, Dong Biwu and Lin boqu approached leaders of those small parties and other political factions.¹⁵³ Initially, it seems that the reactions from the small party leaders were rather positive.

According to the CCP representatives' reports to Yan'an, some people even suggested the proposition of coalition government with the Communists.¹⁵⁴ However, only a few days later, these individuals shifted to a more cautious stance.¹⁵⁵ To avoid an open rift with the KMT, they suggested that the CCP representatives not raise the proposal directly. Mao turned hesitant, suggesting that the proposal should only be mentioned occasionally in the conference.¹⁵⁶ Meanwhile, he insisted that this requirement should be raised in the two-party negotiations.¹⁵⁷

Thus, on September 15, 1944, Lin Boqu, when giving his report on the KMT-CCP negotiations at the Third Plenary Session of the Third People's Political Council, put forward the following proposal:

*We hope the KMT will put an immediate end to the situation of one-party rule. The National Government should convene representatives from the various parties, factions, anti-Japanese forces, local governments, and people's organizations to hold a national affairs conference and organize a coalition government formed of all the anti-Japanese parties.*¹⁵⁸

Thus, for the first time, the CCP openly advocated the establishment of a coalition government, which aimed at putting an end to the KMT's one-party rule and implementing a multi-party system. Previously, the Communists had only sought legal recognition for their border area and their armed forces. By calling for a coalition government, however, the CCP was demanding not just autonomy but a share of the national power.¹⁵⁹

The CCP raised its proposal only half a month after Gauss urged Chiang to establish a war council and they exchanged views with John Service and other U.S. staff. However, it must be noted that all of these American suggestions were merely general formulas. It also did not mean a full coalition government for China, but something less.¹⁶⁰ Meanwhile, the inspiration for the CCP might also have come from political developments in European countries. During the Second World War, many European countries, including Britain, for instance, formed a coalition government and practiced multiparty cooperation. As the final victory approached, many European countries including France, Italy, and Belgium, there was a steady

increase Communist participation in government. Noticeably, Moscow was in support of the coalition government formula. In the eyes of the CCP leaders, the formation of coalition governments as a worldwide trend reflected the growth of progressive forces and compromise in the course of making postwar political arrangements. They expected to pursue a similar course in China.¹⁶¹

The CCP published Lin Boqu's complete speech on September 17. However, the party's scheme of coalition government remained inchoate. Available sources paint a chaotic picture of the immediate reaction from other parties while the Nationalists managed to evade the issue. Only after Lin's speech had elicited positive responses from the small parties, Yan'an confirmed coalition government as the party's new slogan in late September.¹⁶² On October 10, Zhou Enlai delivered a speech entitled "What are the solutions" at Yan'an. He openly called for an end to "one-party dictatorship" and the establishment of a "coalition high command" to direct all Chinese military forces.¹⁶³ On October 13, Lin Boqu officially presented the party's new proposal to the KMT negotiators. The establishment of a coalition government finally became a substantive issue in KMT-CCP negotiations.¹⁶⁴

Meanwhile, under Mao's direction, the CCP propaganda organs launched an all-out campaign in late 1944, arguing that only by establishing a coalition government could China overcome its crisis. According to the CCP's report, the idea of coalition government quickly attracted people's attention and won supports from small parties and nonpartisans alike.¹⁶⁵ Consequently, coalition government became a common program of all parties except the KMT, which placed the Nationalists in a very difficult position. As Mao later revealed, this development was quite beyond his expectation.¹⁶⁶

Without a doubt, the primary cause of the CCP's requirement of a coalition government was the shifting power balance trend in its favor after the Japanese Ichigo offensive.¹⁶⁷ As the KMT troops were crumbling under the Japanese offensive, the development of both the domestic and international situation greatly encouraged the CCP leaders. Mao and his colleagues believed that their party had become a qualified contender for state power.¹⁶⁸

Hurley's Mediation

After he left Chongqing, Wallace recommended in a telegram dated June 26 that Washington accepted Chiang's proposal to appoint a personal representative of President Roosevelt to work with the Generalissimo. Roosevelt agreed, and General Patrick J. Hurley was dispatched. Hurley arrived in Chongqing on September 6 to take up the task when the relationship between Chiang and Stilwell had dipped to its chilliest.¹⁶⁹

Shortly after Hurley's arrival, Yan'an instructed its representatives in Chongqing to seek a conversation with him. The party leaders expected that the arrival of Hurley would present them a new opportunity to raise the requirement of military assistance. They planned to invite Hurley to visit Yan'an and even suggested that half the U.S. supplies designated for China should be distributed to the CCP forces.¹⁷⁰ Up to that point, they estimated Hurley's main task in China was to discuss army reorganization. Therefore, they had no plan to discuss political questions with Hurley.¹⁷¹ Meanwhile, the CCP's reaction to the Stilwell incident was quite restrained. The party leaders believed that the incident would entail no significant change in the U.S. policy of peaceful unification of China.

Nonetheless, Hurley's subsequent mediation, at least at its beginning, offered them what appeared to be real hope for winning American support for their political program. Once he had finished settling the Stilwell-Chiang dispute, the U.S. general quickly showed a great desire to get involved in resolving the KMT-CCP disputes. He was optimistic that a political solution of the CCP problem could be found and he believed an agreement with the Communists would strengthen Chongqing both morally and politically. The swift advance of the American troops in the Pacific and the resounding defeat of KMT troops also raised the urgency of cooperation from the Communists forces.¹⁷²

On the other hand, being afraid to antagonize the Americans further after the Stilwell incident, the Generalissimo quickly accepted Hurley's offer of mediation.¹⁷³ In October, Hurley met with CCP representatives in Chongqing on several occasions.

Their initial round of exchanges was promising. Besides emphasizing his support for Chiang's leadership, Hurley also acknowledged the strength of the Chinese forces, declaring that they were "one of the factors that would decide China's fate". The general also suggested that the CCP should secure a legal status and participate in the leading bodies for military affairs.¹⁷⁴ The CCP leaders thus estimated that they could use American pressure to push Chiang to grant further concessions. As Mao concluded in a note, "allowing Chiang to stay in power, we might secure a favorable deal."¹⁷⁵

Hurley arrived in Yan'an on November 7, 1944, marking the beginning of exchanges between CCP top leaders and high-ranking U.S. officials. The U.S. general brought a new proposal from the KMT, the main idea of which was the submission of CCP forces to the authority of Chongqing.¹⁷⁶ The Nationalists argued that only when these conditions were met would they recognize the legal status of the CCP. In other words, Chiang's scheme meant the actual incorporation of the CCP forces in return for the establishment of a "war council" which would not significantly erode his dominant position.¹⁷⁷

In response, Mao fiercely attacked the corruption of the Nationalists government and the inability of the KMT troops in fighting the Japanese. Although he severely censured the KMT's mistakes, Mao carefully refrained from challenging the Generalissimo's supreme position. He also expressed his willingness to meet with Chiang at an appropriate time for face-to-face discussions on national affairs.¹⁷⁸

Hurley could not deny what Mao had criticized regarding the KMT and the general seemed happy to let the CCP leaders offer a counter-draft. Finally, Mao proposed a five-point agreement on November 9, of which the essential points were the reform of the existing Nationalist regime, the establishment of a coalition government and a joint military committee, all of which were stubbornly refused by the Nationalists earlier. The CCP leaders also told Hurley that once a coalition government was organized, they would recognize Chiang Kai-shek as its leader.¹⁷⁹

The attitude of the CCP leaders convinced Hurley that the Five Point Agreement was something that the KMT would accept. In his mind, the opposition between the

CCP and the KMT had no significant difference from the competition between the two parties in the United States. He could not find any reason to reject Mao's demand for the CCP's equal partnership in a democratic coalition. Moreover, the CCP had expressed their willingness to working with the KMT while Chiang Kai-shek retaining the position of national leader. Hurley believed he got the solution. ¹⁸⁰

Hurley thus gladly accepted the CCP's argument and signed the Five Point Agreement with Mao on November 10, of which the most important point was: "The present National Government is to be reorganized into a national coalition government embracing representatives of all anti-Japanese parties and non-partisan political bodies." At his own initiative, Hurley signed the document with Mao to indicate that he considered its terms "fair and just." The general also left a place reserved for the signature of Chiang Kai-shek. ¹⁸¹

Hurley was rather enthusiastic about his agreement with the CCP. He believed he had ensured the CCP's recognition of Chiang's leadership. In exchange, he was ready to offer Yan'an the establishment of a coalition government and a united command. Therefore, in his report to Roosevelt, Hurley claimed, "Almost all the principles in the Five Point Agreement are ours." ¹⁸² Hurley believed this revised deal was something that the Nationalists could accept.

While the American general was innocently optimistic about his "achievement" in the mediation, the CCP leaders were not. They were equally elated by Hurley's acceptance of their draft. However, they also keenly noticed the mistaken assumption that Hurley held when he signed the draft agreement. Chiang's offer of granting some positions for the CCP in the government was one thing, but the CCP's requirement of a coalition government was another. The American general who seemed utterly naïve just could not understand the difference. His mistake, however, provided the CCP an opportunity for political maneuver. Even if Chongqing rejected the draft agreement, the onus for disunity would fall on the Nationalists. ¹⁸³

In order to attract the Americans further, Mao sent a letter to Roosevelt via Hurley on November 10, expressing his desire to cooperate with Chongqing and Washington. ¹⁸⁴ Following the conclusion of negotiations in Yan'an on December 10,

Zhou Enlai flew together with Hurley to Chongqing. The CCP leaders keenly noticed that Hurley had not clearly differentiated between the formation of a coalition government and the CCP's participation in the existing KMT regime. They estimated that Chiang might accept the latter condition, but he would definitely not agree with the former. The negotiations would be complicated and tortuous.¹⁸⁵

Hurley brought the draft agreement back to Chongqing with full confidence.¹⁸⁶ He even suggested that if the KMT-CCP negotiations failed, the KMT would bear responsibility.¹⁸⁷ However, the Nationalist officials adopted an extremely hard line and flatly rejected the new draft agreement.¹⁸⁸ Chiang argued that the proposed agreement would lead to the CCP's eventual control of the government. He also emphasized that the term "coalition government" must be deleted from the draft. To accept the proposal of the coalition government would be an acknowledgement of the total defeat of his party, he asserted.¹⁸⁹ Chiang also repeated his prior argument that before political reform, the CCP should give up its control of armed forces at first.¹⁹⁰

After Chiang swore that he would never accept the Yan'an draft, Hurley retreated quickly. His support for the Five Points Agreement turned out to be short-lived. Surrounded by the KMT officials, the American general tilted toward the KMT steadily. In fact, in Hurley's scheme of priorities, political unification of China was subordinate to the overall objective of preventing the collapse of the Nationalist government.¹⁹¹ He would refrain from applying pressure on Chiang.¹⁹² Hurley quickly abandoned his own blueprint to endorse the KMT's position. With his participation, the Nationalist government drafted a counterproposal. Yan'an was asked to relinquish control of its armed forces. In return, Chongqing would confer upon the CCP legal status and a nominal place on the National Military Council.¹⁹³

Hurley met with Zhou Enlai on November 21 and tried to persuade him to accept the KMT's counterproposal.¹⁹⁴ Immediately, Zhou contended that to let some CCP members take part in the existing Nationalist regime would not change the essence of the KMT's dictatorship. Therefore, Zhou flatly turned down the KMT counterproposal. Hurley tried to use U.S. military assistance as a lever to win the CCP's compromise, but Zhou rejected this quid pro quo immediately.¹⁹⁵

In fact, for the CCP leaders, Hurley's offer of military aid would mean nothing if their troops were to be placed under the command of Chongqing. They now suspected that Hurley had tilted toward the KMT.¹⁹⁶ On December 1, Mao instructed Zhou to terminate the negotiation at Chongqing and Zhou left the city a week later. Hurley did not give up but instead sent Colonel David Barrett, the head of the U.S. Observation Group at Yan'an, to go with Zhou.¹⁹⁷

Shortly after Zhou's arrival at Yan'an, the CCP leaders convened a meeting on December 7. Mao asserted that the party should insist on the five points draft and launch a political offensive against Chiang's rejection of it. He mapped out two alternatives: to continue the coalition government program, or to establish a separate regime in the CCP-controlled area. The party leaders finally agreed to terminate the negotiation with the KMT, and to publish the agreement signed with Hurley. They also decided to initiate the preparation work of establishing a "Joint Commission of the Liberated Areas" in its controlled area.¹⁹⁸ On December 8, Zhou informed Hurley of the CCP's intention to publish the Yan'an draft.¹⁹⁹ On the same day, Mao met with Colonel Barrett and criticized Hurley's "betrayal of his word". He also informed Barrett of the party's new plan of the Joint Commission of the Liberated Areas".²⁰⁰

It is not difficult to understand the uncompromising attitude of the CCP leaders. At this point, Yan'an held great opportunity of political and military advancements while the Nationalist troops were still in retreat against the Japanese attacks. As an American official stationed at Yan'an suggested, the CCP leaders "felt absolutely sure of the strength of their position"²⁰¹ Their slogans of coalition government had attracted great enthusiasm among politically conscious circles, and the U.S. government itself also got involved and promoted government reform in China. The CCP leaders believed it was time for them to press forward.²⁰²

However, the hard-line expressed in Mao's conversation and Zhou's letter elicited a strong response from the Americans. In his reply to Zhou, Hurley warned that the decision to publish the Yan'an draft only meant that the CCP "had already written finish" to the negotiations.²⁰³ In his conversation with Mao on December 8, Colonel Barrett also warned of possible international and domestic backlash against

Mao's plan of setting up a separate regime in the CCP-controlled area. ²⁰⁴

The Communist leaders paid serious attention to these strong responses from American officials. In fact, their real intention was to warn the U.S. government while imposing pressure on Chiang. To avoid confrontation, Mao instructed CCP representatives in Chongqing to make an explanation towards the Americans on December 12. They assured Hurley that the party had no intention to split with the United States and that they would refrain from publishing the Yan'an draft for the time being.²⁰⁵ In his letters to Hurley, Zhou also expressed the hope that the impasse of political negotiations would not hinder military cooperation between the CCP and the Americans. ²⁰⁶

Meanwhile, after hearing Barrett's warnings, Mao convened a meeting of party leaders on the next day. He cautioned that the preparation for the Joint Commission of the Liberated Areas should be postponed temporarily. Others agreed. When the nation was still at war with Japan, the coalition government initiative was more politically advantageous for the CCP than a separate government. Meanwhile, the military crisis of the Nationalist regime was reaching its peak. American and British civilians were even evacuated from Chongqing in early December.²⁰⁷ The total collapse of the Nationalist regime and fall of Chongqing was predicted by many. As Chiang's position crumbled, the CCP leaders believed that if they had more patience, their party would have a greater chance to win state power while foreign powers would have no choice but recognizing CCP supremacy in China. Thus was not in the party's interests to offend public sentiment by establishing a separate regime at that point in time. ²⁰⁸

With the arrival of 1945, Chiang Kai-shek made a series of adjustments to his domestic policy. ²⁰⁹ He reorganized his cabinet and some progressives (at least in the eyes of Americans) were given posts of influence within the government. He also tried hard to reorganize his military forces and revitalize their fighting spirit. To repair his own power position and to seize the political initiative, Chiang Kai-shek also promised in its New Year's statement that once the military situation stabilized, his party would "prepare for the convening of a People's Congress" within a year "to

adopt and promulgate a constitution”.²¹⁰

Meanwhile, Hurley tried to persuade Chongqing to grant more concessions in the negotiations. With his suggestion, in January 1945, the KMT leaders promised to create within the Executive Yuan a new policy-making organ, an organization “resembling a war cabinet.”²¹¹ The Communists and other parties would be granted representation in it. Chiang also offered to set up a commission, which was made up of a Nationalist military staff, a CCP staffs, and an American military officer to make recommendations regarding the reorganization, equipment, and supply of the CCP forces. He also suggested the appointment of an American military official as the immediate commander of CCP forces for the duration of the war against Japan. ²¹²

Without substantive political concessions from Chongqing, however, Chiang’s program was unacceptable for the CCP. The Democratic League also refused to participate in the “war cabinet”. The Hurley-KMT military scheme provoked instead severe criticism from the CCP leaders. They suspected that Hurley was cheating them in an attempt to hand over their armed forces in exchange for a few posts in the KMT dominated government.²¹³ Mao openly charged that Hurley’s plan bore ominous implications while Zhou Enlai rejected the proposal that U.S. officers exercise unified command of the Chinese forces. ²¹⁴

On January 7, Hurley proposed that the KMT-CCP negotiations be resumed in Yan’an. ²¹⁵ However, this offer was refused by Mao on January 11. Instead of a bipartisan meeting, Mao suggested that a multiparty national affairs conference should be assembled to discuss concrete measures towards coalition government. ²¹⁶ The conference would be attended not only by the CCP and KMT but also by representatives of those small parties. ²¹⁷ The proceedings of the conference, Mao added, should be made public and the delegates should have equal standing.²¹⁸ In fact, Yan’an expected that such a conference would serve as a forum to publicize and promote their coalition government initiative.

Meanwhile, Yan’an still clung to its hopes of obtaining U.S. military aid. Its leaders estimated that the cooling of their relations with Hurley would not affect cooperation from U.S. military staff, who still shuttled back and forth between

Chongqing and Yan'an, actively seeking cooperation with the Communists. Those staffs' action actions were based on both military consideration and their expectation that the CCP could be encouraged to follow an independent and nationalistic policy.

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Meanwhile, the CCP leaders perceived the U.S. ruling class as divided; there were "enlightened" bourgeois politicians such as President Roosevelt, and there were "reactionaries" representing "monopoly bourgeois" such as Hurley. They intended to win over the former while isolating the latter. The disagreement between Hurley and Stilwell's successors was evident to the Communists leaders. Until then, Mao still believed that the FDR administration and U.S. military personnel in China were "progressive", and he expected to exploit the differences among the American officials. One of Mao's tactics was to bypass the "reactive" Hurley, and, via "progressive" U.S. military personnel, to communicate directly with President Roosevelt. Therefore, on January 9, 1945, the CCP sent a message to General Wedemeyer for Roosevelt, which explained that Mao and Zhou, "as leaders of a primary Chinese political party", were eager to have a talk with the President in person. Zhou also warned the American official who transmitted the telegram that Wedemeyer alone should receive it and "General Hurley must not get this information as I don't trust his discretion."²²⁰

Unfortunately, Hurley, who was unable to understand why his mediation had failed, blamed the CCP's unwillingness to cooperate with him solely on the military staffs. He complained that their covert contacts with the CCP had allowed Yan'an to believe that it could bypass him. In the end, Hurley dismissed Barrett and several other officers who he considered were disloyal to him while Wedemeyer issued orders explicitly prohibiting the discussion of cooperation or aid with the CCP.²²¹

After Hurley's disruption undermined the cooperative relations between the CCP and U.S. military personnel, Communist leaders quickly made known their suspicion of the Americans. Hurley's support of Chiang and pressure upon the CCP resulted not only in the deterioration of political relations between the United States and Yan'an but also the breakdown of their military cooperation. ²²²

The waning relationship between the CCP and Hurley had a broader context, however. As the New Year came, the Japanese Ichigo offensive finally came to a halt. Meanwhile, as their troops advanced swiftly in the Pacific Islands, U.S. leaders gradually abandoned their plans for a landing on the Chinese coast. Military cooperation from the CCP no longer appeared as urgent as in the preceding months. On the other hand, however, the Yalta summit meeting was soon to convene, and Soviets entrance into the war against Japan was a foregone conclusion. The critical moment for coordinating U.S. and Soviet Far-Eastern policy had arrived. The Americans hoped to solve the KMT-CCP dispute as soon as possible. Developments of U.S. policy not only entailed new challenges for the CCP but also placed additional pressure on the Nationalists.

Noticing a change in American attitude, the CCP leaders quickly adjusted their policy.²²³ After Barrett's dismissal, the Communist leadership recognized that the scheme to bypass Hurley had failed. On January 22, they agreed to dispatch Zhou to Chongqing to resume talks. However, they still had no intention to compromise. Zhou Enlai arrived at Chongqing on January 24, but he showed no interest in making a deal with the KMT. Instead, Zhou and other CCP representatives tried by every possible means to promote the party's new idea of a multi-party conference.²²⁴ After the talks resumed on January 24, the KMT again offered nominal CCP participation in the government in exchange for the CCP giving up control of its armed forces. The CCP representatives, in turn, insisted that the KMT must dismantle its one-party rule and share power with the CCP.²²⁵

The CCP's unyielding position convinced Hurley that unless the KMT made some concessions in the political arena, it would be impossible to achieve unified command over the Chinese armed forces. Under Hurley's prodding, the KMT representatives changed their tactics. They granted a series of compromises. In an apparent endeavor to reach a settlement with the Communists, the KMT representatives replied to the CCP proposal on February 3, agreeing to convene a "political consultative conference" which would be attended by representatives of all parties and by non-partisan leaders. The designed function of the conference was to

discuss steps to be taken in establishing constitutional government.²²⁶

To convene a multi-party conference to discuss interim measures of unification pending convocation of the National Congress, this offer, involving some concessions by the Nationalists, appears to have been palatable to the CCP, as it coincided with the party's demands in past months. However, based on their former experiences, CCP leaders had enough reason to suspect that the so-called reform promised by the KMT negotiators was only a dilatory tactic. In fact, the representatives' proposal did not receive formal approval from the Generalissimo.²²⁷

Therefore, facing this unexpected compromise from Chongqing, the CCP leaders turned hesitant. They still worried that under the KMT's new program, their party's participation in the government would still be limited, while their armies would be wiped out. Meanwhile, they also noticed that the Soviets would soon enter the war against Japan, which would bring a situation more in their favor. Therefore, the CCP leaders decided to wait for further developments.²²⁸

As the representative of the U.S. government, Hurley participated in the final round of wartime negotiations between the two Chinese parities. He was confident in the KMT's ability to maintain control of a coalition government and believed that Yan'an had no real strength. Understanding Chinese politics in American terms, he also believed a political and military settlement on Nationalist terms was possible. However, he soon found out that China was different. When his optimism was shattered by actual events, Hurley's entire program collapsed.²²⁹

Two Fates of China

Frustrated by the CCP's unyielding attitude, Hurley became increasingly impatient and short-tempered towards Yan'an in the spring of 1945, which in turn led Mao to suspect that U.S. policy had evolved to support Chiang's regime unconditionally. Mao's stance against the Nationalist government was further toughened, while the CCP adopted an even more radical political and military strategy in the following months.

As their plan to win support from the Americans failed, the CCP leaders shifted their attention back to the Soviets. In early 1945, victories in Europe enabled Moscow to play an increasingly active role in the Far East. To a certain extent, the CCP's hardline approach to Hurley was encouraged by the Soviets. Although the Soviets gave no direct material support to the Chinese Communists, Yan'an unquestionably derived moral support from Moscow. In fact, the CCP leaders consistently believed that the Soviet Union was the most reliable friend and supporter of the Chinese Revolution. Their policy of cooperating with the United States was based primarily on their realistic assessment of the international balance of power for their domestic political needs.²³⁰ In the latter half of 1944, while the CCP was perusing active cooperation with the Americans, it was also trying to strengthen its ties with the Soviets. In fact, Yan'an informed Moscow of nearly every major development in their relationship with Washington.²³¹

Many elements entered into the CCP's assessment of Soviet policy in this period. The developments of Soviet policies convinced CCP leaders that Moscow would enter the war against Japan once Germany was defeated, which they estimated would happen within one or two years. The CCP leaders were quite optimistic about the consequences of Soviet entry into the war, which they believed would increase the weight that their party carried in Chinese politics. They also expected that Moscow would act as a powerful restraint on the Nationalists while balancing American influence in China. Therefore, the CCP leaders had good reason to put off a resolution of the KMT-CCP problem until the Soviets entered the war against Japan.²³² They again adopted a "wait and see" approach during the negotiations with the KMT.²³³

Political developments in Europe also encouraged the CCP leaders. During this time, the Soviet armies were advancing swiftly in Eastern Europe, while postwar arrangements for Europe were beginning to take shape. In October 1944, Winston Churchill visited Moscow to join Stalin in demarcating respective spheres of influence in southeast Europe. Although this agreement was not made public, the political development in the region indicated that everywhere the Soviets occupied, Poland for instance, they resolutely supported political forces friendly to them, while

in the Anglo-American sphere, such as Greece, the situation was exactly the opposite.

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The CCP leaders paid close attention to the emerging conflict between the Soviets and the Western allies in general and to development in the situation in Poland and Greece in particular. British conduct in Greece raised an alarm amongst CCP leaders. After its army's landing in Greece in October 1944, London intervened in support of the pro-Anglo-American coalition government. In early December, the Greek Communist Party (KKE) withdrew from the coalition government and launched an armed uprising. However, the British troops under the command of General Ronald Scobie forcefully suppressed the uprising while Moscow kept mum.²³⁵

These events induced the CCP leaders to pay even more attention to questions of whether, when, and to what extent the Soviet Union and the Western allies would join the war against Japan in China. Commentary in CCP newspapers during this period enthusiastically supported the Soviet liberation of Poland while strongly condemning British suppression of the KKE's insurgency. The party leaders repeatedly warned their followers of the need to oppose anti-communist military actions in China instigated by persons like General Scobie. They alerted the whole party to be on guard against military intervention by "foreign reactionary forces" within Chinese domestic affairs.²³⁶

Significant adjustment thus occurred in the CCP's foreign relations policy. After the progressive deterioration of its relations with Hurley, the focus of CCP diplomacy shifted back towards Moscow. Its leaders expected that the Soviets would have more say in the Far East. They also believed that, to safeguard its own interests, Moscow would not permit the United States to monopolize influence over China after the war. In early 1945, there was a marked increase in the number of reports and articles in CCP newspapers concerning Soviet views on China's domestic problem and calling for friendship between China and the Soviet Union. This was in striking contrast to the restrained but pointed criticism of Hurley for his actions that encouraged the KMT to prepare an anti-communist civil war.²³⁷

At the same time, cooperation between the CCP and U.S. military officials declined rapidly while preparations for cooperation with the Soviet army moved forward.²³⁸ In mid-March 1945, the CCP leaders in southern China once asked for instructions from Yan'an regarding a possible Allied army landing on the coast of Guangdong province. The party leaders warned that since the Americans were now unconditionally in support of Chiang while the British might try to rope in local forces, neither of them would be very friendly towards the CCP forces. Therefore, those guerrillas in southern China should make use of contradictions between the Western powers and the Nationalists, and develop their own strengths to secure themselves in an impregnable position.²³⁹

Meanwhile, cooperation with their big brother became more attractive for Yan'an.²⁴⁰ Although its southward expansion was not abandoned, Yan'an gradually shifted more attention from assisting the U.S. landing on the southeast coast to supporting the Soviet forces in north and northeast China (another important reason was the difficulties in implementing its southward expansion plan against stiff resistance from Nationalist forces). They expected Moscow would join the war against Japan in the near future.²⁴¹

On April 5, 1945, Moscow announced that it would not renew its neutrality agreement with Japan. The Soviet entry into the war against Japan became imminent, which presented Yan'an with new opportunities for cooperation with Moscow. CCP newspapers immediately hailed the significance of this event. On April 18, Mao approved an instruction to prepare for cooperation with the Soviet Army. According to the directive, the most important military cooperation for CCP forces would henceforth be with the Soviets. If CCP troops could link up with the Red Army in northern China and Manchuria, Mao believed, they might fetch those areas.²⁴²

Against this background, from April 23 to June 11, 1945, the Communists convened their Seventh National Congress at Yan'an. By then, the party had reached an unprecedented level of political and military strength. Mao Zedong was named the undisputed leader of the CCP while Mao's "thought" was enshrined in the Constitution of the party. In many of his speeches, Mao took great effort to discuss

possible Soviet and American influence on Chinese politics. In his public political report “On Coalition Government”, Mao warned the whole party that after the end of the Second World War, political conflicts would continue, mainly because there were still “anti-democratic forces and those who oppose the people” inside the anti-Fascist camp. Those reactionary forces did not give up oppressing the people in colonies and semi-colonies. Therefore, he asserted, “Only through persistent effort, and by overcoming remnant fascist forces, anti-democratic forces, and all the forces of imperialism can there be the broadest possible popular victory.”²⁴³

As Niu Jun suggested, this was the first time since the outbreak of the Pacific War that CCP leaders clearly stated that there was a continuing struggle with the Allied camp and that this struggle would have a significant, if not predominant, influence on the postwar world. ²⁴⁴In future, Mao believed, the CCP should clearly align itself with the Soviets while he warned the Americans and British that they must “pay serious attention” to the aspirations of the Chinese people and avoid making “an enormous mistake.” ²⁴⁵

In his secret reports during the conferences, Mao warned the whole party even more clearly on the danger of a new foreign intervention directed by people like General Scobie. After the victory against Japan, the United States, which was in control of the Nationalist regime, would try to turn China into a dependent semi-colony. The party must prepare for the worst. Mao’s speech clearly demonstrated that CCP leaders were already preparing for a possible confrontation with the United States.²⁴⁶

Thus, the CCP leaders decided to limit American activities in Communists controlled areas. Yan’an instructed all its base areas to deny the U.S. army permission to establish communication centers within the areas and to stop providing the Americans with important intelligence. They warned the U.S. Observer Group in Yan’an that they could not sneak around at will again and they rejected American proposals to construct airfields and other facilities within their controlled areas.²⁴⁷ Nonetheless, the CCP leaders had not decided to split with the U.S. completely, as they still did not give up the hope of taking advantage of the “contradiction” within

the U.S. ruling circle. ²⁴⁸

Changes to the CCP's foreign policy and military strategy were directly translated into its political strategy. The Seventh Congress advocated building a new state under the leadership of the laboring class, which meant the rule of the Communists. Mao's official report "On Coalition Government" represented an attempt to provide a theoretical basis for the policy of competing with the Nationalist party for national leadership, to emphasize the distinction between the programs of the CCP and those other parties and groups, and to formulate a clear-cut party line in the process of further expansion. In fact, only a few days after the publication of Mao's report, Wang Ruofei, the ranking Chinese Communist in Chongqing at that time, told Hurley frankly that, "the party now supported democratic principles but only as a stepping stone towards a future Communist state."²⁴⁹

The confident and optimistic mood in Yan'an reflected the continuing expansion of Communist horizons. In the preceding months, the party had exploited the Japanese offensive against the KMT government to its advantage both in political and military terms. In the spring 1945, developments on the battlefield still favored Communist expansion against both Japanese and Nationalist lines. At the end of March, after a lull of more than three months, the Japanese resumed their offensive in Hubei and Hunan provinces. ²⁵⁰With Chongqing on the ropes, the CCP's military prospects brightened again. The party's rapid expansion and increasing American and Soviet recognition of their strength led Mao to claim during the Seventh Congress confidently,

*"Our Communist Party has never been so powerful, the revolutionary base areas have never had so large a population and so large an army, the prestige of the Communist Party is higher than ever among the people both in the Japanese-occupied and in the Kuomintang areas, and the revolutionary forces of the Soviet Union and the people of all countries are stronger than ever before. One must say that, with these conditions, it is entirely possible to defeat the aggressors and build a new China."*²⁵¹

Nearly at the same time, the KMT also formulated their postwar strategy. The Generalissimo unveiled his new political program in a public address on March 1. The

essence of the program was the convocation of the National People's Assembly in November 1945, which would adopt a new constitution so that a new government could be instituted. Before it, however, the KMT would retain "its power of ultimate decision and final responsibility." Chiang also abandoned his party's earlier offer of a multi-party conference. He asserted that the KMT "can only entrust the government to a National People's Assembly that represents the mass, it cannot entrust the government to a congeries of parties and factions or to a coalition government composed of such parties and factions."²⁵² Chiang also told Hurley that the KMT would convene the National Assembly on schedule whether or not the CCP approved, and he expressed hope for American support.²⁵³ His uncompromising stance was designed to compel the U.S. government to support his program.

The secret of Chiang's new program lay in the fact that the National Assembly he suggested would be completely under the control of the KMT. According to the KMT formula, the delegates to the Assembly had been elected in 1936 under conditions and regulations that insured the election of KMT members and its faithful supporters. As a result, the new constitution would be shaped to perpetuate the rule of the KMT, and the new government instituted would not change the substance of Chiang's personal dominance.²⁵⁴ For the Nationalists, this program was an ideal tactic to fend off the CCP's coalition government initiative. Once a "democratic" constitution being passed, the CCP would be asked to submit its military forces and territorial control under the new government. If Yan'an refused, the KMT would be legally justified in attacking the Communists as rebels.

Chiang's new program only caused great uneasiness among politically conscious circles. Yan'an severely condemned Chiang's March 1 statement as a virtual "declaration of war." Zhou Enlai sent a letter to Wang Shijie saying that Chiang's proposal to convene the National People's Assembly left no room for salvaging KMT-CCP relations. On March 9, Zhou informed Hurley that the CCP believed it was meaningless to continue negotiating with the KMT. The two parties' wartime negotiations reached a complete deadlock.²⁵⁵

The smaller parties also promptly denounced the National Assembly program as

“one party controlled, deceitful and China-splitting.” Their leaders quickly pointed out that the Assembly was elected when the people had no freedom and the political parties and groups had no legal status. What they wanted was, above all, a share of real authority in a coalition government.²⁵⁶

However, for the dissidents of Chiang, his regime was too weak to rule but still too strong to be overthrown. The leaders of the smaller parties then tried to play a role in mediating the KMT-CCP conflict. A group of six minor party and non-partisan leaders visited Yan’an in early July. They agreed with the CCP leaders on a new set of proposals. They jointly asked the Nationalist government to call off the National Assembly plan. Instead, they suggested summoning a political conference composed of three members of the KMT, three members of the CCP, three members representing the Democratic League, and three members representing other political parties and groups.²⁵⁷ They also suggested that the schedule and substance of the National Assembly should be discussed and decided by the multi-party conference.²⁵⁸

Nonetheless, at this time, both the KMT and CCP paid more attention to their own political programs.²⁵⁹ The basic conflict between the two parties, as revealed in their respective proposals, was quite clear. The Nationalists insisted upon the incorporation of CCP forces into the Nationalist army first, followed by recognition of the political status of the Communists, whereas the Communists insisted on sharing power in a coalition government first, followed by the integration of their military forces to the Nationalist army. These differences were the product of deeply rooted suspicions and mutual distrust. Neither side was ready or willing to make any concession to the other.

While the Nationalists firmly insisted upon their national assembly plan, the CCP resumed its program of establishing a separate regime in northern China. After the suspension of KMT-CCP talks in December 1944, Yan’an raised the idea of establishing a Joint Commission for the Liberated Areas. The plan was postponed soon, however, fearing possibly unfavorable international and domestic reaction. However, as CCP-KMT negotiations broke down in February 1945, especially after Chiang’s announcement of the KMT’s national assembly plan, Yan’an quickly

resumed the program.²⁶⁰

On April 1, 1945, Mao told Service that Yan'an was preparing to organize a "Chinese People's Joint Commission for the Liberated Areas". That commission would include not only representatives from all liberated areas, but would also be open to "all organizations wishing to participate in it." He also warned that if the KMT persisted in convening the National People's Assembly, the CCP would simultaneously convene the "Joint Commission of the Liberated Areas."²⁶¹ The CCP's Seventh Party Congress formally discussed the question of convening a "People's Congress for the Liberated Areas" and establishing the Joint Commission. In his report "On Coalition Government", Mao for the first time announced that the party would hold its People's Conference as soon as possible.²⁶²

The CCP officials started their preparations very quickly.²⁶³ During the summer of 1945, they held regional level elections in many regions of their controlled area. On June 21, the Shaan-Gan-Ning(陕甘宁) Border Region government announced the establishment of a Preparatory Committee for the People's Congress of the Liberated Areas. On July 13, the Preparatory Committee passed a draft resolution concerning elections for the People's Congress and formally proposed the convening of the congress in November 1945, instructing delegates to the congress to arrive in Yan'an by November 12.²⁶⁴ The committee also dispatched a circular telegram inviting all political parties and groups to choose delegates to participate in "a meeting that will affect China's future." On August 1, the Preparatory Committee established a subcommittee to discuss the agenda for the People's Congress of the Liberated Areas. The party leaders also invited KMT dissidents such as Li Jishen to send their representatives.²⁶⁵

The CCP's decision to proclaim publicly the convening its People's Congress and quickly carry out preparatory work was an extremely radical measure taken in response to the KMT's proposal to convene a National Assembly.²⁶⁶ As Mao stated in his "On Coalition Government", there were two steps required to dismantle the KMT's one-party dictatorship: first, to establish a provisional coalition government through common agreement among representatives of all parties and people with no

party affiliation; then, to convene a national assembly after free and unrestricted elections and form a regular coalition government.²⁶⁷ The Joint Commission of the Liberated Area was simply the concrete measure of the CCP's first step. Apparently, the CCP also tried to avoid being seen as forming a separate regime in its controlled area.

Nonetheless, this was far from the program's full significance. After all, the joint commission was a government by its very nature. By convening it, the CCP claimed jurisdiction over approximately 90 million people in the territories under its control, and the party had become strong enough to have its authority recognized in these areas. By convening the preliminary meeting in June, Mao intended to warn Chiang and the Americans that the CCP was capable of creating an alternative government if the KMT obstructed the coalition government program.²⁶⁸

The CCP's resolve to establish the Joint Commission, a strong reaction to the KMT's decision to convene a national assembly, was also closely linked with its understanding of U.S. and Soviet policy towards China. The CCP leaders believed Moscow was inclined to support its political program while Washington was eager for Moscow's participation in the war against Japan. Both would try to maintain KMT-CCP cooperation.²⁶⁹ If the Soviets entered the war or if an open conflict between the Chinese parties occurred, Moscow would be strongly tempted to intervene in support of the CCP and even to help establish an independent, pro-Soviet state in northern China or Manchuria. In this complicated situation, adopting a tough stance toward the KMT's program of National Assembly at a minimum would elicit no opposition from the Soviets and might even force some concessions from the Americans.²⁷⁰

Nearly the same time, the Kuomintang's Sixth National Congress was inaugurated in Chongqing on May 5. In his opening remarks, Chiang suggested convening the National Congress on November 12, in celebration of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's birthday.²⁷¹ Discussions of the CCP problem occupied much time of the Congress.²⁷² Commenting on the CCP's new program, Chiang asserted that a

separate regime in northern China would bring about a quick demise of Yan'an but that his party should be cautious towards the CCP's requirement of a coalition government.²⁷³ On May 17, the KMT Congress finally passed its guideline for dealing with the Communists. It resolved to settle the Communist problem through political means.²⁷⁴

However, the terms "political problem" and "solution by political means" had special meaning for Chiang. In its essence, to solve a problem by political means signified to him the use of military pressure to induce his opponents to accept his conditions. Chiang's vague promise of popular government was also not enough for the CCP and other political activists.²⁷⁵ In fact, Chiang was only willing to concede political participation and a power-sharing scheme that did not endanger his party's control. His conception of unity can be summed up as: I want to cooperate with the Communists but they must obey my orders.²⁷⁶ Even Hurley knew very well that the KMT still hoped to keep China under its one-party rule.²⁷⁷

Therefore, the gap between the visions of the Nationalists and the Communists was wide and fundamental. Basically, Chiang's whole political program was vitiated by a shortsighted determination to tenaciously hold on to his own power and by a corresponding refusal to share power with political leaders who did not blindly obey and follow him. This aspect of Chiang's monopoly of power fostered an alignment between the CCP and the minor parties in opposing his monopoly of power and led many anti-Communist and non-Communist leaders to become sympathetic to Yan'an.

In fact, Chiang was also in a dilemma. As the national leader, he might rise above party selfishness and anti-Communist prejudice to lead a coalition government. However, a coalition government would open the way for the more virile CCP to extend its influence to the point perhaps of controlling the government. Most importantly, political reform would make many KMT cadres lose those privileges they now enjoyed, which in turn would destroy the fragile balance of different factions inside the Nationalist regime and threaten Chiang's personal leadership. The conservative character of the KMT party predicted no true reform of its regime.²⁷⁸

At this critical moment, when they were formulating strategies for postwar competition, both the CCP and the KMT paid very close attention to the development of international relations in East Asia. As the victory of Anti-Japanese war was almost in sight, a two-camp vision of world politics gradually formed in both the KMT and CCP leaders' minds.

When the Americans were increasingly inclined to support Chiang, Yan'an gradually abandoned the policy of allying with the United States. On June 6, 1945, John Service and five other people were arrested by FBI on charges of conspiring to commit espionage centered on the magazine *Amerasia*. To the CCP leaders, the arrest of these "friendly Americans sympathetic to China's cause of resistance and democracy" signified the victory of American reactionaries over the progressive forces.²⁷⁹ They suspected that the U.S. policy of wholly supporting Chiang had been firmly established. Therefore, in his concluding remarks at the Seventh Congress, Mao warned the whole party of the need for vigilance concerning the danger of a new foreign intervention. Apparently, he had already foreseen a possible confrontation with the United States.²⁸⁰ Meanwhile, the focus of CCP foreign policy shifted to the Soviets. Its leaders hoped that Moscow would help them achieve two major goals. The first was to receive direct Soviet aid by cooperating in the war against Japan. Second, to safeguard peace in the Far East, Moscow would not permit the United States to monopolize influence over China.²⁸¹

The CCP's Seventh and the KMT's Sixth Congress met precisely when the war of resistance was drawing to an end, and the question of what course China would follow after the war became urgent. As in Mao's word, two roads lay before the Chinese people, and two possible destinies awaited China. The relations between the two parties became very strained. Propaganda against each other became more and more vitriolic. It became evident that the conflict between the KMT and CCP was too fundamental to be settled peacefully through negotiation between the two parties solely under their own auspices. In fact, people were anxious that civil war might precede the conclusion of the war against Japan.²⁸²

Conclusion

In 1944, after the massive Japanese Ichigo offensive, the KMT failed to constrain the expansion of CCP, while the Communists became more and more assertive in their rivalry with the Nationalists for state power. Being confident of the popularity of their political program and the rapid growth of their armed forces, the Communists steadily increased their terms of political reform for a domestic settlement. Meanwhile, realizing that the establishment of a coalition government would put his rule in danger, Chiang was determined to resist these demands.

Thus, there was no common basis for an agreement between the two sides. The Communists would not relinquish their military forces unless their political position was unequivocally secured. The KMT would accept the legalization of the CCP only after its military force had been fully incorporated into the central army. This was to be the nub of the stalemate in the negotiations over the following two years. As Tang Tsou argues, “The conflict estimates of relative strength, the divergent views over procedure, and conflicting opinions regarding the terms of a Kuomintang-Communists rapprochement led naturally to entirely opposite judgment on the probable outcome of a political settlement.”²⁸³ By then, the nature of Chinese politics provided no other internal basis for a negotiated peace.²⁸⁴ What stopped an imminent civil war in China was the influence of foreign powers.

¹ Odd Arne Westad, *Decisive Encounters: the Chinese Civil War, 1946-1950* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003) offers a survey history and the best introduction of the civil war, but also starts from the year 1946.

² The review focuses on those works from English world but the Chinese and Japanese works are also mentioned, In fact, major achievements and shortages are shared, in a different extent, by all specialists on this topic. See, Michael H. Hunt, *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy* (Columbia University Press 1996).

³ On the influence of the Soviets, see Steven I. Levine, *Anvil of Victory: the Communist Revolution in Manchuria, 1945-1948* (New York : Columbia University Press, 1987), Odd Arne Westad, ed., *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963*(Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1998) Dieter Heinzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China, 1945-1950: The Arduous Road to the Alliance*(Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2004) Leading Chinese scholar in this subject is Professor Shenzhuhua, based on many first-hand Russian materials, he has written a series of papers, but mainly focused on the Cold War age. See, Sheng Zhuhua, *Lengzhan wushu*(Five Books on the Cold War, 冷战五书), Beijing: Jiuzhou chubanshe(九州出版社), 2012. Japanese scholars also produced many outstanding papers, and work, such as Ishii Akira, *Chuso kankeishi no kenkyu: 1945-1950*<A Research of Sino-Russian Relations:1945-1950> (Tokyo : tokyodaigakushuppankai,1990) On the role of the American, influential works includes Herbert Feis, *The China Tangle : the American effort in China from Pearl Harbor to the Marshall Mission*(Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1953); Tang Tsou,

America's Failure in China, 1941-50(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963) Michael Schaller, *The U.S. crusade in China, 1938-1945*(New York: Columbia University Press, 1979). Larry I Bland Ed, *George C. Marshall's mediation mission to China, December 1945-January 1947* (Lexington, Va.: George C. Marshall Foundation, 1998.

⁴ Niu Jun, Niu, Jun. *From Yan'an to the world: the origin and development of Chinese Communist foreign policy*. Voices of Asia, 2005. Yang Kuisong, *Mao Zedong yu Mosike de enen yuanyuan* (Mao Zedong and Moscow: favor and frustration, 毛泽东与莫斯科的恩恩怨怨). Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 2009. *Zhongjian didai de geming—Zhongguo geming de celue zai guoji beijing xia de yanbian*(Revolution in the middle realms—the unfolding of strategy in China's revolution in international context, 中间地带的革命). Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1992.

⁵ See, Xiang Lanxing, *Recasting the Imperial Far East: Britain and America in China, 1945-1950* (M.E. Sharpe, 1995).

⁶ Odd Arne Westad, *Cold War and Revolution: Soviet-American Rivalry and the Origins of the Chinese Civil War, 1944-1946* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.)

⁷ Zhai Qiang, "Great Power Conflict and the Chinese Civil War", *Reviews in American History* ,Vol.23.No.3 (1995) p.517

⁸ In summarizing the main argument of Westad, the author borrowed some piece from the review work of Zhai Qiang. Zhai Qiang, "Great Power Conflict and the Chinese Civil War", pp. 516-520; Westad repeated such kind of argument in many other places. See, Odd Arne Westad, "Rethinking Revolutions: The Cold War in the Third World", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Nov., 1992), pp. 460-461

⁹ For instance, Zhang Zhengjiang, *Lengzhan yu neizhan*(Cold War and Civil War, 冷战与内战),Tianjin:Tianjin Guji Chubanshe, 2003. Ji Yaguang, *Guogong quanmian neizhan de yuanyi*(The origins of the overall breaking out of civil war between KMT and CCP, 国共全面内战的缘起), *Heirongjiang chubanshe*, 2008.

¹⁰ See, Zhai, "Great Power Conflict and the Chinese Civil War", pp. 516-520.

¹¹ See, Paul A. Cohen, *Discovering History in China Discovering History in China: American historical writing on the recent Chinese past* (New York: Columbia University Press 1997).

¹² Suzanne Pepper's *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle, 1945-1949* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); Studies of Chinese politics in ROC age usually stop on August 1945, suggesting that the main explanation of the KMT's failure and the CCP's success could be found in earlier periods. Lloyd E. Eastman, *The Seeds of Destruction: Nationalist China in war and revolution, 1937-1949*(Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1984). See also, Chi Hsi-sheng, *Nationalist China at War: Military Defeats and Political Collapse, 1937-45* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1982).

¹³ Deng Ye, *Lianhe zhengfu yu yidang xunzheng, 1944-1946*,(Coalition Government and One Party Tutelage, from 1944 to 1946, 联合政府与一党训政) , Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2003, 2011, hereafter cited as Deng Ye, 2003 or Deng Ye, 2011. Wang Chaoguang, *Zhonghua mingguo shi, Cong kangzhan shengli dao neizhan baofa qianhou*(History of Modern China, from the victory of the War of Resistance to the outbreak of civil war, 中华民国史: 从抗战胜利到内战爆发). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000. Another key limitation of these Chinese scholars' works (especially Deng Ye's) is that they seldom used foreign sources.

¹⁴ See, Deng Ye, 2011, pp.493-497,503-507.

¹⁵ William C.Kirby, "The Internationalization of China: Foreign Relations at Home and Abroad in the Republican Era", *China Quarterly*, Vol,150, No.2 (June 1997, p.433

¹⁶ Hans Van De Ven, "Stilwell in the stocks: the Chinese nationalists and the allied powers in the Second World War", *Asian Affairs*, Vol.34, No.3, pp.243-259.

¹⁷ John W. Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937-1945: The Diplomacy of Chinese Nationalism*, Cary, NC, USA: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 4. See also, Hunt, *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy*; *Hans van de Ven, War and Nationalism in China: 1925-1945*, London: Routledge, 2012.

¹⁸ See Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*. Chapter 7, esp. pp.151-152

¹⁹ Michael Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism: Mao, Stalin, and the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press,1997),especially first few pages. However, it is ironic to notice his unsympathetic attitude towards Mao.

²⁰ Until now, many of those most important materials for this research topic are not accessible to ordinary researchers. What we could compensate to examine seriously those works provided those historians who enjoy some privileges of document access due to their occupation and rank.

²¹ Michael Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism*.

²² *Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun lishi ziliao congshu bianshen weiyuanhui comp*, Balujun: wenxian,(Collection of documents from Eight Route Army, 八路军: 参考资料), Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1994; *Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun lishi ziliao congshu bianshen weiyuanhui comp*, Xinsijun :wenxian,(Collection of documents from New Fourth Army,新四军: 文献), Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1994; *Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun lishi ziliao bianshen weiyuanhui*, ed. *Junshi douzhen guodu jieduan: zongshu, wenxian, dashiji* [The Transition Phrase of Military Struggles: Summary, Documents and Events 过渡阶段军事斗争] Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 2000.

²³ Westad had once discussed this problem, see Westad, *Decisive Encounters: the Chinese Civil War, 1946-1950*.

²⁴ See, John K. Fairbank and Albert Feuerwerker, *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol.13, Republican China, 1912-1949. Part 2, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp.160-163, pp.220-229.

²⁵ For the KMT-CCP wartime negotiations, see Yang Kuisong, *Shiqu de jihui?* (失去的机会, The Lost

Opportunity?), revised edition, Beijing: New Star Press (新星出版社), 2010.

²⁶ Deng Ye, *Lianhe zhengfu he yidang xunzheng*, pp.2-7

²⁷ Chiang, Kai-shek, *China's Destiny*, authorized translation by Wang Chung-hui, New York: Macmillan, 1947.

²⁸ The Office of the Historian in the United States Department of State, *Foreign Relation of United States* (Hereafter cited as *FRUS*), 1943, China, pp.115-18,123,257-258,275-276,277-279,327-328. See also, Deng Ye, "Jiang Jieshi guanyu zhongguo mingyun de mingti ji guogong de liangge kouhao" (Chiang Kai-shek's Statements on China's Destiny" and the Slogans of the Communist and the Nationalist Parties, 蒋介石关于“中国之命运”的命题与国共的两个口号), *Lishi Yanjiu* (History Studies,历史研究), No.4 2008.

²⁹ Mao to Dong Biwu, 4 July 1943, Mao to Peng Dehuai, 7 July 1943, Mao to Sub-bureau, 13 August, 1943, all from *ERAD*, p.937, p.939. Tang Zong's Diary, 29 June 1943, Tang Zong, *Zai Jiangjieshi shenbian banian* (On the nearside of Chiang Kaishek for eight years, 在蒋介石身边八年--待从室高级幕僚唐纵日记, Here after cited as *Tang Zong riji.*), Qunzong Chubanshe (Mass Press 群众出版社), 1991, p.366.

³⁰ The KMT-CCP negotiation, which had once broke off after the New Fourth Army (N4A) incident in January 1941, was finally resumed by the year of 1942. See, Yang Kuisong, *Guomindang de liangong yu fangong* (Kuomintang: unity with Communists and Anti-communism, 国民党的联共与反共), *Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe*, 2008, pp.470-472.

³¹ See, Deng Ye, "Ri-Su guanxi yu guogong de zhanlue liyi: 1943 nian Jiang Jieshi zhicai zhonggong de cehua he quxiao (Sino-Soviet Relations and the Guomindang and CCP's Strategic Interests: The Planning and Cancellation of Chiang Kai-shek's 1943 Sanctions against the CCP, 日苏关系与国共的战略利益" *Jindaishi Yanjiu* (Modern History Study,近代史研究), 2007, No.6, pp.1-20.

³² Gauss to the Secretary of State, 14 October, *FRUS* 1943, China, p.357.

³³ Memorandum of Conversation by Hornbeck 19 August 1943; *FRUS*, 1943, China, pp.97-98, Acheson to the Secretary of State, 12 September 1943, pp. 334-335; Feis, *The China Tangle*, pp.87-88. Mao Zedong to Dong Biwu, 5 October 1943, *Zhonggong zhongyang kangri mingzu tongyi zhanxian wenjian xuanbian* (Collection of documents from the CCP central on the anti-Japanese national united front, 中共中央抗日民族统一战线文件选编, hereafter cited as *Kangri minzu*), Beijing: Danan chubanshe, 1986, Vol.3, p.669. Directive of the CCP Center, 18 January 1944, *Zhong yang dang an guan comp. Zhong gong zhong yang wen jian xuan ji* (A Selection of CCP Central Committee Documents, 中共中央文件选集, hereafter cited as *ZZWX*) (Beijing Zhonggong zhongyang danxiaochubanshe 1988), Vol.14, p.156; Mao Zedong to Dong Biwu, 4 February 1944, *Kangri minzu*, Vol.3, p.677; CCP center to its sub-bureaus, 18 January 1944, *ERAD*, p.970. See also, John W. Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937-1945: The Diplomacy of Chinese Nationalism*, Cary, NC, USA: Oxford University Press, 1988, p.250. Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, pp.157-159.

³⁴ Directive from the CCP Center, 18 January 1944, *ZZWX*, Vol.14, p.156; Mao Zedong to Dong Biwu, 4 February 1944, *Kangri minzu*, Vol.3, p.677. Qin Xiaoyi, *Zhonghuaminguo Zhongyao Shiliao Chubian Bianjiweiyuanhui, Zhonghua Minguo Zhongyao Shiliao Chubian--Dui Ri Kangzhanshiqi.* (A Preliminary Collection of Important Historical Materials on the Republic of China, 中华民国重要史料初编) (Taipei: Zhongguo Guomindang Zhongyang Weiyuanhui Dangshi Weiyuanhui, 1981) (here after cited as *ZZSC*), Vol.5(4), pp.261-262.

³⁵ Deng Ye 2011, pp.6-10.

³⁶ John K. Fairbank and Albert Feuerwerker eds, *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 13: Republican China 1912-1949, Part 2, pp.552-554.

³⁷ Chiang Kai-shek's Diary, 4 December 1943, quoted from Deng Ye 2011, p.5.

³⁸ Hans Van De Ven, "Stilwell in the stocks: the Chinese nationalists and the allied powers in the Second World War", *Asian Affairs*, Vol.34, No.3, pp.243-259.

³⁹ Chiang to Roosevelt, 9 December 1943, *FRUS*, 1943, China, p.182. It is interesting to note that the CCP's leader Mao Zedong keenly noticed this change and reached the same conclusion. Mao to Deng Xiaoping, 16 December 1943, *ERAD*, pp.958-859.

⁴⁰ U.S. State Department, *The China White Paper*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1967. (hereafter cited as *China White Paper*) pp.492-494; Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, *Stilwell's Command Problems*, Washington, Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1956(c1955), pp.297-301; Feis, *The China Tangle*, 304-314.

⁴¹ Hans Van De Ven, "Stilwell in the stocks: the Chinese nationalists and the allied powers in the Second World War", p.245.

⁴² In Japanese the operation was also called Tairiku Datsū Sakusen (大陸打通作戦 or "Continent Cross-Through Operation"), while the Chinese refer to it as the Battle of Henan-Hunan-Guangxi (simplified Chinese: 豫湘桂会战). For the Japanese account of the battles, see Boeicho boei kenshujo, *Ichigō Sakusen*, Vol.1-3, Tokyo: Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1967, 1968, 1969.

⁴³ Hara Takeshi, "The Ichigo Offensive", in Mark Peattie, Edward Drea, and Hans van de Ven eds., *The Battle for China: Essays on the Military History of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937-1945*, Stanford University Press 2010, pp.392-402.

⁴⁴ Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, p. 157.

⁴⁵ Mao Zedong to Lin Boqu, 15 May 1944, *ERAD*, pp.991-994; *Zhong gong zhong yang wen xian yan jiu shi* (Literature Study Office of CCPCC, 中共中央文献研究室) eds, *Mao Zedong Nianpu* (The Chronological

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- Biography of Mao Zedong, 毛泽东年谱, hereafter cited as *Mao Nianpu*, Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe,1993,Vol.2, p.512.
- ⁴⁶ *Mao Zedong wenji*, Vol.3, pp.131-134.
- ⁴⁷ *Kangri minzu*, pp.693-696. Deng Ye, p.9.
- ⁴⁸ Wang Shijie rijì, 18 May 1944, 22 May 1944, Vol.4, pp.315-316, pp.317-318. *Kangri minzu*, pp.700-701.
- ⁴⁹ Wang Shijie rijì, 31 May 1944, 3 Jun 1944, Vol.4, p.323, p.325, ZZSC, Vol.5 (4), p.296, p.270.
- ⁵⁰ Lin Boqu, *Lin Boqu Wenji* (Collection of Lin Boqu's writings, 林伯渠文集), Huayi chubanshe,1996, pp.403-404.
- ⁵¹ Reardon-Anderson, *Yenan and the Great Powers*, p.40.
- ⁵² Mao Zedong, *Mao Zedong Wenji* (Collection of Works of Mao Zedong, 毛泽东文集), Renmin chubanshe 1996, Vol.3, p.137.
- ⁵³ Lin Boqu, *Lin Boqu Wenji*, Huayi chubanshe 1996, p.403-404
- ⁵⁴ *Mao Nianpu*, Vol.2, p.516.
- ⁵⁵ Wang Shijie rijì, 5 June 1944, Vol.4, p.326. *Kangri mingzu*, p.709.
- ⁵⁶ Mao Zedong, *Mao Zedong Junshi wenji* (Collections of Mao Zedong's Writings on Military issue, 毛泽东军事文集, here after cited as MMW), Vol.2, p.711, 715.
- ⁵⁷ Mao to Sub-bureaus, 15 July1944, *ERAD*, pp.1006-1007.
- ⁵⁸ Mao Zedong wenji, Vol.3, p.137; See also Zhonggong zhong yang wen xian yan jiu shi(Literature Study Office of CCPCC, 中共中央文献研究室) eds, Ren Bishi Nianpu (The Chronological Biography of Ren Bishi, 任弼时年谱), Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe,1993, p.465. Zhong gong zhong yang wen xian yan jiu shi eds, Liu Shaoqi Nianpu (The Chronological Biography of Liu Shaoqi, 刘少奇年谱, hereafter cited as Liu Nianpu), 1996, p.445.
- ⁵⁹ CCP center on current situation, 25 December 1944, *ERAD*, p.1049.
- ⁶⁰ Ren Bishi Nianpu, p.465, Liu Shaoqi Nianpu, p.445; Peng Zhen Nianpu, Vol.1, p.241; Hu Qiaomu, Hu Qiaomu huiyi Mao Zedong (Hu Qiaomu in memory of Mao Zedong, 胡乔木回忆毛泽东, hereafter cited as Hu Qiaomu) pp.367-368.
- ⁶¹ Zhou Enlai, "Ruhe jie jue(How to Solve, 如何解决)", *Jiefang Ribao*(Liberation Daily, 解放日报), 12 October 1945; *Hu Qiaomu*, p.347, *Mao Nianpu*, Vol.2, pp.568-569.
- ⁶² CCP center's instruction of setting up city work organizations, 4 September 1944, CCP center on current situation, 25 December 1945, ZZWX, Vol.14, p.432, p.433; Hu Qiaomu, p.367,368. Peng Zhen zhuan bianji zu comp, *Peng Zhen Nianpu* (The Chronological Biography of Peng Zhen, 彭真年谱, here after cited as Peng Zhen Nianpu), Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2002, Vol.1, p.241.
- ⁶³ See, Reardon-Anderson, *Yenan and the Great Powers*, p.25.
- ⁶⁴ Lyman P. Van Slyke eds., *The Chinese Communist Movement: A Report of the United States War Department*, July 1945, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1968.
- ⁶⁵ CCP center's Directive, 25 July 1944. ERAD, p.1008; Coordinating with negotiation in Chongqing, the Communist was quite cautious and hesitate to move into Henan, designed not to provoke the Nationalists. However, this situation changed quickly. *Kangri minzu*, p.691; CCP center to CCP North China Bureau, 18 May 1944, ERAD, p.995. N4AD, Vol.4, p.301; Liu Shaoqi, Chen Yi to Zhang Yunyi, 23 June 1945; Chen Yi to Rao Shushi, 9 July 1944; Zhang Yunyi to Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Chen Yi, 11 July 1944; The CCP Centre to Central China Bureay, 25 July 1944. Zheng Weisang to Zhang Yunyi, 3 July, 1944, *N4AD*, pp.303-313; pp.401-407.
- ⁶⁶ CCP center's instruction on March into Henan area, 25 July 1944, CCP military center to Zheng Weisan, Li Xiannian and etc. 14 October 1944, ZZWX, Vol.14, p.293, p.382.
- ⁶⁷ *Wang Enmao rijì*, August 8, 1944.
- ⁶⁸ Wang Zheng, Wang Shoudao, "Yi nanzheng (The Memory of Southward Advancement, 忆南征)", in ERAM, pp.415-441.
- ⁶⁹ CCP center to its Central China Bureau (CCB), 27 September 1944, CCB to Su Yu, Tang Zhenlin, Huang Kecheng and Deng Zihui, 7 November 1944, ZZWX, Vol.14, pp.357-358, pp.405-409;
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- ⁷¹ *Mao Nianpu*, Vol.2, pp.537-538; *Liu Nianpu*, Vol.1, p.454, Su Yu, *Suyu zhanzheng huiyilu*, pp.317.
- ⁷² Reardon-Anderson, *Yenan and the Great Powers*, p.28.
- ⁷³ Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, pp.156-158
- ⁷⁴ *The Stilwell Paper*, p.316.
- ⁷⁵ Reardon-Anderson, *Yenan and the Great Powers*, p.1.
- ⁷⁶ Memorandum by Service, *FRUS*, 1944, Vol.6, China, p.710
- ⁷⁷ Deng Ye, 2011, pp.2-3.
- ⁷⁸ Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937-1945*, 199-204. The Secretary of State to Gauss, 11 April 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, Vol.6 China, p.772.
- ⁷⁹ Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937-1945*, pp. 200-201.
- ⁸⁰ *The China White Paper*, pp.549-555.

- ⁸¹ *The China White Paper*, pp.552-553, p.559.
- ⁸² Madame Chiang to Roosevelt, 27 June 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, Vol., China, p.234.
- ⁸³ Feis, *The China Tangle*, p.149.
- ⁸⁴ Gauss to the Secretary of State, 4 July 1944, 12 July 1944, *FRUS* 1944, China, pp.116-117, p.125-12.;Memorandum by Gauss, 31 August 1944, *ibid*, pp.546-551;The China White Paper 561-562
- ⁸⁵ *The China White Papers*, p.559. Chiang to Roosevelt, 22 February 1944, *ZZSC*, Vol. 3(1), pp.163-164.
- ⁸⁶ *The China White Paper*, p.553-554.
- ⁸⁷ Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, pp.159-160.
- ⁸⁸ *Ibid*.
- ⁸⁹ CCP center's directive on diplomatic works, 18 August 1944, in *ZZWX*, Vol.14, p.573.
- ⁹⁰ Feis, *The China Tangle*, p.192, n.14 and p.316; Albert C. Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!* (New York: Holt, 1958), pp. 333-334; Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, p.142.
- ⁹¹ *The China White Paper*, p.67.
- ⁹² John S. Service, *The Amerasia papers: some problems in the history of US-China relations*, Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, University of California, 1971.
- ⁹³ "Zhongyang guanyu wajiaogongzuo de zhishi" (Directive from the CCP center on diplomatic work), 18 August 1944, *ZZWX*, Vol.14, pp.314-318.
- ⁹⁴ CCP center to Lin, Dong and Wang on government reorganization, 4 September 1944, *ZZWX*, Vol.14, pp.323-324.
- ⁹⁵ Zhou Enlai, "Note to General Stilwell "in Zhou Enlai, Zhou Enlai Junshi wenji (*Collection of Zhou Enlai's Military Writings*), 周恩来军事文集, Vol.2, p.451.
- ⁹⁶ John Service, Report No.3, 30 July,1944, Amerasia Paper, p.705
- ⁹⁷ Reardon-Anderson, *Yenan and the Great Powers*, p.47.
- ⁹⁸ Evidently, Mao and his followers had a different understanding of "democracy" from the Western notion.
- ⁹⁹ Michael Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism*, p. 25.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, and Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, p.164.
- ¹⁰¹ See, Deng Ye, 2011, pp.61-62.
- ¹⁰² Boeicho boei kenshujo, *Ichigō Sakusen: konan no kaisen*. (一号作战. 2:湖南の会戦).
- ¹⁰³ *Mao Nianpu*, Vol.2, pp.524-525.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Wang Shijie riji*, 3 July, 6 July and 14 July 1944, Vol.4, p.378, pp.350-351, p.356. *Kangri minzu*,p.717
- ¹⁰⁵ "Guanyu shiju jingkuang de tongzhi (On Current Situation, 关于时局近况的通知)", 15 July 1944, *ZZWX*,Vol.14, pp.282-285.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Stilwell's Command Problem*, p.380, 399.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Stilwell's Command Problem*, p.383; Feis, *The China Tangle*, p.171.
- ¹⁰⁸ *The China White Paper*, p.560.
- ¹⁰⁹ Xu Yongchang's Diary, 23 July, 1944; Wang Shijie riji, 27 July 1944, Vol.4, p.364.
- ¹¹⁰ Chiang to Roosevelt, 8 July 1944, 12 August 1944, *FRUS China, 1944*, p.121; p.141. *ZZSC*, Vol.3 (3), pp.636, 637...
- ¹¹¹ *Xu Yongchang riji*, 9 July, 13 July, 21 July 1944, pp.463-364, 367-369, p.380.
- ¹¹² Boeicho boei kenshujo, *Ichigō Sakusen*, Hara Takeshi, "The Ichigo Offensive"
- ¹¹³ John W. Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, and 1937-1945: The Diplomacy of Chinese Nationalism*, Cary, NC, USA: Oxford University Press, 1988. p 204.
- ¹¹⁴ Gauss to the Secretary of State, 27 July 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, China, p.136.
- ¹¹⁵ Da gongbao, 3 October 1944, page 2.
- ¹¹⁶ Roosevelt to Chiang 21 August 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, China, p.148, *ZZSC*, Vol.3 (3), pp.636-637.
- ¹¹⁷ Roosevelt to Chiang 16 September 1944, *FRUS*, 1944, China, p.157, *ZZSC*, Vol.3(3), pp.657-658,
- ¹¹⁸ Wang Jianlang, "Xinren deliushi: Cong Jiang Jieshi riji kan kanzhanhouqi zhongmeiguanxi"(Loss of Confidence: Using Chiang Kai-shek's Diary to Look at Sino-American Relations in the Later Period of the Resistance War against Japan, 信任的流失:从蒋介石日记看抗战后期的中美关系), *Minguo dang'an*, 2009, No.3; pp. 107-105
- ¹¹⁹ *ZZSC*, Vol.3 (3), pp.673-774; pp.675-676.
- ¹²⁰ *FRUS* 1944, China, pp.166-170. *ZZSC*, Vol.3, p.676.
- ¹²¹ *ZZSC*, Vol.3, pp.677-678. *Stilwell's Command Problems*, pp.468-469.
- ¹²² Barbara Wertheim Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China, 1911-45*. Macmillan 1971.
- ¹²³ *ZZSC*, Vol.5 (4), p.274. Wang Shijie riji, 4 August 1944, Vol.4, p.371.
- ¹²⁴ *The China White Paper*, p.542.
- ¹²⁵ *Mao Nianpu*, Vol.2, p.533, 534.
- ¹²⁶ Lin Boqu wenji, p.406-411.
- ¹²⁷ Wang Shijie riji, 30 August 1944, pp.389-390.
- ¹²⁸ Deng Ye, 2011, p.34.
- ¹²⁹ John K. Fairbank and Albert Feuerwerker, *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol.13, pp.580-591.
- ¹³⁰ Tang Tsou, *The America Failure in China*, p.170.
- ¹³¹ *The Cambridge History of China*, pp.572-575, pp.583-592. See also Deng Ye.2011.
- ¹³² Lin, Dong and Wang to Mao, June 5, 1944, *Kangri minzu*, p.707.
- ¹³³ Nonetheless, when nearly every political conscious people were talking about democracy, there was no serious

- discussion on the true meaning of the word, and most importantly how to bring it to China. Wen Liming, *Disanzhong liliang yu kanzhan houqi zhongguo zhengzhi* (The Third Force and Chinese Politics in Anti-Japanese War period 第三种力量与抗战时期的中国政治), Shanghai shudian ,2004.
- ¹³⁴ *The Cambridge History of China*, p.706.
- ¹³⁵ Deng Ye,2011, pp.37-39. For those people's arguments and activities, see, Zhongguo mingzhu tongmeng zhongyang wenshi ziliao weiyuanhui(中国民主同盟中央文史资料委员会)comp. Zhongguo mingzhu tongmeng lishi wenxian(中国民主同盟历史文献), Wenshi ziliao chubanshe, 1983.,pp.32-37. See also, Weng, *Disanzhong liliang*. For students movements see also, *Xinminzhu zhuyi geming shiqi tongshi*, pp.220-224.
- ¹³⁶ *The Cambridge History of China*, pp.707-713.
- ¹³⁷ Wang Jianlang , "Xinren deliushi", pp. 107-105
- ¹³⁸ Reardon-Anderson, *Yan'an and the Great Powers*, p.32.
- ¹³⁹ Niu Jun, From Yan'an to the World, p.154.
- ¹⁴⁰ The CCP CC to Lin Boqu, Dong Biwu, and Wang Ruofei, 4 September 1944,ZZWX,Vol.14,pp.323-324. Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, pp.160-161.
- ¹⁴¹ *Mao Nianpu*, Vol.2, pp.533-534.
- ¹⁴² *Mao Nianpu*,Vol.2, p.536; Zhong gong zhong yang wen xian yan jiu shi eds, *Zhou Enlai nian pu*(The Chronological Biography of Zhou Enlai 周恩来年谱 1898-1949). (Beijing: Ren min chu ban she: Zhong yang wen xian chu ban she, 1989.)(Here after Zhou Nianpu), p.593 Deng Ye,2011,p.14
- ¹⁴³ Zhou Nianpu, p.593.
- ¹⁴⁴ CCP center to Lin, Dong and Wang, 4 September 1944, ZZWX, Vol.14, p.323.
- ¹⁴⁵ *Mao Nianpu*, Vol.2, p.536.
- ¹⁴⁶ CCP Center to Dong Biwu and Wang Ruofei, 4 September 1944, *Kangri minzu*, p.738.
- ¹⁴⁷ For instance, Jiefang Ribao, 4 July 1944. See Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism*, p.96.
- ¹⁴⁸ *The China White Paper*,pp. 561-562
- ¹⁴⁹ FRUS 1944 China, pp.116-117.p.125-126.
- ¹⁵⁰ *The China White Paper*, p.563. FRUS 1944, China, p.142.
- ¹⁵¹ Amerasia, 20 April 1945, quoted from *Yenan and the Great Powers*, p.45.
- ¹⁵² Nanfanju Dangshi ziliao zhengji xiaozu eds, *Nanfanju dangshi ziliao: dashiji*(Events of the CCP South China Bureau,南方局党史资料 大事记), p.241.
- ¹⁵³ *Mao Nianpu*,Vol.2,p.539; Zhou Nianpu,p.594; Dong Biwu Nianpu, p.209.
- ¹⁵⁴ *Mao Nianpu*,Vol.2, p.544
- ¹⁵⁵ *Nanfanju dashiji*, p.242. Dong Biwu Nianpu, p.213
- ¹⁵⁶ *Mao Nianpu*, Vol.2, p.545. *Nanfanju dashiji*, p. 242.
- ¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p.242.
- ¹⁵⁸ Jiefang Ribao, 22 September 1944; Dong Biwu's Report, 24 September 1944, *Kangri minzu*,p.761; Lin Boqu's report on People's Political Council, 15 September 1944, ZZWX, Vol.14,p.334.
- ¹⁵⁹ See Deng Ye, 2011, pp.35-36.
- ¹⁶⁰ Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*. pp.160-161.
- ¹⁶¹ See, Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, pp.160-161.
- ¹⁶² *Mao Nianpu*, Vol.2, p.547.
- ¹⁶³ Zhou Enlai, *Ruhe jie jue* (How to solve, 如何解决) 10 October 1944, in ZZWX, Vol.14, pp.364-365; Jiefang ribao, 12 October 1944.
- ¹⁶⁴ Mao Zedong wenji (Collection of Mao's Writing),Vol.3 pp.214-215; Lin Boqu to Wang Shijie and Zhang Zhizhong, 13 October 1944, ZZWX, Vol.14, pp.373-375.
- ¹⁶⁵ Xinhua ribao,10 October 1944, See also, Tang Zong, p.493, 16 Feb. 1945.
- ¹⁶⁶ Mao Zedong zai qida de baogao he jianghuaji, (Collected reports and addresses of Mao Zedong at the Seventh National Congress of the CCP, 毛泽东在七大的报告和讲话集),p.101.
- ¹⁶⁷ Mao Zedong zai qida de baogao he jianghuaji, p.101.
- ¹⁶⁸ *Mao Nianpu* Vol.2, p.546-547.
- ¹⁶⁹ Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, *Stilwell's Mission to China*, Washington, Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1956(c1955)part 2, pp.383-387,413-418,422.
- ¹⁷⁰ CCP Centre to Lin Boqu, 9 September 1944.
- ¹⁷¹ Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, p.168.
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- ¹⁷³ Wang Shijie riji, 13 October, 19 October 1944, Vol.4, p.420, pp.425-426.
- ¹⁷⁴ Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, p. 168. Mao Nianpu, Vol.2, p.551-552.
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Chapter 2.

Sino-Soviet Treaty, Japanese Surrender and the Chongqing Talk

As the Japanese Empire ebbed, the rivalry over the future of China reached a critical stage. Neither Chongqing nor Yan'an was well prepared for the new situation caused by the "sudden" surrender of the Japanese. Meanwhile, the Soviet-American division of spheres of influence in China at Yalta and their direct intervention around Japanese surrender, especially their strong military presence, exerted unprecedented pressures on the political development of China. An immediate civil war was postponed while the KMT regained the initiative on domestic struggles. However, both the KMT and the CCP did not passively accept the peace that great powers imposed on them but managed to continue their own political course.

From Yalta to Moscow

Ever since the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, Chiang Kai-shek was in constant fear about the possibility that Moscow might reap a third party's benefit. After the Cairo Conference, as the American leaders became more and more active in seeking Soviet participation in the war against Japan, the Generalissimo saw his fears materializing. The looming re-emergence of the Soviet Union as a major power in the Far East greatly troubled him.¹

Besides the consideration of inter-state relations, the KMT leaders had also long been considering the possibility of solving the CCP problem through an accommodation with Moscow. However, the Nationalist leaders were still hesitant to grant compromise to the Soviets directly. This reluctance reflected the strong force of the nationalistic mood in China. Indeed, As Garver suggested, a central aspect of the

political contest between the KMT and the CCP was a struggle for nationalistic legitimacy. Both the Nationalists and the Communists were afraid that they would be seen as betraying the nation by putting narrow partisan or ideological interests above the collective interests of the nation. The swelling tide of Chinese nationalism meant that to concede to the Soviets' requirements would seriously damage the KMT's fragile domestic legitimacy claim.²

To get out of the dilemma, the Nationalist leaders, who were still reluctant to adjust their domestic policy, made every attempt to drag the U.S. government into their bargaining with the Soviets. They hoped Washington would act as a mediator and check the Soviets' ambitions. Nonetheless, the Americans adopted a rather ambivalent attitude towards Sino-Soviet interactions. Besides hollow rhetoric, they offered few, if any, substantial assistance for Chongqing during its bargaining process with the Soviets. The hesitation of the Nationalist government delayed the negotiation process several times. As time ran out, the Soviets finished their military preparation and then impose an agreement upon China.

Chongqing's efforts to enlist American support

In the Spring 1945, the leading Allies signed a secret agreement concerning China during the Crimean conference at Yalta. The United States and Great Britain had agreed to give Soviet Russia certain privileges in the Far East, as a reward for Soviet entry into the war against Japan, and Moscow's goodwill towards Chiang. Domestic considerations required that Chiang Kai-shek feigned surprise and outrage at the Big Three's secret deal at Yalta. However, as Westad and other historians have clearly revealed, the result of the Yalta conference did not come as a true shock to the Generalissimo.³ In fact, it had become clear to Chiang and other Nationalist leaders in the late 1944 via different sources that Washington and Moscow were discussing the conditions for Soviet entry into the war.⁴

Geopolitical factors decreed that any Soviet advance in the Far East would have to be accomplished at the expense of China. A review of Sino-Russian relations since

1895 shows that serious friction had existed regarding Manchuria, Mongolia, Xinjiang, and other border areas. The situation would turn even more complicated as the Soviets Red Army would occupy some Chinese territory. What the Nationalist leaders feared most, however, was a possible CCP-Soviet collaboration in northern China and a ring of satellite states controlled by Moscow in northeast Asia, including Manchuria.⁵

To avoid such a scenario, a group of KMT officials suggested that their party must revitalize its military effort to expedite an early victory over Japan. In that case, at the very least, they might achieve a better bargaining position.⁶ Some of them also argued for a political settlement with the Communists as soon as possible.⁷ Otherwise, these people argued, the consequences might be even more catastrophic for their regime.⁸

Neither of these two options, however, was favored by Chiang Kai-shek. A political settlement with the CCP was not an option, except if the deal could be obtained on his own terms. Meanwhile, he did not refuse to consider the possibility of reaching a compromise with Moscow to win its assistance. He also showed great interest in the pursuit of a Sino-Soviet settlement via the Americans. In fact, mediation of Washington was an indispensable component of his strategy as he expected that the Americans would check Soviet demands and thereby ensure a suitable deal for him.⁹

When Wallace visited Chongqing in late June 1944, Chiang Kai-shek had already expressed his readiness to improve relations with Moscow if Washington would agree to provide assistance. He received no encouragement from Wallace, however. Instead, American officials repeatedly encouraged Chiang to reach a working agreement with Yan'an, which in their eyes would support Chongqing's negotiations with Moscow. While avoiding entanglement with the Chinese-Soviet difficulties, the U.S. government showed greater interests in finding a solution to the KMT-CCP rancor.¹⁰

Chongqing also made certain efforts to improve its relations with Moscow in the fall of 1944. The openly anti-Soviet proclamations of the KMT press abated while the Nationalist leaders met with Soviet diplomats frequently. In October, Soviet

officials proposed a summit between Stalin and Chiang Kai-shek. Right when his relations with Washington were in severe trouble over the Stilwell incident, however, Chiang declined Stalin's invitation, as he suspected that it was Stalin's plot to estrange the already strained Sino-American relations. Moreover, he feared that the Soviets might take advantage of the military debacle in China to impose more demands upon him.¹¹ Whatever his reasons, "Chiang's refusal to meet with Stalin meant that the terms of future Sino-Soviet relations would be negotiated not between Chiang and Stalin, but between Roosevelt and Stalin at Yalta."¹²

On the other side, Moscow still viewed Chiang as the man best able to protect their interests in the Far East. While promoting the coalition government program in Europe, the Soviets generally kept a distance from the debates on a coalition government in China.¹³ Henceforth, the Soviets leaders continued to raise their invitations to Chiang.

Meanwhile, Chongqing strengthened its efforts to circumvent Washington's reluctance to get involved. After Hurley took charge of the U.S. embassy in November 1944, the Nationalist leaders believed they had found the right person to present their views to Washington.¹⁴ On February 2, 1945, Chiang and T.V. Soong informed Hurley that Moscow had proposed Soong's visit to Moscow in late February. They appealed for Washington's full cooperation in this deal and asked the ambassador to deliver their "tentative agenda" of the meeting to Washington. According to the document, Soong would discuss with Stalin the Soviets' entry into the war against Japan as well as border disputes between the two countries.¹⁵ Noticeably, it intentionally bypassed the key problem in the Chinese-Soviet relationship, the Soviet attitude toward the KMT-CCP cleavage.¹⁶

Hurley was eager to push forward a peaceful unification in China on terms favorable to the Nationalists while minimizing the Soviets threat to Chongqing. He also believed a rapprochement between Moscow and Chongqing was vital to a solution of China's internal problem, as it would destroy the CCP's hope of obtaining Soviet assistance. Nonetheless, officials in Washington remained skeptical. As no KMT-CCP working agreement had been achieved, they believed it was still not an

opportune time for Sino-Soviet negotiation.¹⁷ Thus, in reply to Hurley, Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew reminded Hurley that the U.S. government's policy was not to "take it upon ourselves to place a caveat upon or to sponsor discussion of any particular question" between Chongqing and Moscow.¹⁸ He also asked Hurley to follow the President's earlier communication with Chiang, which called for a KMT-CCP settlement prior to any Sino-Soviet conference.¹⁹

As Liu Xiaoyuan suggested, some subtle differences existed among the programs of Hurley, Chiang, and the U.S. State Department. Hurley's policy rested on the assumption that the CCP would have to come to terms with Chongqing because Moscow would support the Nationalist government and American policy in China. Like Hurley, Chiang placed high expectations on the Soviets. However, if too many concessions were granted to the Soviets, it would endanger his party's domestic position. Thus, Chiang turned to Washington as he expected that the Americans would help him to constrain Soviet demands. Meanwhile, the Department of State still expected that Soviet influence in China would be contained only by the establishment of political and military unity in China. They emphatically insisted that Chiang should achieve an early reconciliation with the Communists. Their warning to Chongqing was clear: The Soviets have to come into the war, and you should get your own house in order beforehand.²⁰

Nevertheless, Chiang's vested domestic interests made him reluctant to implement reforms advocated by the Americans. As the Americans declined to mediate, Chiang turned more hesitant to strike a deal with Moscow.²¹ Frustrated by Chongqing, Stalin also changed his tactic to seek American acquiescence to his demands.²² Soong's visit was postponed.²³

Besides Chongqing's hesitation, however, a Sino-Soviet negotiation failed to take place in early 1945 also because of President Roosevelt's conduct of great power diplomacy at Yalta. The desperate military situation in China pushed President Roosevelt to reformulate his strategy for East Asia at Yalta. He tried to reach a "thoroughgoing understanding" with Stalin on both military and political problems in the region. The agreement between the two leaders was designed as a quid pro quo

device in which Moscow committed itself to participating in the Pacific war while, in return, the status quo of Outer Mongolia would be maintained (without any definition of that term) while the former Tsarist right to control the Chinese Eastern (中东路) and the South Manchurian railroads (南满铁路) would be partially restored to the Soviet government in the form of Soviet-Chinese joint management. Roosevelt also volunteered to convey these conditions to Chongqing when the Soviet Red Army was ready for the war in Asia. Only in the matter of the Soviets requirement of a warm-water port did the two leaders articulate different ideas. Through these concessions, Roosevelt hoped, he would help to transform the Soviets into an imposing cornerstone of a new postwar order in East Asia. ²⁴

The paramount considerations impelling the Americans to conclude the Yalta agreement were undoubtedly military in nature. Nevertheless, for Roosevelt, the Yalta deal was also aimed at obtaining Moscow's cooperation with the KMT in dealing with Yan'an. Not only did the American leaders accept the military necessity of the Soviets interventions in the Far East, but they also tended to recognize Moscow as an important partner in assisting America's political efforts in China. Thus, Roosevelt was willing to meet Stalin's demands to bring about a Sino-Soviet rapprochement, to obtain Soviet support for the Nationalist government, and to ward off Soviet interference in Chinese domestic politics. ²⁵ Therefore, in his eyes, the KMT regime was paying a reasonable price in Manchuria and Outer Mongolia, not merely for Soviet participation in the war but also for Moscow's much-needed goodwill in China's internal affairs.²⁶ All of these reflected the Soviet's (re)emerging influence in the region and America's frustration in implementing its China policy.

It was an idea which Nationalist leaders in Chongqing found difficult to accept, as the price was too high for you. Before receiving the precise contents of the agreement, China's tragic experience throughout its modern diplomatic history haunted them.²⁷ In the two months following the Yalta conference, Chiang and his colleagues learned bit by bit what the Soviets and the Americans had agreed.²⁸ As the terms of the deal gradually became clear, Chiang mulled his diplomatic response.

He had two options: mobilizing American pressure to balance the Soviets, and making certain concessions to Moscow. In fact, Chiang vacillated back and forth between the two options and, at times, simultaneously implemented both of them.²⁹ On some occasions, Chiang tried to uncouple the Soviet Union and the United States, while drawing the Americans into the negotiations to check the Soviets. Although provoking Soviet-American tensions might increase the risk that Moscow would support the CCP or refuse to withdraw from Manchuria, it also increased the probability that if either of these occurred, the Americans would squarely back Chiang and force Soviet compliance, he strongly expected.³⁰

Meanwhile, the Generalissimo, who was reluctant to initiate domestic reform or to compromise with the Communists, still try to win the goodwill of the Soviets and disrupt the Moscow-Yan'an linkage. For this goal, Chiang was ready to make some generous concessions to Moscow. From his perspective, one of the most important concessions Chongqing could make concerned its general diplomatic orientation in the postwar world. Moscow clearly desired friendly neighboring states in the emerging bipolar system. As Soviet-American tension rose, the KMT leaders expected China's non-participation in any future American anti-Soviet bloc would be valuable to Moscow.³¹ Their various inner-circle discussions revealed clearly that they were not passive "late comers of the Cold War" as Westad suggested, but that they did anticipate the looming Soviet-American rivalry and tried to exploit it.³²

Meanwhile, the Soviets were still in pursuit of an earlier negotiation with the Nationalist. Stalin told Roosevelt at Yalta that T.V. Soong could come to Moscow in late April. However, before detecting the precise terms of the Yalta agreement and America's true intentions, Chiang preferred to keep his options open and therefore avoided talking with Moscow. In fact, as the war in Europe came to its end, it was also not in the Soviet interest to rush into a final agreement with the Chinese government. It would be more convenient for them to postpone the talks to a moment when they could summon enough military and diplomatic leverage in the Far East to impose their will on Chongqing. The talks between the two states were delayed again.

As Moscow renounced its treaty of neutrality with Japan on April 5, 1945, its

entry into the war became imminent. Hurley finally disclosed the main contents of the Yalta agreement to Chiang on May 22, and the sense of crisis in Chongqing intensified. ³³The Generalissimo initiated another round of efforts to attract American involvement.

The U. S. -Soviet relationship did come under close review after the new president took office in Washington. In the few months after the Yalta Conference, Soviet actions in Eastern Europe, particularly in Poland, deeply disturbed the American leaders. However, their commitments at Yalta were not yet relinquished as the War Department still estimated that only at an unacceptable cost of American lives could they defeat Japan. Therefore, Washington had to rely on Soviet assistance to defeat Tokyo at an early date. Even the successful development of Atomic bombs did not change their appreciation. ³⁴

In fact, what the Americans could do was also limited. In retrospect, it was fairly clear that the Soviets' decision to enter the war and the timing of their entry would be made with little regard to any political action taken by Washington. Meanwhile, it was beyond the capability of U.S. troops to gain a prior entry to Manchuria, and it was impossible for them to prevent the Soviets from entering the war at a time of their own choosing. Therefore, in American decision makers' eyes, the concessions made to the Soviets at Yalta were those "which are within the military power of Russian to obtain regardless of the United States military action short of war."³⁵ As Washington still did not abandon its objective of unconditional Japanese surrender at an early date, a complete understanding with the Soviets on the Far East remained necessary. ³⁶

Thus, growing concern about Soviet intentions in Europe led to no major change in America's strategy in Asia and the secret Yalta accords remained intact. The main outcome of Washington's policy review in mid-May was to ask Stalin to clarify his position regarding China's sovereignty and China's domestic politics. ³⁷In an effort to stem the erosion of Soviet-American cooperation, Harry Hopkins went to Moscow as the new president's special representative on May 28. He met with Stalin and exchanged ideas with the Soviet leader on Far East problems. Stalin promised that

his armies would be in position by August 8, 1945. He also assured Hopkins that Moscow did not intend to alter the sovereignty of any part of China, including Manchuria, and that he had no territorial claims to China, in either Xinjiang or any other places. Instead, Stalin promised, Moscow would help the Chinese to achieve unity and he believed Chiang Kai-shek would be the one to undertake unification successfully. In the end, the two sides agreed that the question of the Yalta Agreement should be raised by the Soviets with T.V. Soong during his planned visit to Moscow.³⁸The Hopkins mission to Moscow only proved that the Yalta understanding was still intact. ³⁹

Chiang had keenly noticed the urgency for closer relations with Moscow. However, he was still hesitant to strike a deal with either Moscow or Yan'an. Around that time, the Generalissimo had still not received the full text of the Yalta agreement. If the Soviet price was too high, Chiang still expected to use American pressure to moderate Soviet terms. On June 8, immediately before Hopkins' visit to Moscow, Chiang asked T.V. Soong to seek help from Hopkins to secure Stalin's assurance of his China policy. ⁴⁰To test the American stance, Chiang also instructed Soong to inquire as to the possibility of U.S. military operations in Manchuria. He even proposed an American presence at Port Arthur through an arrangement of a multinational naval base. However, when T.V. Soong communicated these ideas to Truman on June 9, the new U.S. President only let him read a copy of the Yalta Far Eastern arrangement. Truman also added that his government would uphold the agreement left by Roosevelt.⁴¹

Truman's rebuff demonstrated the futility of Chiang's ploy. Chiang quickly changed his mind and instructed Soong two days later that he must not mention to anyone again the plan regarding American participation in those air and naval bases at Lushun (旅顺, Port Arthur). ⁴² Chiang also emphasized that the use of the term "lease", which would certainly offend Chinese public feelings, was unacceptable and that it would be best for Chinese, themselves, rather than the Americans to raise the issue with the Soviet Union. As the Americans were still unwilling to challenge Moscow, Chiang believed, it would be counterproductive to antagonize Moscow and

it was better for him to uncouple Sino-Soviet and Sino-American relations.⁴³

Chiang finally learned the exact contents of the Yalta agreement via Hurley on June 15. He also received a copy of a memorandum from Truman specifying additional guarantees given by Stalin to Hopkins on May 28. According to the memo, Stalin promised to do everything he could to promote China's unification under Chiang's leadership. The Soviet leader also renounced any territorial claims in Xinjiang and Manchuria, and agreed to facilitate the reestablishment of Chinese administration in the latter.⁴⁴ Stalin's sweeping promises were the best result that Chang could expect. He was now ready to offer some concessions to Stalin.⁴⁵

Nonetheless, Chiang habitually resorted to his traditional barbarian management tactics at first.⁴⁶ He knew very well that China alone could not stand up to Moscow and he still needed the United States involvements as a counterweight to Soviet pressures. In June 1945, Chiang and Soong initiated another round of diplomatic efforts to commit the American government to a joint military occupation of southern Manchuria and an international governance of Port Arthur. Chiang even suggested to Hurley that the projected bilateral negotiations between China and the Soviet Union should be enlarged into a quadruple conference with the participation of the Americans and the British.⁴⁷

Dealing with the Soviets, however, the KMT leaders used different rhetoric. The new Soviet ambassador, Appolon A. Petrov, arrived in Chongqing on April 30.⁴⁸ Chiang received him on May 8 and formally proposed a Sino-Soviet talk during their conversation. He suggested that the war against Japan provided a "second chance" for close Chinese-Soviet cooperation. He also emphasized to Petrov that the problems concerning China and the Soviet Union should be discussed directly by the Chinese and Soviet governments, while America's consent or objection did not really matter.⁴⁹ If Moscow would help China recover Manchuria, Chiang added, his government was willing to grant railway rights, commercial ports, and joint use of air and naval bases to the Soviets.⁵⁰

The two met again on June 12, three days before Chiang received from Hurley

the full text of the Yalta Agreement. In this meeting, Petrov advanced five preconditions for the conclusion of a Sino-Soviet treaty, following the Yalta Agreement's arrangement. If Chiang accepted these requirements, Petrov said, his government was prepared to start negotiation immediately. In reply, Chiang's objection centered on the use of "lease" of Lushun, arguing this word could not be used because it implied national humiliation and disgrace among Chinese people. He left unstated that the use of this term would rouse charges that he and his regime had betrayed the nation.⁵¹

On June 15, soon after receiving the concrete text of the Yalta Agreement from Hurley, Chiang met with the Soviet ambassador again and informed him that the United States' conditions had been received, indicating that Washington would act as an intermediary in the negotiations.⁵² Apparently, after attempting to moderate Soviet demands by distancing him from Washington for several days, Chiang tried again to moderate Soviet demands by stressing the American role in the negotiations. Chiang's two-pronged maneuver with the Americans and the Soviets did not reflect any fundamental readjustment of his foreign policy orientation. His desire to win American support for his dealings with the Russians was more fundamental. His rhetoric for cultivating Soviet goodwill was merely an opportunistic tactic, as he was not hesitant to try anything that might reduce Soviet demands.⁵³

Lacking the power to reject the Soviet-American accord, the KMT leaders were forced to haggle over the details of the Yalta Agreement. They tried hard to get from the Americans interpretations of the terms of the Yalta Agreement. In particular, they were anxious to clarify three issues. Firstly, the "lease" of Port Arthur was unacceptable for them, and China could only agree to some international or Sino-Soviet joint utilization of that port. Secondly, the statement of "maintaining the status quo in Outer Mongolia" in the Yalta accord was not clear yet. The Nationalist government hoped it could be excluded from the upcoming negotiations at Moscow. Thirdly, Chiang also tried to clarify the vague wording in the Yalta accord about Soviet "preeminent interests" in Manchurian railroads, as well as "internationalization"

of the port of Dalian (大连). Nonetheless, all of these overtures were made in vain. After confirming to each other their commitment at Yalta, neither Washington nor Moscow was willing to change their accord for the sake of China.⁵⁴

When the door was closed in Washington for Chongqing's scheme to alter the American commitment at Yalta, the KMT leaders had to proceed with difficult bargaining. Noticeably, when assembling his delegation for the mission to Moscow, Chiang excluded some China's seasoned diplomats, Ambassador V. K. Wellington Koo (顾维钧) for instance. In fact, the Generalissimo had twice exchanged ideas with Koo in March 1945 on the coming bargaining with Moscow.⁵⁵ Koo suggested two ways for Chongqing to avoid diplomatic humiliation. One was to "temporize": Chongqing should ignore the Yalta Agreement and delay Soong's mission to Moscow in the hope that Japan could be defeated before the Soviet entry into the war. The other was to bring the CCP into the government, which would put Yan'an in a position to share with the KMT the burden for whatever decisions it made in relation to Moscow. It would also reassure Stalin about Chiang's goodwill and thus persuade the Soviets leader to retreat from his demands at Yalta. Through these measures, Koo hoped, the KMT regime would be able to reduce its dependence on Washington and defend its national interests.⁵⁶

However, these were suggestions Chiang would not accept. He needed the Sino-Soviet negotiation to achieve some political understanding with Stalin and he was ready to pay the price for this urgent need. The ideas of Koo and Chiang constitute a revealing contrast. The former was a diplomat who had spent his career trying to restore China to its full nationhood. The latter was a politician who had reached his paramount position following a road filled with ruthless *realpolitik* tactics. While Chiang's principal concern was to secure foreign support in his struggle against domestic opponents, Koo did not want to compromise China's sovereignty for political expedience.⁵⁷

Ironically, Stalin also expressed the hope that Koo should be excluded from the delegation.⁵⁸ Given Chiang's political maneuvering, Koo would have been an irrelevant envoy, and with Stalin's territorial ambitions in China, Koo would have

been a tough negotiation opponent. Symbolically, the rejection of Koo by both Chiang and Stalin foreshadowed the course and results of the Moscow negotiations.⁵⁹

The Moscow Treaty

On June 30, 1945, T. V. Soong and his retinue landed in Moscow to start his mission. He and his companions made a valiant effort to limit Soviet demands in the coming weeks.⁶⁰ The negotiations at Moscow were divided into two rounds separated by the Potsdam Conference. The first round extended from June 30 until July 13, the second from August 7 to 14. It took thirteen difficult sessions for the two sides to conclude their negotiations.⁶¹

At this stage, Moscow probably could not have been prevented by any other force from taking what it wanted in East Asia. Yet, the Soviets still needed a formal arrangement with Chongqing to legitimize their gains. Stalin had expected the talks would conclude within a week, so that he could go to Potsdam to deal with the Americans.⁶² However, negotiations were protracted as the Chinese retreated from their original stance only bit by bit. Nonetheless, soon after the second round of the negotiations resumed, the Soviets initiated their offensive in Manchuria, depriving Chongqing any say.

Preparing for the negotiation, the greatest concerns of the Nationalist leaders were the problems of Lushun and Dalian. However, contrary to mainstream narratives, it was the issue of Outer Mongolia, rather than that of Manchuria, which was the main obstacle to the talks at Moscow. As the first formal session commenced, Soong suggested that the Outer Mongolia problem should be placed “in abeyance”, but his suggestion provoked a long rebuttal from Stalin, who claimed that his country must emerge from the war with a strengthened position against Japan and he insisted on the outright independence of Outer Mongolia. Stalin ended by threatening that unless this issue was settled no agreement would be possible.⁶³

Apparently, Chongqing and Moscow had different interpretations of the “status quo” of Outer Mongolia. Soong suggested that China should retain “suzerainty” while

it could continue allowing a high degree of autonomy for the region. If so, Chongqing would not have to “recognize” the independence of Outer Mongolia. However, Stalin made it clear during the second and third sessions on July 2 and 7, respectively, that the Chinese position was unacceptable to him. According to his interpretation, the insertion of the words “the Mongolian People’s Republic” in parenthesis after the phrase “the status quo in Outer Mongolia” in the Yalta Agreement indicated the independence of Outer Mongolia. He thus rejected Chiang’s interpretation of the “status quo”. Stalin adduced reasons of Soviet national security to require Chinese recognition of Outer Mongolia’s independence. He also made it clear that this issue was linked directly to their acceptance of the KMT’s demands regarding Manchuria and the CCP.⁶⁴

Stalin’s price for Soviet entry into the war was much higher than Soong anticipated. He did not retreat, however. Soong emphasized that China could not agree to the cession of territory, that recognition of the independence of Outer Mongolia would complicate the question of Tibet, and even that the Chinese government might fall as its various opponents would charge them with “selling national territory”. Besides its great geopolitical importance, for most Chinese people, both Inner and Outer Mongolia were an unquestionable part of the territorial expanse of China. It was something deeply ingrained in the public consciousness. To relinquish such a massive tract of territory must seriously weaken the KMT’s claim of the right to represent Chinese nationalism. If the Nationalists ceded Outer Mongolia at this time, they would lose the popular support which they now desperately needed.⁶⁵

Domestic considerations thus prevent the Nationalists from easily recognizing Outer Mongolia’s independence. This issue soon became a sensitive issue inside the KMT leadership. On the one hand, to relinquish the legal title to a large piece of territory was unpalatable to any Chinese who had been inculcated with a deep sense of national humiliation over China’s loss of territory and rights to the Western powers. On the other hand, the Nationalist leaders were also realistic enough to recognize the inevitability of the independence and tried to obtain more from the compromise with the Soviets. As John Garver suggested, Soong’s spirited defense of China’s legal title

was also a tactic to strengthen his bargaining position on other issues.⁶⁶

On July 5, Chiang convened a high-level emergency meeting to discuss the Moscow talks, especially the Mongolian issue. Opinions expressed by the participants were diverse but they finally decided to conditionally accept Stalin's demands regarding Outer Mongolia.⁶⁷ After all, in their eyes, the region had long been controlled by the Soviets while China's claim to it was only an "empty name". The stakes were too high for Chongqing to allow the Moscow talk to collapse at the first sign of frustration. Without an agreement to constrain the Soviets, they worried, the Red Army might seize not only Manchuria, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia, but part of northern China as well. It would be unwise, as Chiang wrote in his diary entry that day, to risk "national calamities" (Communist rebellion supported by the Soviet Union) for the sake of "mere formality" (China's nominal sovereignty over Outer Mongolia).⁶⁸

Meanwhile, T. V. Soong tried again to win support from Ambassador Harriman at Moscow.⁶⁹ On July 6, Chiang's instruction arrived. Soong was authorized to make concession to the Soviets on Mongolia, provided that the agreement would induce the Soviets to support Chongqing's position with regard to Manchuria, Xinjiang, and the CCP. ⁷⁰ Especially regarding the CCP problem, Chiang suggested that the Communists would have to submit completely to the military and civil orders of the central government. Some CCP leaders could be taken into the cabinet, but there absolutely would not be a "coalition government". Chiang elaborated his third and certainly his most important condition in the following words:

*The Chinese government sincerely hopes that the Soviet government will give all its material and moral support to the central government and that any assistance given to China should be confined to the central government.*⁷¹

If all these requirements were met, Chiang said, he was willing to "voluntarily settle" the problem of Outer Mongolia. After the war, a plebiscite could be conducted and if the vote favored independence, the ROC's National Assembly could then be petitioned to recognize it.⁷² Soon thereafter, Chiang also dispatched two more orders to the delegation, asking them not to go further than this "maximum sacrifice".

Apparently, Chiang still anxious whether the deal with the Soviets could be attained at a reasonable price.⁷³

When the session on July 7 started. Soong tried once again to reason with Stalin before making a deal over Outer Mongolia. This time, he changed to another line, contending that by giving up such a large territory, the KMT regime would collapse under the pressure of internal opposition. As in his words,

*Any Chinese government that signs an agreement ceding Outer Mongolia cannot continue to survive... Our government does not believe that it can continue to survive if it recognizes Outer Mongolian independence. Even China's most extreme liberals adamantly oppose giving independence to Outer Mongolia.*⁷⁴

Nonetheless, Stalin was unmoved. Instead, he reassured Soong that even the CCP would not be able to overthrow the central government if the latter concluded an alliance with him. The two sides parted coldly that night.⁷⁵

Meanwhile, although he had already ordered Soong to concede on Outer Mongolia, Chiang still believed American involvement would be helpful, at least for other unsettled issues. He also expected that Washington would support at least China's nominal suzerainty over Outer Mongolia.⁷⁶ Thus, on July 8, Chiang summoned Hurley and asked him to inform Truman the "maximum concessions" he was prepared to make to Stalin.⁷⁷ What's more, Chiang said, if the U.S. president had any opinion regarding the ongoing Sino-Soviet negotiations, he would be glad to hear.⁷⁸ Nearly at the same time, T.V. Soong also sought help from Harriman at Moscow.⁷⁹ What emerged was a pattern of the combination of a willingness to conciliate Moscow and the mobilization of U.S. intervention.

However, Truman rejected again the Chinese invitation. On July 4, he told Harriman that Washington would not act as an interpreter on any part of the Yalta agreements in connection with the Moscow talks.⁸⁰ On July 8, Harriman informed Soong that Washington could do little for the Chinese in their negotiations with the Russians. As Harriman confessed, his government's own intention to occupy islands near Japan prevented Washington from assisting China to resist the Soviet demands of Port Arthur. He also suggested that Chongqing could allow the Russians to participate

in the administration of Dalian and the railroads. He exhorted Soong that the current task of Chongqing was to establish an accord with Moscow that would impose legal restraint on the Soviets.⁸¹ Soong quickly recognized that further stumbling over Outer Mongolia would not improve his bargaining position.

The impasse over Outer Mongolia ended two days later. When the talks resumed on July 9, Soong presented concessions. He opened the session by stressing the magnitude of the “greatest sacrifice” that his government was now prepared to make for the sake of “eternal peace” between China and the Soviet Union. Chongqing would “permit” independence of Outer Mongolia after Japan’s surrender. In return, his government asked Moscow to support its stand on several issues, Xinjiang and the CCP for instance. Without adequate compensation, Soong emphasized, it would be difficult to justify the sacrifice to the nation.⁸²

Once the Chinese delegation had yielded on the critical issue of Outer Mongolia, Stalin proceeded quickly to indicate the specific guarantees he was prepared to give. He assured Soong that he would withhold support from the insurgents in Xinjiang and the CCP and he denied that Moscow had supported the CCP in the past. Categorically, Stalin stated that all the military forces of China must be under the KMT government’s control. If needed, Soviet aid and assistance would be given and solely given to the central government under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. The Soviets leader also promised that three months would be a maximum period sufficient for the completion of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Manchuria. He assured Soong that “We recognize China’s complete sovereignty in Manchuria”.⁸³ When Soong raised the statement that “We hope that the Communist armies will be incorporated into the government’s armed forces”, Stalin replied very quickly, “This is a legitimate request, China must have only one government and one armed force.”⁸⁴

This was probably the most important session in the whole negotiation. The two sides made up the basic political deal. Nonetheless, Stalin did not give Soong any reason to believe that his sacrifice of Outer Mongolia would oblige Moscow to make any more compensation. Instead, he recognized China’s full sovereignty in Manchuria only under the condition that Russian control of Port Arthur was secured. With regard

to the CCP and the Xinjiang question, the promise of the Soviet leader was still evasive.⁸⁵ Chiang's quid pro quo formula on Outer Mongolia obtained no substantive advantages in the other matters, especially on the Manchuria issue.

Despite the vast distance remaining between the two sides, after the July 9 session, T. V. Soong sent an optimistic report to Chiang. He claimed that "the major issues had been approximately settled." Negotiations in the next three days, however, proved that Soong's goal was unattainable. In these discussions, the Mongolian question no longer constituted the overwhelming obstacle, but debates aroused on the details of the Dalian, Lushun, and the Manchurian railways issues.⁸⁶

By the end of the first round of talks on July 13, Soong had succeeded in whittling down some Soviet demands. However, considerable divergence remained, especially regarding the administrative institution to be set up at Dalian and Lushun, the management of the railways, the scope of the Lushun defense zone, and the transit rights of Soviet troops across Manchuria in peacetime. These differences reflected the deep conflict between Chiang's determination to safeguard China's effective control over Manchuria and Moscow's ambition to secure Manchuria as its sphere of influence. Soong had managed to bargain away Outer Mongolia to win a substantial reduction of Soviet demands, but even the remaining Soviet requirements there might serve as a basis for Soviet hegemony in northeast China. If the Soviet presence in Manchuria was not carefully contained, the KMT leaders believed, Moscow might still be tempted to help the CCP to seize control over the region.⁸⁷

Another deadlock was reached. Stalin could no longer delay his journey to Potsdam, and Soong intended to use the interval to return to Chongqing for further instructions. The Moscow talks adjourned on July 13. The conferees agreed not to reveal the impasse to the outside world.⁸⁸

Both the Chinese and the Russians supposed that American influence might help their respective causes at Potsdam. Chongqing tried again to mobilize American intervention. Chiang expected the American leaders to press Moscow to respect the Chinese position at Potsdam. Nearly at the same time, however, he assured Petrov

again that China's "independent foreign policy" would not be affected by any decisions concerning China that might be made at Potsdam.⁸⁹

After mid-April 1945, Moscow transferred its troops from Europe to the Far East swiftly. However, by late July 1945, it had still neither completed military preparations nor reached a final decision on when to attack. Stalin's strategy in Potsdam thus mirrored that of Chiang to use the American desire of cutting its casualties in the war as a lever to compel Washington to pressure China into acceding to Soviet demands.⁹⁰

Among all those issues that remained unresolved, the undefined territorial boundary of Outer Mongolia became one of biggest concern for Chiang. However, what the Americans showed more interest was free access of their goods through the port of Dalian. Stalin's interpretation of the Yalta Agreement on Dalian and the railroads made Harriman anxious.⁹¹ Those privileges Stalin requested in Manchuria had gone beyond the specific provisions of the Yalta Agreement.⁹² Harriman thus suggested active U.S. interference in the Sino-Soviet negotiation⁹³

However, during their meetings with Stalin at Potsdam, Truman and Byrnes did not comment on the Chinese-Soviet differences but merely reiterated their concern regarding Dalian. In reply, Stalin assured the Americans that Dalian would be a free port open to the commerce of all nations. That closed the discussion of Sino-Soviet relations, and this subject would not be raised again at the Potsdam Conference.⁹⁴

On July 20, Chiang sent a message to American leaders to plead for their support again. He informed Truman that China had not only accommodated the Yalta formula, but had already gone beyond it on the Mongolian issue. Chiang asked Truman to impress upon Stalin China's stance so that he would no longer insist on further Chinese concessions.⁹⁵

Three days later, in reply to Chiang's message, Truman approved a telegram drafted by Byrnes. The telegram was straightforward:

I asked that you carry out the Yalta agreement but I had not asked that you make any concession in excess of that agreement. If you and Generalissimo Stalin differ as to the correct interpretation of the Yalta agreement, I hope you will arrange

*for Soong to return to Moscow and continue your efforts to reach complete understanding.*⁹⁶

The first sentence seemed to disapprove of Chongqing's relinquishing of Outer Mongolia and to caution against any further concessions. However, Truman also clearly rejected Chiang's request that Washington should mediate Sino-Soviet relations. It seems that both Truman and Byrnes were satisfied by Stalin's earlier assurance. They also believed that without further concessions from the Chinese, a Sino-Soviet agreement would not be reached. In that case, Stalin would enter the war to satisfy his demands and ignore Chongqing's disposition completely.⁹⁷

In fact, during that time, some U.S. leaders expected that an American ultimatum, or the atomic bombing of Japan, would result in an early Japanese surrender and thus prevent Soviet entry into Manchuria. However, although its relations with Moscow were deteriorating, Washington was still reluctant to change its policy on the issue of Soviet belligerency in the Pacific war.⁹⁸ Their wishful expectation was that the continuation of the Sino-Soviet negotiation would delay Soviet military actions or that the Japanese would surrender before Soviets entry into the war. Resorting to the vague principle of "open door", the American leaders ignored the fact that the Chinese were in no position to bargain with Stalin.⁹⁹

For the KMT leaders, Truman's message was a callous response to their plea for help.¹⁰⁰ T. V. Soong had once hoped that by playing a game of delay, he would give the Americans time to intervene. Now he realized that this was in vain. Soong then feared that his opponents both inside and outside the KMT would publicly attack him for having sold out the nation's sacred territory. Thus, the failure to win American support led Soong to resign as foreign minister. In order to save his own political fortune, he tried to find someone else to bear the onus of ceding territory.¹⁰¹

Thus, the day after he received Truman's blunt reply, Soong told Wang Shijie that he hoped Wang would assume the position of Foreign Minister and be his successor to finish the job in Moscow.¹⁰² Chiang Kai-shek himself also asked Wang to take Soong's place while expressed strong displeasure against Soong's escape of responsibility, which made Wang feel difficult to refuse.¹⁰³ Eventually, Soong

accepted a compromise: he could resign, but he must lead the delegation back to Moscow with Wang. On July 30, Soong officially resigned as foreign minister and was replaced by Wang. However, Soong insisted that Wang should sign the final agreement with the Russians.¹⁰⁴

As his efforts to invite American interference failed, Chiang Kai-shek had no other choice but to continue the negotiation with the Soviets. On August 4, in a conversation with Petrov, he made some conciliatory remarks about his appreciation of Stalin's concern for Soviet security in Manchuria. Chiang also expressed his wish to visit Moscow personally after the conclusion of a Sino-Soviet treaty.¹⁰⁵ On the next day, Soong and Wang departed for Moscow, arriving in the afternoon of August 7. Before they left, Chiang decided to make a new concession over the Liaodong Peninsula: the Soviets could establish a military zone in the region, excluding the port of Dalian and the connecting railroads.¹⁰⁶

However, when the Chinese delegates met with Soviet leaders on the same evening, they only noticed that Stalin's appetite had grown even bigger during the past four weeks as the Soviets had finished their military preparation for a war against Japan. During their conversations, Soong raised a new subject, demanding that Japanese government and private properties in Manchuria be regarded as part of Japanese reparations to China. He received no such promise from Stalin.¹⁰⁷ Instead, Stalin indicated that some of the Japanese properties, including the shares of some Japanese enterprises, should be considered as Soviet war booty. The two did not push this topic further. As things turned out, this "war booty" problem would cause serious controversy between the two sides in the coming months.¹⁰⁸

After his meeting with Stalin, Soong routinely reported the contents of the discussion to Harriman. Belatedly, through Harriman, Truman and Byrnes came to realize that the KMT regime was unable to hold the door open in Manchuria by itself. If they were still reluctant to take direct action in the Sino-Soviet talks at Potsdam, now Harriman convinced them that a bolder stance must be taken by the American government.¹⁰⁹ On August 5, Byrnes accepted Harriman's recommendations.¹¹⁰

In fact, at this stage, the overall strategic calculation of Washington had

changed. The rapid deterioration of KMT-CCP relations and the successful testing of an atomic bomb in July led some American leaders to reevaluate the costs and benefits associated with the Soviets' participation in the war. Soviet assistance was no longer as essential to assure the early surrender of Japan, while the costs of a Soviet presence in Manchuria weighed more heavily. This in turn led to a reversal of the U.S. policy of noninvolvement.¹¹¹

Washington finally intervened in the Moscow talks on China's behalf on August 8. Harriman conveyed Truman's message to Stalin. Truman insisted on a narrow interpretation of Soviet rights under the Yalta Agreement. He instructed Harriman to inform Stalin that he believed that China had already met the requirements of the Yalta Agreement, while he hoped that the Soviets would not ask for further concessions from the Chinese that might adversely affect U.S. interests.¹¹²

Nonetheless, the American leaders did not take any substantive measures to back up their verbal support for the Nationalists. Military staff at Washington had discussed the possibility of landing on Dalian in early August. However, nothing concrete materialized. Always seeing Soviet intervention in the Pacific war as inevitable, the request for a definite commitment by Soviet leaders to the open door principle seemed to be their last resort to safeguard its interests. Stalin quickly rejected their requirements.¹¹³

On August 9, Harriman informed Wang Shijie of his talk with Stalin and urged Wang not to accept any arrangement at Dalian that violated the "open door" principle. Harriman also warned Soong that Chinese acceptance of any demands exceeding the U.S. interpretation of the Yalta Agreement, especially those concerning Dalian, would be interpreted by Washington as they were made with an eye to "obtaining Soviet support" for domestic reasons.¹¹⁴

However, this intervention came too late. These were days of tremendous change in the situation in the Far East. On August 6, a day before the resumption of the negotiations, the Americans dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Two days later, on August 8, the same day that Harriman met Stalin, the Soviets declared war against Japan and the Red Army advanced rapidly into Manchuria, "honoring"

Stalin's former promise.¹¹⁵

For Chongqing, these rapidly developing events made an immediate agreement with the Soviets imperative.¹¹⁶ On August 9, Wang Shijie and T. V. Soong cabled Chiang, suggesting that after the Soviet declaration of war against Japan, the conclusion of a treaty with the Soviet Union could no longer be delayed. Obviously, between the American rhetorical support and the Russian military advancement, the Chinese delegation knew which weighed more heavily.¹¹⁷

Before meeting with the Soviet leaders again on the evening of August 10, the Chinese delegates heard the news broadcast about Japan's decision to accept the Potsdam Proclamation. They recognized that the treaty with the Russians must be concluded before the Japanese surrendered formally. If an agreement would not be rapidly concluded, they believed, Soviet terms would increase once the Red Army occupied Manchuria. Moreover, without a treaty the Chinese side would be powerless to limit Soviet support for the CCP and ensure Soviet withdrawal from Manchuria.¹¹⁸

In spite of these pressing considerations, however, the Chinese delegation made their final push for further Soviet concessions. The Russians did not share their anxiety, however. Instead, they inflated their requirements and made the negotiations increasingly tough. To remind the Chinese that he was holding the trump card, at one point in the discussion Stalin suddenly inserted a remark: "It's now five o'clock in [the] Far East and our troops will continue movement." Stalin also threatened to make his support of Chiang Kai-shek's government conditional. He suggested that the projected Sino-Soviet treaty should include a clause providing for the KMT's commitment to national unity and "democratization of China". As things turned out, Stalin was only plaguing the Chinese representatives. He soon gave up the "democratization" phrase, showing that he was willing to make "concessions" even at the risk of being "cursed" by the CCP.¹¹⁹

Stalin also made a major concession by dropping his demand for Soviet participation in the civil administration of Dalian, to which Harriman had objected earlier. He also abandoned his requirement for a veto over Chinese civil official at Lushun. Stalin promised again that the Soviet withdrawal from Manchuria would start

within three months of Japan's defeat, but he refused to set a definite deadline for completion of the withdrawal. Nonetheless, at the end of this August 10 session, the two sides remained in disagreement on three issues. Stalin continued to demand exclusive military authority at Lushun, as well as a Soviet chief for both the Chinese Eastern and Southern Manchurian Railways.¹²⁰

The issue of independence for Outer Mongolia once again proved to be the most nettlesome one. The crux now centered on the disposition of the Altai region and the delineation of the border between Xinjiang and Outer Mongolia. The Nationalist leaders worried that unless a specific agreement was reached that the Altai region was a part of China, recognition of Mongolian independence would mean implicit cession of the western Altai. Stalin's refusal to provide a map specifying Outer Mongolia's borders deepened their suspicions.¹²¹

In their report to Chiang Kai-shek, Soong and Wang proposed more concessions. They suggested that a Russian chief of the Dalian port would be acceptable in exchange for Stalin's giving up his demand to include Dalian in the military zone. As for Port Arthur, the railroads, and the Mongolian border, they believed the differences between the two sides could not be resolved unless Chiang was willing to make further concessions. In the next two days, the negotiations continued. However, without Stalin's presence and with no instructions from Chiang, the two sides achieved no breakthrough.¹²²

Soong made another effort to enlist American support on August 11 but failed again. Harriman's concern was still limited to Dalian.¹²³ Aware that no American assistance would come, Soong and Wang cabled Chiang again on August 12, saying that if they did not receive any new instructions from Chongqing by the next day, they would accept all the Soviets demands and sign the treaty.¹²⁴

On August 11 and 12, Chiang dispatched three instructions successively to his envoys in Moscow, which were sent without the knowledge of the meeting on August 10.¹²⁵ He still insisted that Outer Mongolia's borders would have to be clarified before its independence could be recognized.¹²⁶ Soong and Wang were puzzled and disturbed by Chiang Kai-shek's suddenly unyielding attitude in his latest instruction.

The delegation had scheduled a final session with Stalin that night. All the delegation members agreed that Chiang's order was unrealistic and further delay would be extremely harmful. However, Wang Shijie, the person who would take responsibility to sign the treaty, still insisted that at least with regard to the question of Outer Mongolia, Chiang's instructions would have to be sought.¹²⁷

Further negotiations were postponed while Wang and Soong dispatched a telegram together to Chiang the evening of August 12, pleading him that it was imperative to compromise on the remaining unresolved issues, especially the Outer Mongolia problem. Wang also emphasized that without a treaty with the Russians, two conditions vital to China's stability in the postwar years could not be gained. One was the clarification of the Soviet-KMT relationship, which would have the effect of containing the Chinese Communists. The other was a definite agreement that would limit Soviet influence in Manchuria and guarantee final Soviet withdrawal from that area.¹²⁸ They pleaded:

*It is impossible to fulfill Your Excellency's directive regarding Outer Mongolia... We and the other members of the delegation unanimously believe that we must conclude a Sino-Soviet agreement. If we delay further, it will be extremely easy to cause unexpected changes. Therefore, we very earnestly ask Your Excellency to authorize us to dispose the Mongolian and other unresolved issues expediently.*¹²⁹

This telegram proved to be unnecessary. Chiang had already changed his mind after receiving the earlier message of Soong and Wang. His new instruction arrived in Moscow on August 13 at 10:00 p.m., early enough for the Chinese delegation to arrange a midnight session with the Russians. In this one-sentence message, Chiang gave Soong and Wang what they had asked for: "With regard to Outer Mongolia and other unsettled problems, you are authorized to deal with them in an appropriate fashion..."¹³⁰

It was an ambiguous reply that had the advantage of allowing Chiang to avoid the onus of assuming responsibility for giving final authorization to accepting Moscow's demands. Again, the Chinese delegation in Moscow was in a quandary. They all felt it was imperative to sign an agreement as soon as possible, but they still

lacked a clear, final authorization from Chiang. At last, Chiang Ching-kuo(蒋经国) agreed to take personal responsibility for the acceptance of Stalin's terms. ¹³¹

On August 14, the negotiation resumed and it was the last important session of the Moscow Conference. The Chinese delegation yielded to the Soviet stance on the "current boundaries" of Outer Mongolia, gave up the parity principle regarding the management of the railroads, agreed to lease the port installation of Dalian to the Soviets without charge, and accepted a Russian port master in Dalian. However, the Russians would not let the Chinese off the hook so easily. Molotov made a new demand: a financial agreement should be concluded calling for Chinese payment to the Russian troops in Manchuria. He warned that unless these troops were provided with Chinese currency to buy goods, they would take what they needed. The only thing that Soong and Wang could do was to plead for Russians' generosity to war-torn China. At the end, the two sides agreed to leave the problem for further discussion.¹³² The issue of "war trophies," that is, of the disposition of Japanese investments in Manchuria, was also left unresolved. As will be discussed in chapter 4, this loophole later provided the basis excuse the Soviets to strip Manchuria of much of its industrial plants.

On the evening of August 14, a formal ceremony was held for signing the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance. Purposely, T.V. Soong did not affix his name to these documents. Wang Shijie and Molotov signed the documents on behalf of their governments. At a banquet later that evening, Stalin reiterated the pledge that the Soviet Union would exert all its strength to achieve China's unification under Chiang Kai-shek's leadership. ¹³³

Compared with the difficult negotiating process, the ratification of the Moscow agreements in Chongqing turned out to be swift. The outcome of the negotiation is what the Nationalist leaders could accept. Outer Mongolia had already left China for some twenty years, thus it was not a bad deal for the KMT to recognize its independence in exchange for Soviet recognition of Chinese sovereignty in Manchuria. To Chongqing, nothing was more important than Moscow's promise, which was written into one of the agreements, that the Soviet government would offer

its “moral, military, and other material assistance” only to the Nationalist Government of China. Moscow’s pledge not to make further encroachments in Manchuria and Xinjiang was also highly valued by the KMT leaders. After the signing of the treaty, Chiang expressed gratitude to Hurley and told the American general that he was satisfied with the treaty.¹³⁴

Ten days later, on August 24, 1945, the ROC’s Legislative Yuan held a special session to decide its ratification of the treaty. At the beginning of the meeting, the representatives were told that the Generalissimo had already approved the results of the Moscow negotiations. Consequently, it took only three hours for the legislators to conclude their debate and reach a unanimous decision for ratification. On the next day, the treaty and its supplementary agreements were made public. The immediate response to the treaty was generally calm and realistic.¹³⁵ Despite Song and Wang’s fears, the CCP publicly accepted the Treaty while the initial response from the public was neutral as the excitement of victory against Japan still continued, although many people were reluctant to accept the independence of Outer Mongolia and those violations of China’s sovereignty over Manchuria.¹³⁶

In his dealings with the Soviets, Chiang’s cards were limited. The Nationalist regime had immense internal problems and its strength was far below that of the Soviet Union. The Soviet leaders skillfully exploited their advantages. In spite of his potential power to grasp whatever he wanted, however, Stalin chose a less ambitious option. In return, the Nationalist government got guarantees that Moscow would recognize it as the sole legitimate government of China. However, many hidden troubles between the two sides were left for the postwar age.

The Sudden Japanese Surrender

While the influence of Washington and Moscow increased drastically, the Japanese role in Chinese domestic politics did not fade. An important fact, which was usually overlooked, is that in contrast to other theaters, the Japanese China Expeditionary Army still enjoyed significant military superiority when the war came

to its end.

As the year 1945 unfolded, it was evident that the Pacific war had entered its final stage. The success of the Ichigo operation did not alter Tokyo's general strategic disadvantage. Although its military prospects turned desperate day after day, Tokyo still refused to give up fighting so long as the Allies insisted on an unconditional surrender. The Japanese leaders were also reluctant to approach Washington directly. Instead, they turned to the Soviets for mediation. Their illusions about Moscow thus strengthened the bargaining position of the Soviets vis-à-vis Chongqing and Washington.¹³⁷

Meanwhile, the Japanese commanders in China were still confident of their own military advantage. They still kept the illusion that they could crush the U.S. troops through some decisive battles on the Asia mainland. In the spring of 1945, the Japanese armies resumed their offensives in central and southern China. However, this time, they suffered fierce resistance from the Nationalist troops.¹³⁸ In April, U.S. troops landed on the Ryukyu Islands. The threats to the Japanese home islands became prominent. Tokyo finally ordered its troops in China to evacuate from most territories they had occupied in the past year and concentrate.¹³⁹

For the KMT, the severe crisis of 1944 had finally passed. In the first half of the year 1945, Chongqing made great efforts to revitalize its military power.¹⁴⁰ The opening of the China-Burma Road brought more aid from abroad while the conclusion of the North Burma campaign permitted the redeployment of those elite American-equipped forces back to the home front. Stilwell's program to train a few high-quality Chinese divisions finally began to bear fruit. From April to June 1945, some of these units fought effectively and played a great role in turning back the Japanese offensive in west Hunan and northwest Hubei.¹⁴¹

With these developments, the Nationalist leaders prepared to launch counter-offensives. Assisted by American military staffs in China, Chongqing devised a plan to reoccupy some important ports along the country's southeastern coast.¹⁴² Their goal was to open more routes for transporting foreign aid while cooperating with the coming landing of the American troops.¹⁴³ In accordance with this plan, the

KMT concentrated most of its elite troops in southern China. From May to July, these troops reoccupied some cities and they prepared to launch a large-scale offensive to take back Guangzhou (Canton, 广州), the largest port in south China, in early August. The Japanese surrender, however, deprived them the chance to implement it.¹⁴⁴

When the year 1945 came, the Japanese occupied more Chinese territory than they had at any other time. It did them no good, however. The United States, having won battles for Pacific islands, threatened the Japanese home islands. As their military prospects turned desperate, some Japanese officials resumed their “peace” operations in China. They were now ready to offer certain “concessions” to the Nationalists for a separate peace in China. Nonetheless, the Japanese still insisted on keeping the “status-quo” of the Manchukuo while continuing to maintain some privileges in China.¹⁴⁵ However, against the new situation of spring 1945, it was not in the interest of Chongqing or Yan’an to reach a separate peace with Tokyo, especially under the condition that the Japanese still did not abandon their privileges. On the other hand, Japanese commanders in China also showed strong opposition to peace efforts. Their arrogance blinded them and these generals were obsessed by the idea that their troops still enjoyed advantages. They argued that military coercion was the only solution.¹⁴⁶ As a result, although various contacts between Japanese and the Nationalist agents were made through different channels, all of these maneuvers turned out to be fruitless.¹⁴⁷

Meanwhile, the Japanese officials and the CCP agents also made contact with each other for several times.¹⁴⁸ For instance, in June 1945, the CCP New Fourth Army (N4A) secretly dispatched a cadre to Nanjing, who later got a chance to meet privately with the Chief of Staff of the Japanese Expeditionary Army. As far as we know now, it seemed that these two people did not refer to any concrete issues during their conversation, but they agreed to keep their linkage intact.¹⁴⁹

These efforts for a “peaceful settlement”, especially their secret contacts with the Chinese Communists, revealed that at least a group of Japanese officials had noticed the desperate situation. They sought to evacuate from China under some favorable

conditions, so that their troops could save strength for the defense of the home islands. However, most Japanese leaders, including even those officials who advocated a separate peace in China, still refused to abandon their ambitions on many issues, including puppet regimes they set up in Manchuria and Nanjing. These were what the Chinese side would never accept. Both the CCP and the KMT insisted that all territories lost to the Japanese, including Manchuria and Taiwan, should be restored. They also expected that China would get a greater saying in the disposition of the Japanese empire after the war. In fact, in dealing with the Japanese, what the two Chinese parties concerned was not a separate peace, but to construct contact with their current foreign enemy, which might strengthen their power position in postwar domestic struggles.¹⁵⁰

It was during this impasse of the KMT-CCP-Japan triangle relations that the Emperor of Japan announced his country's unconditional surrender. The sudden surrender of Japan added another complex problem to the already strained KMT-CCP competition. The prominent issue soon became the question of which party would accept the surrender of more than two million Japanese troops and take over those resources in the vast occupied areas.

The conclusion of the war came at an unexpectedly fast speed. On August 6, the Americans dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima. In the late evening of August 8, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan, and soon after, at midnight on August 9, the Red Army invaded Manchuria. Later on that day, the Americans dropped an atomic bomb on Nagasaki. The next day, the Japanese government revealed its acceptance to the terms for ending the war that the Allies had set in the Potsdam Declaration.

The victorious conclusion of the war against Japan caught the two Chinese parties in surprise. Although they had waited for the Soviet entry for several months, it was impossible for the CCP leaders to anticipate the drastic change brought by the atomic bomb. Mao, like almost everyone else at this time, estimated a prolonged war on the Asia mainland. Even after the Soviets denounced their neutrality pact with Tokyo in early April 1945, Mao and other CCP leaders still estimated that the war against Japan would last for at least one more year.¹⁵¹ They also anticipated that it

would only be a matter of time before Chiang would initiate attacks against them. Thus, they believed their party must take full advantage of the current situation to seize more territory and construct substantial base areas. In a directive to General Wang Zhen and Li Xiannian(李先念) in June 1945, Mao estimated that the redeployment of Allied forces from Europe to China needed some months. The war with Japan would last for another year and a half.¹⁵² The party could take time to increase its strength and establish a stronghold in southern China, “so that when the KMT launches a civil war, it can pin down the Nationalist on one additional front.”¹⁵³ Even on August 4, only about a week before the Japanese surrender, Mao still believed that the Japanese would not be defeated until the winter of 1946. He thus ordered the forces in Henan and Anhui to continue their expansion southward.¹⁵⁴

The situation of Chongqing was not any better. On May 18, in his political report to the KMT’s Sixth National Congress, Chiang estimated that the war would last for another year. The KMT officials made great efforts to contain the CCP’s southward expansion. In late July, Chiang reached the consensus with Wedemeyer that the American troops landing on China should refrain from making contact with those other “anti-governmental” forces. The KMT’s elite troops were still concentrated in southern China for the counteroffensive plans mentioned above. However, the war ended before these operations were carried out.¹⁵⁵

Nevertheless, the speedy ending of the war pushed the CCP and the KMT towards a final showdown. Considering the large amounts of weapons the Japanese troops left and the treasure of the occupation area, the takeover meant great interest. The race between the two sides started immediately. The Communists lost no time in exercise their “belligerent right” to accept the surrender of men, machines, and territory from the Japanese. Meanwhile, Chiang Kai-shek, backed by the United States, sharply denounced this “unauthorized” action and began to deploy his own Nationalist troops to various localities to ward off the Communist expansion.

On August 9, the day after Moscow declared war against Japan, Mao proclaimed that with the Soviet entry into the war, the surrender of Japan was a forgone conclusion. The final stage of the war had arrived and the party’s new task was

preparing for the domestic struggle. However, Mao was still uncertain about the extent to which his party could gain assistance from Moscow. On the one hand, he hailed the advance of the Red Army. On the other hand, Mao urged his comrades to rely on their own strength.¹⁵⁶

At this time, the paramount issue between the two parties was the conflicting claims over the authority to disarm Japanese forces and take over Japanese occupied areas. Yan'an immediately launched an all-out effort to seize as much Japanese-occupied territory (including large cities and major lines of transportation) and as many Japanese weapons as possible. At the same time, preparations began within the party to cope with possible military conflicts with the Nationalists. In the eyes of the CCP leaders, Chiang's policy of launching a nationwide civil war was already set, but it was possible that for a time military clashes might be localized and restricted in scale. Yan'an repeatedly warned its local headquarters "the civil war is approaching"¹⁵⁷

On August 10, in a series of public orders, Zhu De asked the CCP armies to disarm and accept the surrender of Japanese troops.¹⁵⁸ In an inner-party directive of the next day, Mao estimated that the Nationalists, ganging up with the "American imperialists", would have the upper hand in large cities such as Shanghai, Nanjing, and Wuhan. However, medium and small cities along the railways in northern and central China would be contestable, while the vast rural area and the numerous medium and small towns in northern China might fall into Communist hands. The party must regroup all its armed forces quickly to outpace the KMT in capturing more territories and weapons, which would strengthen their power to a new level. The CCP leaders called this strategy "protecting the fruits of victory" and asked its troops to adopt retaliation tactics to fight for every inch land. The more the party could gain from the taking over of territory and arms from the Japanese, Mao believed, the better its position in a possible civil war against the KMT.¹⁵⁹

The CCP leaders had long been discussing the possibility of occupying some cities before or after the Japanese surrender. In mid-August 1945, Yan'an openly announced urgent preparations for the seizure of cities. On August 10, the CCP

leaders instructed the N4A to concentrate its main force to seize big cities and strategic points, especially Nanjing, Shanghai and Wuhan.¹⁶⁰ On the same day, Yan'an also openly ordered its troops in northern China to march forward and reoccupy big cities such as Tianjin and Beijing,¹⁶¹ On August 12, Yan'an published its list of governors for the Jiangsu, Anhui, Zhejiang, and Hubei province. It also nominated mayors for Shanghai, Nanjing and Wuhan.¹⁶² Later, mayors for Beijing and Tianjin were also nominated.¹⁶³

It must be noted that most of these orders did not reflect the CCP forces' actual deployments. In fact, at this point, most of the CCP's high-ranking military commanders remained at Yan'an as the Seventh National Congress had just closed. Here, Yan'an exaggerated its military arrangements to boast its political position and it abandoned plans to occupy big cities nearly overnight on 12 August.¹⁶⁴

However, in the first week after the Japanese surrender, the CCP leaders did follow a radical line. For instance, Yan'an once decided to abandon its troops' former designation of ERA and N4A and adopt the new name of "liberation army", which clearly indicated the party leaders' resolution to separate from the Nationalist army system and regain their full autonomy.¹⁶⁵ Mao and his colleagues were determined to take full advantage of the Japanese surrender to win their party a greater say in national affairs and an equal status with the KMT.

To realize their ambitions, the CCP leaders extended their united front policy to win over the defeated Japanese and the puppet Nanjing regime. Directed by Yan'an, the party's Central China Bureau (华中局,CCB) dispatched a liaison mission to Nanjing and Shanghai, trying to persuade the Japanese to cooperate with the CCP. The CCP agents once attempted to meet with the Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese army at Nanjing. For reasons still unknown, they abandoned this plan later.¹⁶⁶ Nonetheless, these agents finally met with some Japanese officials on August 14 and asked them to surrender to the N4A. However, the Japanese refused, saying that in accordance with instructions they received, they could only surrender to the Nationalist government.¹⁶⁷ The CCP agents also made contact with Japanese

commanders in Wuhan and some other cities, but got a similar reply.¹⁶⁸ While the Japanese did not refuse to contact with the CCP, they were still reluctant to surrender to the Communists.¹⁶⁹

The party's attempt to win over its old enemies failed, but its local leaders went ahead on their own. On August 11, the CCB formulated a plan to occupy Nanjing and Shanghai.¹⁷⁰ Local military leaders such as General Su Yu showed a cautious attitude. Yan'an also warned the CCB leaders that it was better to shift targets to small cities and towns along the southern Yangtze River.¹⁷¹ Mao ordered Su Yu's troops to stay in the rural area.¹⁷² However, the CCB leaders did not give up the idea.¹⁷³ On August 15, due to some incorrect intelligence, however, the CCB dispatched some 3000 undercover soldiers to Shanghai in order to cooperate with a planned mass uprising in the city.¹⁷⁴ Local cadres quickly noticed that the uprising had only a slim chance of success. However, the CCB leaders still submitted their plan of Shanghai's insurrection to Yan'an on August 19.¹⁷⁵ Yan'an approved it on August 20. Fortunately, on the next day, Mao and his colleagues changed their mind. They dispatched two urgent telegrams to the CCB leaders, asking them to stop the Shanghai insurrection.¹⁷⁶

A double-fold expectation made up the CCP's aggressive stance in this period. On the one hand, they expected they could receive support from the Red Army soon.¹⁷⁷ On the other hand, and more importantly, they believed they could take advantage of their relatively favorable geographical position to earn more from Japanese surrender. At the time, most of the KMT troops were still in the remote areas of southwest China, and the CCP troops located near cities and railways in northern and eastern China. If the party succeeded in taking over Japanese arms and strategic positions in these areas, Yan'an estimated, the Nationalists would be out of the game.

The sudden end of the war also caught the Nationalists unprepared for the task of recovering the territories they had lost and reestablishing their political authority. Its main forces were still confined to the 'rear' southwestern areas of China, hundreds of miles away from the strategically and politically important cities and communication

lines in North and Central China. These armies were also not well trained or effectively organized.

However, while the status of national government imposed great constraints on the KMT leaders during their dealings with Moscow, its status as legal representative of the Chinese people (with international recognition, no less) gave Chongqing significant advantages over the CCP in the competition for receiving the Japanese surrender.

The Generalissimo made full use of this privilege. News that Tokyo had sued for peace reached Chongqing on August 10. Immediately, Chiang required those Japanese troops in China not to surrender to authorities besides his government, while to keep those strategic points and transportation lines in their hands for the arrival of the KMT troops. On the other hand, Chongqing lost no time in denouncing the CCP's independent expansions. Chiang issued an order to Zhu De on August 12, asking the CCP forces "to remain in their current posts and wait for further instruction".¹⁷⁸

The Communists would never obey these orders. The first answer from Yan'an took the form of a broadcast, which denounced Chiang as "China's fascist chieftain" and accused him of "treating enemies as friends and friends as enemies".¹⁷⁹ On August 13, Zhu De cabled Chiang a reply. Characterizing Chiang's order as "unfair" and "contrary to the national interest", he told Chiang plainly, "you had issued a wrong order, very wrong indeed and we have to reject it resolutely."¹⁸⁰

Meanwhile, Yan'an went a step forward to show its independent status. On the same day he replied to Chiang's order, Zhu De dispatched a telegram to General Yasuji Okamura, the Commander in Chief of the Japanese Expeditionary Army in China, instructing the Japanese troops to surrender to the Communists. At the same time, Zhu sent a note to the Allied government, using the title of "the Commander in Chief of the Anti-Japanese Army on the Chinese Liberated Area". In his note, Zhu asserted that Chongqing had no right to represent "all the anti-Japanese armed forces and 260 million people in China's Liberated Areas and Japanese-occupied areas". Moreover, he argued, the CCP held the right to accept Japanese surrender "in accordance with the Potsdam Declaration and the measures laid down by the Allies".

The CCP military leader also asserted that the party had its own right to send representatives “to participate directly in accepting a Japanese surrender by the Allies, in military control of Japan and in the coming peace conference.”¹⁸¹ Even after receiving MacArthur’s General Order No.1, Yan’an still insisted on August 16 upon their right to accept the Japanese surrender.¹⁸² On the same day, Mao sent another telegram to Chiang, rejecting again his order of August 11.¹⁸³

What swung the balance in favor of KMT was its status as legal national government and the diplomatic assistance it received from the great powers, the United States in particular. In mid-August, KMT officials worked closely with the staff of Wedemeyer on plans for deploying government forces to take control of key points in China. Chiang also requested the American generals to dispatch troops to land on the southern and northern Chinese coasts and continue other forms assistance to his regime. Wedemeyer agreed. On August 13, Wedemeyer reassured Chiang that his plan in China was to “make certain that Chinese and American forces and resources are disposed to insure a strong unified Central Government.”¹⁸⁴

To facilitate the advance of the Nationalist forces, the Americans expeditiously transported them by air and sea to strategic points throughout China. In the end, the United States intervened on the government’s behalf, transporting approximately half a million of its troops into northern China, Taiwan, and Manchuria. Meanwhile, a force of 53,000 US marines landed and occupied Peiping, Tianjin, and other strategic points in northern China, pending the arrival of government troops. Ironically, the US War Department at the same time requested that the principle of non-involvement be kept. However, since the two Chinese parties viewed their race to take from the Japanese as the center of their rivalry, Yan’an immediately protested against these American movements as interference in China’s domestic affairs.¹⁸⁵

Most importantly, under the Americans’ instruction, Japanese armies and Chinese puppet troops refused to surrender to the CCP. In fact, the gigantic air and sealift of the KMT forces and the landing of the U.S. marines would not have been effective in reestablishing the authority of the Nationalists if, pending their arrival, the Japanese and puppet forces had not garrisoned the contested localities against the CCP.¹⁸⁶

In assuring the cooperation of the Japanese, the U.S. government made great efforts. On August 12, Hurley warned Washington that the CCP capture of Japanese arms would make a civil war in China inevitable. The Japanese should be asked to lay down their arms only to the Nationalists government, he suggested. On August 15, General Douglas MacArthur issued his General Order No.1, instructing that all Japanese troops outside Manchuria must lay down their arms only to representatives of Chiang Kai-shek.¹⁸⁷ This order from the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers deprived the CCP of a right to receive the Japanese surrender.

The Americans also intentionally warned the Japanese of the importance they attached to this arrangement. On August 17, General George Marshall asked MacArthur to make it clear to the Japanese that the Potsdam provision regarding the repatriation of Japanese soldiers applied only to those who surrendered to Chiang and his subordinates.¹⁸⁸ As Truman noted in his memoirs, “this operation of using the Japanese to hold off the Communists was a joint decision of the State and Defense Department which I approved.”¹⁸⁹

On his part, Chiang acted swiftly to exercise this exclusive authority. As early as August 10, he asked his commanders to warn the Japanese that they must not surrender to Chinese troops who were not authorized by him. On August 15, he formally ordered General Okamura to stop the military activities of all Japanese forces. Meanwhile, he also required them to preserve current positions and maintain order in their area, and held temporarily their arms and supplies awaiting instruction from the Nationalist government. Chongqing tried every means to make sure that the withdrawal of the Japanese forces was coordinated with the movement of Nationalist troops, thus prevented the CCP from obtaining any advantage. On August 22, Chongqing openly instructed Japanese forces to refuse passage to the CCP forces, and to prevent those troops from occupying any city by force.¹⁹⁰

In the context of these orders, one passage in Generalissimo Chiang’s message to the Chinese soldiers and civilians on the surrender of Japan was significant,

Although the armed forces of the enemy have been defeated and must be made to observe strictly all the terms of surrender, yet we should not think of revenge or heap

abuses on the innocent people of Japan.

This speech “rendering good for evil”(以德报怨) had great implications for postwar Sino-Japanese relations.¹⁹¹ However, it must be noted that when giving this speech, Chiang had the very clear purpose in mind of pulling Japan to his side in Chinese domestic struggles. His policy turned out to be successful.

In fact, the Japanese still enjoyed great potential influence in Chinese politics even after their surrender. In August 1945, there were close to 1.25 million Japanese troops in China proper, not including puppet troops, armed or partially armed, and over 1.75 million Japanese civilians in the country. The scale of the surrender operation was gigantic, and it took months to complete.¹⁹² Although their government indicated its acceptance of surrender on August 10, the Imperial Army Headquarters still ordered their troops to keep arms.¹⁹³ In fact, General Yasuji Okamura and other Japanese commanders in China showed strong opposition to the decision of surrender and declared that their soldiers would fight to the last man.¹⁹⁴ Okamura also formulated a plan of keeping a quasi-independent Japanese-occupied area on the Shandong peninsula.¹⁹⁵ Even after the order of surrender came, he still refused to accept the reality, asserting that it was unacceptable for his troops to surrender to an inferior enemy. Only after strict instruction from Tokyo did Okamura accept the defeat reluctantly.¹⁹⁶

Ironically, when their defeat became a matter of fact, the Japanese generals adjusted their stubborn position very quickly. They obeyed the orders from the Allies to ensure a smooth return to their homeland. Nearly all of the Japanese commanders in China cooperated with the Nationalist government wholeheartedly. In fact, even before receiving instructions from MacArthur, Okamura had already ordered his force not to surrender to any Chinese forces that were not authorized by Chongqing. If the CCP showed any “unfriendly” attitude, he emphasized, it should be “punished assertively.”¹⁹⁷

Meanwhile, the KMT officials repeatedly required the Japanese to help them

defend large cities and important lines of communication. On August 23, General He Yingqin, the Commander-in-Chief of the Nationalist Army, even formally ordered the Japanese troops to recover the cities they had lost to the CCP in the previous week.¹⁹⁸ As the attitude of the U.S. government became clear while the gestures of the Nationalists were satisfactory for them, the Japanese had every reason to cooperate with the KMT.

As a result, because neither Nationalist troops nor the Americans were present in northern China, it was the Japanese Army who resisted CCP expansion in the region, just as they did before their surrender. The Japanese army turned out to be a formidable obstacle to the CCP's expansion plan. With a few exceptions, its troops were powerless before the Japanese and the party took no big city in the weeks following the Japanese surrender. In Shandong, for instance, although the CCP controlled most of the province, the Nationalist governor, with the help of Japanese troops, easily occupied Jinan, the capital city.¹⁹⁹

Chiang also moved quickly to ensure the support of Chinese puppet forces. On August 10, He instructed his commanders in all war zones to incite the puppet forces to shift their allegiance to Chongqing, to establish liaison with them, and to persuade them to control the important points and lines evacuated by the Japanese. On the next day, he issued a proclamation offering the puppet forces responsibility for maintaining order in their own regions. The commanders of puppet forces who availed themselves of this offer were given new appointments.²⁰⁰

In fact, most commanders of the puppet forces were politically closer to the KMT than to the CCP. Many of them had originally been the KMT's high-ranking officers. For them, shifting allegiance again was simply returning to their original fold.²⁰¹ On August 16, Chiang cabled Zhou Fohai, the puppet Mayor of Shanghai and Zhou and Chen Gongbo, another key figure in the puppet regime, immediately showed their loyalty to Chiang.²⁰² After reconverting these troops into his force, Chiang Kai-shek felt in touch with coastal China once again.

With all these drastic measures, the KMT succeeded in denying important cities, towns, and lines of communication from the Communists. It finally reestablished its

authority in central and southern China and reoccupied most important cities and lines of communication in northern China. The trend of CCP expansion was stalled.

The other blow for Yan'an came from the Soviets. Even before the end of the war, CCP leaders had recognized that the aid they could receive from the Soviets was limited. They thus maintained a discreet silence with respect to Sino-Soviet negotiations in Moscow. On August 13, Mao presented a report on the Soviets' entry into the war. He emphasized that the entire party must adhere to self-reliance and "entirely depend on its own efforts". As soon as Moscow entered the war, the CCP leaders immediately ordered their troops to cooperate with the Red Army. ²⁰³ Their true intention behind this order, however, was to justify the party's military expansion. The aggressive gesture of the party in the first week after the Japanese surrender was derived from the domestic power vacuum left by Japanese surrender rather than encouragement from the Soviets.

The conclusion of the Sino-Soviet talks at Moscow and MacArthur's General Order No.1 thus placed enormous pressure on the Communists. Chiang Kai-shek at once launched a political offensive against Yan'an by inviting Mao Zedong to Chongqing for talks. The Generalissimo tried to use international pressure and public calls for peace and unity to resolve the CCP problem in his favor.²⁰⁴ The situation thus necessitated that Yan'an revise its strategy.

From the beginning, however, the CCP did not intend to yield to international pressure. Mao outlined the basic line his party would adopt for postwar struggles on August 13. Besides self-reliance, he called on the whole party "to act without human or divine laws," in other words, not be restricted by international treaties.²⁰⁵ In the first week following the Japanese surrender, the CCP leaders openly condemned the KMT's deprivation of their troops' right of the takeover. They also required that the KMT should "immediately abolish one-party dictatorship, convene an all-party meeting, and establish a democratic, coalition government" ²⁰⁶ The CCP newspapers even openly condemned Chiang as "a public enemy". In an inter-party directive, CCP leaders also called Chiang's proposal for peace talks "a total fraud". ²⁰⁷

However, by the end of August, the CCP leaders had to admit that they had only limited space for military expansion, either in south or north China. The disposition of Japanese occupied area was settled in favor of the KMT. Moreover, direct pressure from Soviet leaders was quite unexpected for them. In his telegrams to Yan'an in late September, Stalin flatly rejected Mao's bid to secure Soviet assistance in the civil war. Instead, he asked Mao to go to Chongqing for talks and "to seek a means of maintaining internal peace ... (and) travel the road of peaceful development." Otherwise, a civil war would erupt, and "the Chinese people would face the risk of extermination."²⁰⁸ These messages from Stalin clearly showed that Moscow would not only help the CCP, but it also required that Yan'an make further concessions in order to accommodate the needs of Soviet foreign policy.

In fact, Stalin's position on Chinese domestic politics was quite close to that of the United States; namely, the CCP must dissolve its army and enter the Nationalist government. Soviets support for the KMT had a very realistic component as they believed the KMT would be more likely to prevail over the CCP in any test of arms.²⁰⁹ Besides suspicions regarding the CCP's loyalty, the Soviets were aware of the KMT's history of militarily out-gunning the CCP. Soviet diplomats in Chongqing emphasized the CCP's inferior military and economic strength relative to the KMT. Stalin's experience in dealing with Chinese affairs in the late 1920s also led him to underestimate the revolutionary potential of the CCP. He was also uncertain about the intentions of Washington and feared that he might be entangled in China's domestic struggle. In any case, Stalin could afford to wait for further developments in China while pursuing a course that would not arouse American suspicions.²¹⁰

Without a doubt, Stalin's stance imposed enormous pressure on the CCP. However, as Niu Jun suggested, the involvement of the Soviets also constrained the United States while exerting pressure on the Nationalists. While no possibility of extensive military expansion existed, it was not against the CCP's interests to resume political negotiations with the Nationalists.²¹¹ The question was whether it would be able to make the best of the situation to regain the political initiative.

The Chongqing Talk

The resume of the KMT-CCP negotiation and the convocation of Chongqing talk was not the continuation of the two parties' wartime negotiation, but was based on the outcome of their competition after the sudden Japanese surrender in August. The conclusion of the Sino-Soviet treaty disrupted the linkage between the CCP and the Soviets. Meanwhile, and with the assistance of the Americans, Chiang took advantage of his status as the national leader to monopolize the right to receive Japanese surrender. He also successfully turned the former enemies into his agents against the Communists. The transportation of the Nationalist troops by the Americans to former Japanese occupied areas, the landing of American marines in strategic points in coastal China, and the cooperation provided by the Japanese and puppet forces, all these developments frustrated the CCP's ambition of quick expansion, while providing a foundation for renewed negotiations between the CCP and the KMT.

Moreover, the victorious ending of the war of resistance greatly enhanced the political legitimacy of the Nationalist government. The personal prestige of Chiang Kai-shek reached an unprecedented level. His followers were welcomed as liberators by the people of the reoccupied areas. Meanwhile, after more than thirty years of civil conflict and foreign invasion, the general populace was not interested in another war but instead favored peace, unity, and order. As the sole legitimate national government recognized both inside and outside of the country, Chongqing regained political initiative almost overnight.²¹²

With its regained edge in political competition, the KMT leaders initiated another round of political offensive. Chiang had considered the possibility of negotiating with Mao directly for a long time.²¹³ He sent telegrams to Mao respectively on August 14, August 20, and August 23, inviting the CCP leader for negotiations at Chongqing.²¹⁴ Chiang's invitations were clearly based on the favorable political and military situation for the KMT, as he was in a good position to impose a "political solution" upon Yan'an. Meanwhile, the peace talk would at least

give KMT troops more time to finish their deployment.

Chiang's invitations to Mao attracted great sympathy among the Chinese public, especially those small party leaders and political activists, while imposed great pressure against the Communists.²¹⁵ Against such a background, Yan'an modified its uncompromising stance of the preceding months. A more cautious approach emerged quickly, which was formulated in an inner-party directive on August 22. The directive explained that the Sino-Soviet treaty and the KMT's monopolization of the right to accept Japan's surrender had disrupted the implementation of the party's military strategy. It reads:

*Under the circumstances, our army should change its policy immediately. With the exception of a few spots that should be occupied, we should employ a certain amount of troops to threaten big cities and main lines of communication in order to push the enemy and puppets to concentrate on big cities and communication lines. (Meanwhile, we should) send enough troops to seize small cities and wide areas of the countryside, expanding and strengthening the liberated areas, mobilizing the masses to struggle and get organized, and training troops, we should prepare for coping with the new situation, planning for a protracted (struggle).*²¹⁶

The tone of Yan'an's rhetoric towards the KMT also softened on August 22 when Mao replied to Chiang that he would send Zhou to Chongqing to resume the negotiations without precondition.²¹⁷ However, Mao changed his mind hours later and decided to go to Chongqing himself.²¹⁸ On August 23, the CCP Politburo convened an enlarged plenum. The party leaders concluded that since both Washington and Moscow opposed a large-scale civil war in China, it would make sense for the party to put forward the slogan of peace, democracy, and unity, and recalibrate relations with the KMT, at least temporarily. The meeting decided that Mao should go to Chongqing for talks while appropriate concessions could be made to resolve China's internal problems.²¹⁹

On August 26, two days before his departure, Mao drafted an inner-party circular informing the party that Chiang had monopolized the right to accept surrender and had strengthened his position by recovering Shanghai, Nanjing, and other big

cities, reopening sea communications, taking over the arms of the Japanese forces, and incorporating puppet troops into KMT forces. As a result, for the time being, the big cities and important communication lines would not be in the hands of the Communists. On the other hand, Mao suggested, the KMT also faced serious problems. It would take a rather long time for Chiang to take over big cities and main lines of transportation. The Soviet Union, the United States, and Britain all disapproved of a civil war in China. The KMT was also constrained by public calls for peace and unity. It was possible that, under domestic and foreign constraints, the Nationalists would conditionally recognize the CCP's legal status. The circular thus informed the party that the CCP was prepared to make necessary concessions. It was prepared to recognize the KMT's prominent position to "create a new stage of peaceful development".²²⁰ In that event, Mao argued, the party should strive to master all methods of legal struggle and strengthen its works in the KMT-controlled areas. On the same day, Yan'an instructed the CCB that the name of New Fourth Army should be maintained.²²¹

However, Yan'an also emphasized, these concessions were not to damage the party's fundamental interests. In the coming stage, Mao asserted, the party should continue its struggles and its troops should fight to control the main railways in northern China, to occupy as many villages, county, and higher administrative centers as possible, even if temporarily. After another a short period of offensive operations, Mao expected, it would be possible for the party to control most of the areas north of the lower Yangtze River, thereby strengthening its positions in negotiations with the Nationalists.²²²

Thus, it is difficult to argue that Mao's concessions and his willingness to come personally to Chongqing stemmed from a feeling of diplomatic isolation produced by Chiang's maneuvers. The situation probably disappointed the CCP leaders and their hope for an aggressive expansion after the Japanese surrender.²²³ However, it did not diminish those people's confidence in their own strength to defend political and military positions that they had won for themselves over the preceding years. The party leaders also never wavered in their belief that only through military victories

could they force Chiang to accept a political settlement. Therefore, in their eyes, it was still necessary for the party to continue its strategy of one-part talking and one-part fighting. As things turned out, while Mao was negotiating with Chiang at Chongqing, the CCP forces continued to expand their possessions by attacking puppet forces and isolated Japanese garrisons in north China.²²⁴

Mao arrived at Chongqing on August 28, 1945. In the following weeks, he and Chiang conferred with each other for several times. Meanwhile, representatives from both sides held many negotiation sessions. Yan'an prepared a proposal with six points before the talk. The CCP was now ready to make some significant concessions. It would abandon its previous demands for the right to receive the Japanese surrender while it reaffirmed its proposal to call a conference of all parties, and to convene a national people's assembly chosen via free elections.²²⁵ For the first time after the Japanese Ichigo offensive, the CCP moderated its demands in negotiations with the KMT.

After they arrived at Chongqing, the CCP leaders showed even more signs of compromise. They agreed to conduct the negotiations in secret. Only a brief communiqué would be issued after each day of conversation. On political questions, the CCP representatives generally adopted a low profile. They made it clear that the party would abandon most of their terms proposed in the previous months, such as the establishment of a coalition government and a coalition high command. Instead, they simply suggested that all parties and groups should participate in a political conference "to exchange views on national affairs and the convocation of the national assembly".²²⁶ They also postponed their program of "People's Congress of the Liberation Areas". Instead, they agreed to convene the national assembly in accordance with the KMT's plan. Initially, the CCP representative once suggested that the delegates to the assembly should be chosen through general elections. However, when the Nationalists' representatives raised objections, they retreated again and suggested that only one-third of those delegators of the national assembly should be chosen through supplementary elections. The CCP representatives also promised that

they would accept the KMT's leadership in the central government and cooperate with the KMT during the period of transition to a democratic regime. ²²⁷They emphasized that they would respect and support the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. All of these statements were actually the reincarnation of the party's rhetoric before the Japanese Ichigo offensive.²²⁸

With these concessions from the CCP, the two sides reached some agreement on political issues. ²²⁹They unanimously agreed that the tutelage rule of the KMT must be brought to an early conclusion and the period of constitutionalism be ushered in. It is also agreed that Chongqing should take necessary steps to convene a "political conference", composed of representatives of all political parties as well as those of party affiliation in order to discuss plans for peaceful national reconstruction and the problem of convening the National People's Assembly. The discussions of the political conference would be transparent and its decisions would be final and conclusive. With regard to military questions, it was unanimously agreed that all troops must belong to the state, that military authority must be unified in the hands of the central government, and that all existing troops must be effectively reorganized accordingly.²³⁰

As soon as more substantive problems were discussed, however, the two sides again got deadlocked. ²³¹As was to be expected, the most intractable issues were the questions of incorporation of Communist forces into the National army and the problem of political control of the "liberated areas" controlled by the CCP. ²³²Both Mao and Chiang keenly noticed that their political power of the CCP depended on the armed forces and territory under their control. As Mao demonstrated this sentiment in his report of On Coalition Government,

These people said to the Communists, if you give up your army, we shall give you freedom. If these words were sincere, then the parties which had no army should have enjoyed freedom long ago..... the democratic league and the democratic faction of the KMT had no military forces, yet neither of them enjoyed any freedom... just because they had no army, they lost their freedom. ²³³

Therefore, the CCP representatives firmly defended their stand on these two

issues, while the KMT adhered rigidly in the negotiations to its idea of military and political unification. In fact, the guideline that Chiang set for the talks was “be flexible on political problems but strict on military issues.”²³⁴ The Nationalists thus tried by every means to reduce the size of the “liberated areas” and cut down the strength of the CCP troops.

The paramount obstacle was the question of incorporating the CCP forces into the Nationalist military system, especially the number of Communist troops that were to be included. The CCP representatives suggested that their troops should be concentrated north of the Yellow River and a 7:1 ratio between KMT and CCP troops should be used in carrying out a military reorganization. Initially, the CCP representatives contended that their party should maintain 48 divisions. However, the KMT refused, arguing that because the current plan for a peacetime army consisting of only 80-100 divisions, the CCP as the minor side should not claim the right to approximately one half of the army. The CCP then insisted on a 7:1 ratio. Under pressure from Hurley, the KMT representatives finally offered that the CCP could maintain a maximum of 20 divisions and the CCP accepted. The two sides reached certain compromises on this issue but many difficulties still awaited real solution.²³⁵

The even more difficult issue was the CCP-controlled “liberated areas”. At the beginning, the CCP representatives demanded to control in effect those provinces in Northern China. After their demands were rejected, they finally proposed that all the “liberated areas” temporarily retain their status quo until the constitutional provision for the popular election of provincial government officials had been put into effect. Yan’an also claimed the right to appoint, select, and elect CCP governors and mayors in those provinces, Shandong and Hebei for instance, where they enjoyed military superiority. In response, however, the KMT negotiators criticized CCP proposals as “separatist rule,” and “treading in the footsteps of the warlords.” They insisted that governors of local government be appointed directly by Chongqing and they contended that until a constitution had been adopted and a democratic government inaugurated, the prerogative of appointing governors and officials was vested in the central government. Meanwhile, the CCP representatives argued that the status quo of

territory control should not be changed until the transition to a constitutional government had been finished. On this issue, not even a verbal agreement was reached between the two sides.²³⁶

Another problem left unsettled was the conflicting claims to disarm the Japanese forces and take over the occupied areas, which was the direct cause of the increase in armed clashes between the two parties in August. The KMT claimed its exclusive authority to send troops to occupied areas and to disarm the Japanese forces, while the CCP claimed the right to disarm the Japanese forces in areas where their forces had been active or had already surrounded the enemy troops. Again, no solution could be found.²³⁷

In conclusion, as Deng Ye suggested, the abandonment of their demand for coalition government and insistence on gaining control over provincial and local government indicated that, as the weaker side, the CCP were content with preserving their regional influence while temporarily abandoning their hope of fetching national power in the near future. However, on all issues that would immediately affect their power position, the CCP insisted on a set of minimum terms that would have at least preserved its territory and armed control, which would enable them to make another advance when a new opportunity came.²³⁸

Thus, the gap between the two parties' position was large and deep. In retrospect, as Tang Tsou argued, given the basic conflict between the KMT and CCP, civil war could have been avoided or postponed, if at all, only by a temporary accommodation which registered the existing balance of forces between them, was enforceable, and posed no threat to the position of either side. Thus, the only solution, would have been an arrangement under which China was temporarily divided, under some legal and administrative formula, into two zones, one ruled by the Nationalists and the other by the Communists, while the Nationalists government exercised some loose but over-all control to give the country a semblance of unity. Ironically, the CCP proposals offered just such a chance, however slim, of working out a transient arrangement. To be sure, such an accommodation would recognize the CCP's advantage in northern China and leave Yan'an a chance to expand in the future.

However, under such an arrangement, the ruling position of the KMT at the national level would not be threatened.²³⁹ With both diplomatic and domestic advantage in hand, however, the Generalissimo was apparently confident in his forces' strength to win the competition to unify the country quickly and impose a political solution upon the CCP. He thus refused to consider the CCP's suggestion, which in his eyes is a direct challenge to his national ruling status.

Due to the KMT's rigid position, no agreement could have been reached on the most pressing issues. To appease the public cry for peace and unity, the two sides agreed to issue a summary of the conversations on October 10, which emphasized the points of the agreement while not mentioning the inability to reach an agreement on the issue of disarming Japanese forces.²⁴⁰ Continued negotiations produced no results. The negotiations adjourned and Mao returned to Yan'an on the next day.²⁴¹

The leaders of the two parties interpreted the results of the Chongqing talks differently and each claimed victory.²⁴² The two sides also did not wait for further talks before intensifying their own military activities and quickening their race for control of China. Beginning in mid-October, the number of armed clashes increased sharply. While the CCP troops gave up their contests for southern and central China, they made a determined effort to extend their influence in the north and penetrate into Manchuria.²⁴³

Conclusion

Great power intervention and Chiang Kai-shek's successful foreign linkage management played a vital role in terminating an immediate civil war in China after the Japanese surrender. Through making some very difficult concessions on Outer Mongolia and Manchuria issues, the Nationalists government temporary win the Soviets' good will in its dealing with the CCP. Meanwhile, the status of legitimate national government with international recognition helped Chongqing to enjoy the privilege of receiving Japanese surrender. With the assistance of U.S. government, Chiang acted swiftly to exercise the exclusive authority of takingover. With supports

of foreign powers, the KMT finally reestablished its political and military advantage against the CCP.

On the other hand, the CCP was not well prepared to the drastic change of situation. In autumn 1945, the expansion of the Communists was once temporarily arrested. However, the CCP was far from being defeated. Even the Soviet assurances to support the Nationalist government could only weaken their bargaining position temporarily but failed to bring about a settlement on Nationalist terms at Chongqing. On critical issues of armed forces and territory control, the differences between the CCP and KMT are wide and deep. Both the KMT and the CCP continued their own political course.

Throughout the negotiation, Hurley adopted a rather passive gesture. Meanwhile, his government offered “all-out” support for the takeover of KMT troops. Such assistance in the name of “taking over Japanese surrender” may have been entirely legitimate for the recognized government. Nonetheless, considering the specific situation in China, America’s role in China’s an impartial mediator between the rival parties was compromised from the start. The aid of the Americans merely increased the determination of Chiang not to grant concessions.

Meanwhile, just as Washington found it necessary to grant limited aid to Chongqing for its own interests in China, Moscow could not but lend a hand to the CCP in Manchuria. Once Moscow had reached a new estimate of the military and revolutionary potential of the CCP, the Soviets gave more supports to the CCP. The power balance in China was again interrupted by foreign powers.

¹ Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder: China, the United States, and Their Policies for the Postwar Disposition of the Japanese Empire, 1941-1945*. Cambridge University Press, 2002, p.231.

² See, Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937-1945*, p 4.

³ Wei Daoming to Chiang, 12 March 1945, ZZSC 3(2), pp.542-543. pp.544-545, Zongtong Dashi, Vol.5(2), p.686-687. Gu Weijun, *Gu Weijun Huiyilu* (The Remembrance of Willington Koo, 顾维钧回忆录, hereafter cited as RWK), The Commercial Press 1990, Vol.5, p.540, pp.562-563; Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, pp. 19-20. Liu, *A Partnership of Disorder*, pp.243-246. Zhang Zhengjiang, *Lenzhan yu neizhan*, pp.66-67.

⁴ Koo to Chiang, 9 November 1944, ZZSC 3 (2), pp.539-540. Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, pp.233-234.

⁵ Chennault to Roosevelt, 19 April 1944, *FRUS*, 1944.: China, p.59;

- ⁶ *Zongtong Dashi*, Vol.5 (2), p.693-694.
- ⁷ Gauss to Hull, 4 July 1944, *FRUS* 1944: China, pp.113-115.
- ⁸ Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership of Disorder*, p.234.
- ⁹ Zhang Zhengjiang, *Lenzhan yu neizhan*, chapter 2.
- ¹⁰ *The China White Paper*, pp. 549-560; State Department memorandum for the Secretary of State, n.d. (July 1944), *FRUS*, 1944: China, pp. 484-485. Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, p.236.
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- ¹⁵ Michael Schaller, *The U.S. Crusade in China, 1938—1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp.197-198, 217-218; Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China, 1941-1950*(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963),pp. 182-183, 246-247; O. Edmund Clubb, *China and Russia: The "Great Game"* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971),p.341.
- ¹⁶ Hurley to the Secretary of State, 4 February 1945, *FRUS* 1945, Vol.7, p.851. Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, p.236.
- ¹⁷ Grew to Hurley, 12 February 1945, GRCE, box 1. Quoted from Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, p.237.*FRUS*, 1945, Vol.7, p.852
- ¹⁸ *The China White Paper*, 93-94.
- ¹⁹ *The China White Paper*, 93-94. Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, p.237.
- ²⁰ Memorandum of Dr. Arthur N. Young, 2 April 1945, *FRUS* 1945, Vol.7, p.859. See Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, pp.240-242.
- ²¹ Wang Shijie's riji, Vol.5. p.25, p.28, 2 January and 11 January.
- ²² Wang Shijie Riji, Vol.5, pp.27-28, 11 February 1945. Hurley to the Secretary of State, 8 February 1945, *FRUS* 1945, China, pp.855-856.
- ²³ Archeson to the Secretary of State., 27 February 1945, *FRUS* 1945 China, p.856; pp.857-858. *Zongtong Dashi*, Vol.5 (2), p.682. Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, p.243.
- ²⁴ Bohlen minutes of Roosevelt-Stalin meeting, 8 February 1945, *FRUS: Malta and Yalta*, pp.769-770; Harriman memorandum of conversations with Soviet leaders, 10 February 1945, *ibid.* pp. 894-895; Grew to Stettinius, 9 February 1945, *ibid.* p.961. Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, pp.243-245.
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- ²⁶ Bohlen minutes of Roosevelt-Stalin meeting, 8 February 1945, *FRUS: Malta and Yalta*, p.771, Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p.519.
- ²⁷ *Zongtong Dashi*, Vol.5 (2), p.686.Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937-1945*, p 210.
- ²⁸ *Zongtong Dashi*, Vol.5 (2), pp.686-687; Wei Daoming to Chiang, 12 March 1945, *ZZSC*, 3(2), pp. 542-543.
- ²⁹ Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations*, p 210, Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, pp.246-247.
- ³⁰ Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations*, pp.210-211.and Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, pp.247-248.
- ³¹ Tang Zong riji, 11 June 1940, *Tang Zong*, p.133; See also, Deng Ye 2011, pp.114-115.
- ³² See, Deng Ye, 2011, pp.114-117.
- ³³ *ZZSC*, 3(2),p.546
- ³⁴ Herbert Feis, *Japan Subdued: the Automatic Bomb and the End of the War in the Pacific* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961.),p.38; Stimson to the Acting Secretary of State, 21 May 1945, *FRUS* 1945, Vol.7, pp.876-878, Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, pp.248-249.
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- ⁴³ Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937-1945*, p 212.
- ⁴⁴ Grew to Hurley, 9 June 1945, *FRUS* 1945, China, pp.897-898; Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations*, p 213.
- ⁴⁵ *The China White Paper*, pp.92-93.
- ⁴⁶ Hurley to the Secretary of State, 15 June 1945, *FRUS* 1945, China, pp.903-904; *ZZSC*, Vol.3 (2), pp.567-568; Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations*, p 213.
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- ⁴⁸ Hurley to the Secretary of State, 4 May 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol.7, p.861.
- ⁴⁹ Minutes of Chiang-Petrov conversation, 3 June 1945, *ZZSC*, 3(2). pp. 549-552; minutes of

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- ⁵⁰ Minutes of Chiang-Petrov conversation, 3 June 1945, ZZSC 3(2), pp.549-551.
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- ⁵² *Zongton dashi*, p.2567.
- ⁵³ Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, p.251. Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations*, pp. 212-213.
- ⁵⁴ Minutes of Chiang-Petrov conversation, 12 June 1945, ZZSC, 3(2), pp.558-562; Soong to Chiang, 13 June 1945, *ibid.*, pp.563-564; minutes of conversation between Soong and Hopkins, 13 June 1945, *ibid.*, pp.565-567, Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, p. 250,p.256.
- ⁵⁵ RWK, Vol.5, p.549, pp.864-866, 869-872.
- ⁵⁶ Deng Ye 2011, p.128
- ⁵⁷ From his experience, Koo believed that the traditional approach of Chinese diplomacy, using barbarians to control barbarians, had never worked to China's advantage. RWK, 5(E), pp. 867-868. See Liu Xiaoyuan, *Partnership for Disorder*, pp.256-257.
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- ⁶⁰ Hurley to the Secretary of State, 29 July 1945, *FRUS: Berlin*, Vol.2, 1246.
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- ⁶³ See, Yee-Wah Foo, *Chiang Kaishek's Last Ambassador to Moscow: The Wartime Diaries of Fu Bingchang*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp.191-192.
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- ⁶⁸ Zongtong Dashi, Vol.5, p.2586. Chiang to Soong, 6 June 1945; Soong to Chiang, 6 June 1945; Chiang to Soong, 7 June 1945, ZZSC Vol.3 (2), pp.594-596. Liu Xiaoyuan, *Partnership for Disorder*, pp.261-262.
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- ⁷⁴ Minutes of Soong-Stalin conversation, 7 July 1945, ZZSC, Vol.3 (2), pp.599-602. Translation based on Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations*, p.219.
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- ⁷⁶ Wei to Chiang, 12 March 1945; Records of Soong's Conversation with Hopkins, 13 June 1945, ZZSC, Vol.3 (2) pp.542-543, pp.566-567.
- ⁷⁷ Truman, *Year of Decisions*, p.318, *Wang Shijie riji*, pp.118-119, 8 July, Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations*, p.218.
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- ⁷⁹ Harriman to Truman, 3 July 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol.6, pp.911-912. Liu Xiaoyuan, *Partnership for Disorder*, p.198.
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- ⁸¹ Soong to Chiang, ZZSC, Vol.3 (2), pp.508-509. Yee-Wah Foo, *Chiang Kaishek's Last Ambassador to Moscow*, p.191.
- ⁸² Minutes of Soong-Stalin conversation, 9 July 1945, ZZSC 3(2), pp.610-620. Yee-Wah Foo, *Chiang Kaishek's Last Ambassador to Moscow*, p.194.
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- ⁹⁶ Truman to Hurley, 23 July 1945, FRUS: Berlin, 2, p.1241. Liu Xiaoyuan, *Partnership for Disorder*, p.270.
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- ¹⁰¹ Deng Ye, 2011, pp.144-147.
- ¹⁰² Wang Shijie riji, Vol.5, pp.129-130, 24 July 1945. 25 July 1945. FRUS, Conference at Berlin, Vol.2, p.1246, *Zongtong Dashi*, Vol.5, p.2615.
- ¹⁰³ Wang Shijie riji, Vol.5, pp.138-139, 4 August 1945; Liu Xiaoyuan, *A Partnership for Disorder*, p.273, Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations*, 224.
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- ¹⁰⁵ Minutes of Chiang-Petrov conversation, 4 August 1945, ZZSC, 3(2), pp.640-642. Liu Xiaoyuan, *Partnership for Disorder*, p.273.
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Chapter 3.

The Political Consultative Conference and the Decline of Negotiated Settlements

This chapter examines the postwar political struggles between the CCP and the KMT to show how a political settlement for the conflict between the two sides became impossible under international mediation. Our narrative is focused on the Political Consultative Conference in early 1946, which presented the single best opportunity for a political settlement between the CCP and the KMT. Political forces in China had been discussing the convocation of a multi-party conference for several months.¹ However, the conference's actual convening should be attributed largely to the American general George Marshall's mediation mission to China. The involvement of the Americans changed political atmosphere dramatically while gave the conference a new agenda. Unfortunately, however, the political settlements that Marshall's mediation help brought were unsustainable in the Chinese context.

Domestic Stalemate

The Origin of the PCC

The idea of Political Consultative Conference (or Political Consultation Conference, the PCC for short, 政治协商会议) was first introduced as “multi-party talks” (党派会议) by the Communist Party in the People's Political Council (国民参议院) on September 15, 1944. Originally, it was designed as a supplement to the CCP's proposal of Coalition Government against the background of the KMT's military disaster in the summer of 1944.² When the KMT-CCP wartime negotiations

resumed in February 1945, the KMT representative Wang Shijie suggested that the conference should be reframed as “Political Advisory Conference”. As he argued, it should give non-partisans an equal chance of participation while its function should be defined as “advisory”(咨询). In another word, with no decision-making power. ³ Leaders of small parties and nonpartisan political activists also showed great interest for a multiparty conference. In June 1945, six political activists who held membership in the Political Council(国民参政会六议员访问团) visited Yan’an and met with CCP leaders. During their conversations, they agreed to promote the multi-party conference and its name could be changed to “political conference”, while its theme and objectives remained undefined. ⁴

No progress was achieved until the issue was raised again during the Chongqing talks. At a session on September 10, General Zhang Zhizhong proposed the name “Political Consultative Conference”, which was accepted by the two parties.⁵ After consulting with small-party leaders and non-party political activists, the KMT and the CCP finally reached agreement on the conference’s agenda and procedures in late September, and wrote it into the Summary of Conversations between the Nationalist government and the CCP in Chongqing negotiations(重庆谈判会谈纪要). ⁶ According to the document, the main agenda of the PPC included three points: “to exchange ideas on national affairs and discuss questions relating to peaceful state construction, the convocation of the National Assembly (国民大会)” and the problem of the CCP controlled area. ⁷ Apparently, those were issues of CCP disadvantage, which reflected the party’s inferior position after the initial round of post-war competition.⁸

The KMT-CCP Negotiations after the Chongqing Talk

Although the “political consultative conference” was put into the schedule, its prospect quickly turned poor after the Chongqing talks. The KMT and the CCP failed

to agree on the most important issues of military and territorial control. After Mao's return to Yan'an on October 11, 1945, representatives from the two parties continued their negotiations until November. Again, they proceeded very slowly.⁹ The deadlock was clear enough. The KMT insisted that integration of the CCP's troops into the central government's control (军令统一) must be prior to government reorganization(改组政府), while the Communists refused to compromise their control of armies and base areas unless political reform satisfactory to them was to take place. As Mao and CCP leaders clearly recognized, the survival of the Communists fundamentally depended on their possession of an autonomous armed force, their acceptance of the Nationalist precondition would have meant political suicide. On the other hand, the establishment of a genuinely democratic regime would have doomed the Nationalist in the near future, thus the KMT proposed to end its political tutelage and to inaugurate constitutional rule only in accordance with its own procedures and on its own terms.¹⁰

Thus, while political negotiations continued, military clashes broke out at various places in northern China. However, both parties encountered various difficulties in military preparation, and neither of them could ignore the calling of peace both from the domestic and international arena.¹¹ Oppositions for war came first from China's public. After years of domestic chaos, Chinese people desperately desired peace and order. In fact, at this time, the majority of people were quite neutral towards the political program of the two parties. Their paramount wish was quite simple: peace. During this period, citizens and students in various cities rallied and demonstrated, demanding an end to domestic conflicts after the Japanese surrender.¹² Neither the CCP nor the KMT could afford the loss of political legitimacy attendant upon an openly avowed policy of war. For the two parties, it was at least conceivable that some sort of compromise and tacit shifting between battlefields and negotiating table might compensate for their weakness without unduly compromising strengths. As General Marshall reflected later, "It was on this shaky and ambiguous ground that hope for peace in China flickered briefly before guttering out."¹³

In late October, the two parties agreed on the distribution of delegation membership for the PCC.¹⁴ However, negotiations ended in a virtual stalemate on the date of the conference. Since the agenda of PCC was to perpetuate its rule's legitimacy, the KMT did not resist the call for a conference.¹⁵ Instead, the KMT leaders were eager to press an earlier meeting, which would give a stamp of approval to their program of integration of CCP military forces and liberated areas.¹⁶ After the two parties' negotiation reached paralysis in late October, the KMT representatives suggested that the PCC should be convened on December 1 and all problems remaining between the KMT and the CCP should be brought to the conference for settlement.¹⁷

However, Yan'an had its own calculations. What bother them the most, nevertheless, was the agenda of the conference. To discuss problems such as military nationalization, they certainly preferred the format of a two-party talk, which would free them from public pressure.¹⁸ An immediate convocation of the PCC was politically destructive while insisting on postponing the conference would give the KMT a propaganda bullet, especially at a time when public opinion was strongly in favor of an earlier date.¹⁹

After his return to Yan'an, the strategic design of Mao was to take about half a year to create an advantageous condition in Manchuria and northern China. It was still too early for the party to make a compromise, he believed.²⁰ CCP forces exerted great effort in this period to disrupt transportation lines and tried to hinder the KMT's plan of sending troops to northern China and Manchuria.²¹ Meanwhile, to avoid any worse scenario, the CCP adopted stalling tactics in political negotiations. Yan'an refused to appoint their delegates to the PCC, which in effect made the conference's convocation impossible.²²

At the same time, the CCP made intensified propaganda efforts to lay the blame for the negotiation impasse on their opponent's military advance.²³ With the change of situation, however, the party gradually adjusted its passive profile. Firstly, its military situation improved. In late October and early November 1945, the

Communist troops led by General Liu Bocheng (刘伯承) and Deng Xiaoping won the Pinghan Campaign (平汉战役). This victory had significantly slowed the KMT troops' deployment along the Peking-Hankou railway and thus provided cover for other CCP forces to proceed to Manchuria. During the campaign, the KMT deputy commander-in-chief of the 11th War Zone, Gao Shuxun (高树勋), defected to the CCP side and with him a confidential order from Chiang to wipe out the Communists (剿匪手令) also fell into the hand of the Communists. Yan'an quickly took this opportunity to launch a propaganda campaign.²⁴

Moreover, international circumstance also improved for the CCP. Due to the clash of national interests and the Soviets' suspicions of the KMT's linkage with Washington, the frictions between the two increased daily in Manchuria. Especially after the retreat of the KMT's Northeast Headquarters from Shenyang (Mukden) in November, it became obvious to the CCP leaders that the KMT no longer enjoyed Soviet leverage on the two-party struggles, which they once held after the signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of the August.²⁵

As a result, in a telegram to its delegates at Chongqing, Yan'an suggested on December 1, 1945 that since Soviet attitudes had become more and more favorable in the previous weeks, the party should take the chance to resume political negotiation. The CCP decided to modify its propaganda tactics at first.²⁶ Besides mobilizing anti-war movements in the KMT-controlled areas, the CCP raised the issue of the PCC again.²⁷

To exert pressure on the KMT, the CCP appealed to the Democratic League and other democratic elements for a "united front".²⁸ As been discussed above, the so-called third force in China was a collection of several small parties and political organizations, the largest two being the Democratic League and the Youth Party. All of these parties were mainly made up of urban intellectuals, but they claimed the middle class (or national bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie) as their social base.²⁹ Many of them advocated that China should seek a third way between the

Anglo-Saxon road and the Soviet road. It must be noted that the essence of their conception of democracy was neither constitutional rule nor popular elections. Instead, the core of a “genuine democratic polity” in China, as they suggested, should be a coalition government including different parties and political elements through which the best interests of all social class would be balanced, checked, and compromised.³⁰ These political activists championed peaceful cooperation between the KMT and the CCP in this period, as they felt it was their sacred responsibility to bring the two parties together and promote democratization in China.³¹

Zhou Enlai once presented a very detailed evaluation of the third force’s position on the PCC issue. It was those small party leaders, Zhou suggested, who were most eager to have the PCC convened. Without an army or territorial control and with a lack of solid mass support, a multi-party conference was the best channel through which they could exert influence on national political issues.³² Thus, leaders of the small parties repeatedly proposed an early convening of the PCC and the National Assembly in the autumn of 1945. On December 2, 1945, the spokesperson of the Democratic League issued a statement declaring that the PCC should be convened in ten days. They also asked the CCP representatives for an earlier reply on this issue.³³

Against such a background, the CCP leaders realized that they should be active in the discussion of PCC. Their paramount concern was reframing the agenda of the conference. According to a plan drafted by Zhou Enlai on November 5, 1945, the party tried to add more issues, such as government reorganization, popular voting for the National Congress, and constitution-making, into the agenda of PCC and try to set them as the main topics. It was on these issues that the CCP would win cooperation from the third force and while shifting the targets of political discussion to the KMT’s one-party rule.³⁴ As they expected to change the PCC into a platform of a propaganda campaign, the CCP leaders’ posture toward the PCC became more and more active in late 1945. However, anxious about its limited military and political strength, until then Yan’an did not expect to achieve any substantial result from the conference.³⁵

International Momentum

What fundamentally changed the status of PCC, however, was the intervention of the Foreign Powers. President Truman's China policy statement, General Marshall's mediation and the communiqué issued after the Moscow Conference in December 1946 changed the country's political atmosphere and gave a strong impetus for political reform in China. The Political Consultative Conference finally enjoyed strong international momentum. The agenda and the substance of the conference were thus dramatically reformulated.

The Resignation of Hurley

Ambassador Patrick J. Hurley left China before the conclusion of the Chongqing talk on September 22, 1945, and awaited further policy instruction in Washington. Abruptly, this exhausted man resigned on November 27, 1945 and he issued a statement of scathing criticism that his efforts to support the Nationalist Government had been sabotaged by career members of his embassy.³⁶

In retrospect, Hurley's mediation mission covered one of the most crucial periods in Chinese political development. However, after the failure of his attempts in late 1944 and early 1945, the general had been simply swept along by the turbulent political currents in China. Especially at the critical juncture of the Japanese surrender, when the bargaining power of the CCP suffered a sabotage and their requirements turned moderate under Soviet pressure, Hurley failed to use the critical leverage of the U.S. government upon Chongqing to tame the KMT regime and bring about a transient political-military accommodation. ³⁷The result was that, as Tang Tsou suggests, "with the Soviet's direct intervention in Manchuria and the CCP's growing strength, the task of resolving the China tangle which was bequeathed to Marshall was consequently much more formidable than that which once confronted Hurley."³⁸

President Truman's China Policy Statement

Soon after Hurley's resignation, President Truman appointed General George C. Marshall as the U.S. ambassador and his special representative in China.³⁹ The U.S. Government, which had faced so many problems coping in the early postwar period, adopted a limited-intervention policy towards Chinese domestic politics.⁴⁰ They had no intention to support the Nationalists in internecine struggles but suggested that the KMT should solve domestic problems through negotiations and political reforms.⁴¹ In his instruction to Marshall on December 15, 1945, the President asked the general to bear the influence of his government to the end of the "unification of China by peaceful, democratic methods". Truman also expected that this would be the best way to repel Soviets influence from East Asia.⁴²

It had already been proved in the preceding months that American mediation did not work well in China, however.⁴³ For many observers, such as General Wedemeyer, the Marshall mission was doomed to fail. As he candidly reminded Marshall, Chiang Kai-shek was simply a feudal lord while the Chinese Communists were "Marxist-Leninist ideologues", which means, in a Chinese historian's words, "their positions and policies were diametrically opposed and the conflict between them was fundamentally irreconcilable".⁴⁴ Thus, these people suggested that there was no chance for Marshall to succeed in his mediation.⁴⁵

Nonetheless, Marshall's mediation achieved remarkable success at its first stage, and the two Chinese parties reached an agreement both in political and military affairs. Then, to understand why Marshall's mission failed at the end and why peace was not achieved in China, we should place a focus on the dynamic interactions between various American and Chinese visions of political reform. This study would show how a pursuit of the Western ideal of a liberal regime could in fact accelerate polarization in Chinese politics, break the fragile mutual compromise, and finally wipe out the hope of peace.

The goal of Marshall's mediation was set as to help the Chinese to establish a

representative government and to unify partisan armed forces into a single national army. This was the continuation of Washington's approach of past years.⁴⁶ However, different opinions still existed among U.S. officials. There were two visions in Washington. The U.S. War Department emphasized that, a future Chinese government must be "effective and unified" at first. Meanwhile, the State Department insisted on establishing a genuinely democratic regime.⁴⁷ Underlying the opposing strategies were their fundamentally different policy assumptions. Marshall and his colleagues in War Department argued that the creation of a strong and unified China was strategically important since it was the best way to stop Communist aggression in the Far East.⁴⁸ On the other side, however, the State Department, especially the chief of its Division of China Affairs, John Vincent, strongly criticized the Nationalist government. Vincent had paid great attention to the political opponents who in his eyes were daily gaining strength. Through him, the third forces finally became an important factor in the Americans' policy calculations.⁴⁹ In the end, President Truman made a compromise between these two views in formulating his China policy, which made General Marshall's position contradictory from the beginning of his mission.⁵⁰

On December 15, 1945, President Truman released his long-awaited statement on U.S.-China policy. The main thrust of Truman's statement, as Westad suggests, was to signal domestically and internationally the U.S government's "right" to intervene in Chinese politics.⁵¹ Throughout his carefully prepared statement, the President criticized the KMT's one-party rule while urged the broadening of government basis to include other political elements and attribute to them fair and effective representation. Meanwhile, he also pointed out that the existence of autonomous armies such as that of the CCP was inconsistent with political unity in China, and actually would make it impossible. Truman declared that all parties and groups in China had a clear international responsibility to eliminate armed conflicts. However, the U.S. government still recognized the Nationalist regime as the only legal government in China and the proper base to achieve the object of a unified China.⁵²

The imprecision of this statement left an impression that not was altogether

clear or helpful. As Hebert Feis commented later, those careful arrays of sentences did not tell anything about what the U.S. government intended to do. Each of the Chinese factions might be left in some degree of uncertainty while finding something useful for themselves. Soon after his arrival in China, Marshall noticed that both the KMT and the CCP “found in the President’s statement of United States Policy toward China justification for its attitude.”⁵³

Truman also suggested that the detailed steps necessary to the achievement of political unity in China must be worked out by the Chinese. Here, he disowned any intention of intervening in these matters. However, the President was never hesitant to offer his suggestions. Based on a typical American understanding of political affairs, Washington’s prescription was to expand the popular base of the Nationalist government. The following sentences were widely received by the Chinese as the clarification of “peaceful, democratic methods” suggested by Truman:

*The United States strongly advocates that the national conference of representatives of the major political elements in the country agree upon arrangements which would give those elements a fair and effective representation in the Chinese government. It is recognized that this would require modification of the one-party “political tutelage” established as an interim arrangement in the progress in the nation toward democracy by the father of the Chinese Republic, Doctor Sun Yat-sen.*⁵⁴

In his instruction to General Marshall, the President made his suggestion for Chinese domestic politics even clearer:

*It is my understanding that there is now in session in Chongqing a People’s Consultative Council made up of representatives of the various political elements, including the Chinese Communist. The meeting of this council should furnish Marshall with a convenient opportunity for discussions with the various political leaders.*⁵⁵

Ironically and unexpectedly, through this statement, the political status of the Political Consultative Conference was significantly enhanced by a foreign government almost overnight. The dispatch of Marshall’s mission would bring a

profound change in the political atmosphere of China. Both the KMT and the CCP were compelled to adjust for it.

The Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers

To evaluate the plausibility of Marshall's initial success as the peacemaker in China properly, one must also place it in a broader context of international politics. The Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers gives us a window to see other Great Powers' positions on this issue. The relation between the Moscow Conference and China has received some attention from historians recently.⁵⁶ However, from the perspective of Cold War history, their focus is on the debates between the Americans and the Soviets over the withdrawal of their troops from China.⁵⁷ However, what exerted an immediate influence on Chinese political development, as this study will show, were those phrases in the conference communiqué concerning China's political reform.

The communiqué issued after the Moscow Conference on December 27, 1945 was a joint declaration that covered a number of issues.⁵⁸ The most important consensus on China was made at the final meeting that ran beyond midnight into the early hours of December 28. During the meeting, U.S. Secretary of State James F. Byrnes revealed that General Marshall would be empowered to withhold all American support for Chiang's government to promote reform. He then urged the three powers to do nothing that might "hamper or handicap" Marshall in securing unity in China.⁵⁹

Later, the foreign ministers engaged in a detailed discussion on the form the new government should take in China. There were immediate differences as to the manner in which the Nationalists government might be reformed and broadened to include other political groups. Byrnes proposed a joint statement that read, "The foreign ministers reaffirmed... the need for a unified and democratic China under the National government and for the broad participation therein of democratic elements". However, Molotov wanted to see such representatives not only in the cabinet level but also in "other organs of government". Meanwhile, Britain's Foreign Minister Ernest

Bevin insisted that he could not agree to this without consulting London. Although the British argued that both versions proposed by Byrnes and Molotov signified interference in China's internal affairs, the Russians and Americans could not have cared less about this dispute. The disagreement on Soviet troops in Manchuria and American marines in northern China did not prevent the two western powers from reaching a consensus. Finally, Byrnes supported a statement, which ultimately was included in the conference's official declaration, that there was "a need for the broad participation of democratic elements in all branches of national government, and for a cessation of civil strife." They also reaffirmed "their adherence to the policy of noninterference in the internal affairs of China."⁶⁰ The Moscow Conference also signified that a multilateral mediation for China was impossible.

According to Xiang Lanxin, London had intended to prevent the "Moscow Declaration" from providing any legitimacy to unilateral mediation efforts by the American government. In fact, the British did not see eye to eye with Washington on its Far Eastern policy generally and on its China policy in particular. During the Moscow conference, it was America's hegemonic approach to international affairs in general, reflected in her efforts to monopolize Chinese affairs, but not the Soviets', which worried London. The British government was determined to reestablish its former influence and prestige in China in the post-war period. A civil war in China clearly had significant implications for British commercial interests. However, London had no choice but to take a back seat in the mediation process. The British government estimated that Marshall's mediation would "hardly succeed". Nevertheless, the Foreign Office clearly recognized America's primacy and determination to conduct unilateral mediation in China. London had no choice but to endorse the Marshall Mission in public.⁶¹

Britain's unwillingness notwithstanding, the intention of the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union, as pronounced in the Communiqué, was to broaden the base of the Chinese government. Meanwhile, the latter two's passive support for Marshall's mediation was also assured. In the eyes of the Chinese, it seems that the Big Three were now jointly intervening in Chinese politics. For politically conscious

Chinese, the main message of the Communiqué was quite clear: the National government was legitimate, but it had to be reformed.⁶² The international pressure for political reform was once again intensified.

Domestic Reaction to International Intervention

The Moscow Conference made it clear that the Western powers would not support either Chinese party's war plans. Washington would not extend unconditional aid to the KMT, while Moscow for its part continued to support only the Nationalists officially and refused to side with the CCP. Instead, they would promote the unity of China under Chiang Kai-shek's mandate, meanwhile, they also clearly called for government reorganization.

The KMT's Early Reaction

These developments caught the Nationalists in an awkward position. The open calling for political reform in Truman's statement of China policy was a shock to Chiang's postwar program. The KMT leaders thus showed an ambiguous reaction blended with expectation and anxiety regarding the intervention of the Americans.⁶³ On the one hand, continued U.S. support and assistance was vital for Chiang's military program of seizing control of north and northeast China. He expected that the increased American involvement would check Soviet aggression in Manchuria while strengthening the KMT's position in the conflict with the CCP.⁶⁴ However, on the other hand, many top leaders of the party also worried that the U.S. government in general, and General Marshall in particular, might adopt a neutral or "unfavorable" approach to the Chinese political problem that might force the KMT, in return for continued American assistance, to yield more concessions than military necessity would have dictated.⁶⁵

For instance, Chen Lifu, the leader of the KMT right wing, immediately showed to Chiang his caution on three points. Firstly, he suggested it would be much

convenient to solve the CCP problems through the Soviet channel. Secondly, the Americans, who did not have enough understanding of the Chinese special condition, might be easily manipulated by the CCP. Thirdly, he warned, the prospect of achieving a political settlement was rather slim but Marshall was too big a figure to accept any responsibility for a mediation failure; there was the possibility that the general would put all of the blame on the KMT. Chen thus advised Chiang to make it clear to the Americans that the CCP was an internal problem, and prevent them from intervention.⁶⁶

However, it was difficult for the KMT to ignore the Americans' suggestions of reform. General Wedemeyer warned the Generalissimo that he had received orders from his government to desist from transporting any more Nationalist troops to fight a civil war.⁶⁷ Without American help, the military situation in northern China was gloomy for the Nationalists. The KMT's dependence upon American aid did not allow them to refuse the intervention. As the attitude of the Americans was clear, it was impossible for the Nationalists to refuse or delay the arrival of Marshall.⁶⁸

Meanwhile, the Nationalist ambassador to Washington Wei Daoming probably helped Chiang to make the final decision. In his cable on November 27, 1945, Wei assured Chiang that Truman actually supported the Nationalist government strongly and that his policy statement was constructed largely for his domestic audience. Wei also informed Chiang that Truman had already told Marshall that if the mediation failed Washington would continue their support for the KMT. After hearing that, Chiang made a public declaration that there was no difference between the Truman statement and his own intention.⁶⁹

Reactions towards the communiqué of the Moscow Conference continued to be diverse among KMT leaders. Foreign Minister Wang Shijie showed optimism about reaching a compromise with the CCP after international intervention, while Chiang still regarded it as insulting the sovereignty of China and his own prestige.⁷⁰ The KMT's official propaganda organ, *Zhongyang Ribao* (Central Daily), thus asserted that China would not be bound by any decisions to which it was not a party. In public, the KMT leaders only emphasized that the Moscow communiqué was an endorsement

of its own policies and goals. ⁷¹

Adjustment of the CCP's Strategy

The CCP's daily newspaper in Chongqing, Xinhua Daily, also praised the Moscow conference and cited the joint communiqué to call upon Washington to withdraw its forces from northern China.⁷² Compared with the KMT, the CCP's praise was rather sincere. Although the Moscow conference did not result in a complete reversal of Soviet-American support for Chiang's leadership, it did renew Soviet-American pressure on both Chinese parties to agree to a cease-fire and broader political reform, which in effect provided the Communists with an opportunity to recoup from their recent political setbacks.

In fact, as Arne Westad suggests, the result of the Moscow Conference was to provide a respite to the CCP from the KMT's military pressure.⁷³ Up until the Moscow conference, the Americans were actively supporting the KMT's military drive into northern China and Manchuria. As will be discussed in next two chapters, in mid-November, after the Soviets' reversal of attitude in Manchuria to repel the CCP troops out of cities and stop blocking the influx of Nationalist forces into the region, obviously it was impossible for the Communists to gain unilateral control of the Northeast.

Meanwhile, the general disadvantage of the CCP's strategic position in China proper remained unchanged. In November, CCP troops suffered setbacks in northern China's Pingshui Campaign after fierce resistances of KMT general Fu Zuoyi(傅作义). The enemy's air and land counterattack in early December brought the CCP assault on the Beiping- Guisui railway to a sorry end. The CCP troops suffered heavy casualties and lost their tactical superiority in this region. Fu's forces thus firmly controlled the critically important Suiyuan-Peiping Corridor that separated Manchuria from northern China, which posed a severe threat to the CCP's position in northern China. The political and military reversals suffered by the CCP were severe. ⁷⁴

Fortunately, the KMT also encountered great difficulties in devoting more

troops to the region, especially under the condition that the Americans refused to offer further assistance. The perceived military stalemate was therefore provided a basis for compromise on both sides.

For the Communist leaders, it became clear that Moscow still acknowledged the America's leading role while Washington's intention of intervention was continuing to grow.⁷⁵ Their understanding of the linkage between international and domestic issues can be summarized from one of their internal circulars dispatched on November 28:

*The central problem of today's world politics is the conflict between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. The struggle between the KMT and the CCP is a reflection of this global conflict in China. The basic line of the U.S. China policy is support Chiang, suppress the CCP and oppose the Soviets (扶蒋、打共、反苏), while Chiang's policy is to neutralize Russia when attacking us... So the Soviets have to apparently isolate from us and try to neutralize Chiang from its international struggle with the U.S. Our central task is the domestic struggle with Chiang. On the one hand, we must state very clearly in public that we are independent from the Soviets; on the other hand, we should also try to neutralize the Americans, at least formally. To some extent, that would ease our difficulty for a while.*⁷⁶

The CCP, therefore, had to readjust its relations with the Americans. Hurley's resignation was certainly good news for the Communists. The CCP leaders thus tried again to neutralize the Americans.⁷⁷ On December 9, 1945, Zhou dispatched a telegram to Dong Biwu(董必武) for the arrangement of further negotiation. He predicted that Marshall's arrival might bring something new to Chinese politics, and the CCP should make good preparations for a political campaign.⁷⁸ However, Yan'an was still cautious. The strategy of the party was "being active in political issues while being defensive in military ones", while its policy of neutralizing the Americans was merely "a tactic of struggle".⁷⁹ On the fundamental problem of military issues, the party leaders would never concede and they were determined to force Marshall to withdraw after knowing the difficulties involved (知难而退).⁸⁰

For Mao and other CCP leaders, making use of the contradictions between Chongqing and Washington to impede Chiang's was an important struggle tactic.

⁸¹Mao believed that the possibility of avoiding civil war depended largely on foreign mediation, while the United States, as the dominant power in the Far East, would play a decisive role. Thus, on problems concerning China's domestic politics, he paid more attention to the Americans than to the Soviets.⁸² Truman's China policy statement on December 15 gave Yan'an hope that the Americans' attitude might change in its favor. The CCP leaders believed,

*The U.S. had already decided not to intervene directly in Chinese civil war, and not to support Chiang Kai-shek in trying to unify China by armed force. Instead, it is supporting China's peaceful unification. These changes in U.S. policy toward China are beneficial to the Chinese people's current struggle for peace and democracy, though the basic policy line of the United States is still to support Chiang.*⁸³

The very day that Truman issued his policy statement, the CCP leaders endorsed Zhou's proposal and decided to revive the KMT-CCP negotiations.⁸⁴ They showed even more enthusiasm in welcoming the Moscow Communiqué, as they estimated that the Soviets were now in agreement with Marshall's mediation effort. In their eyes, the Moscow Communiqué did not only represent the United States but also the other powers to carry out the agreement of the Moscow Conference.⁸⁵

Overall, the CCP's suspicions about U.S. intentions and impartiality were not swept away, and therefore it attempted to solicit the ambassadors of Britain and Russia in the Marshall Mediation effort, which in its expectation would check and balance the U.S. influence and leave more space for the CCP to maneuver. As in Liu Shaoqi's words, the independence of China had always relied on the balance between foreign powers and the so-called policy of using barbarians to check barbarians (以夷制夷). However, the Soviet side turned down the CCP's proposals immediately.⁸⁶

Nevertheless, for the Communists, the U.S.'s China policy had changed in their favor.⁸⁷ Truman's statement provided the CCP an excellent opportunity to change the agenda of its political debates with the KMT. Therefore, the CCP resumed its

political offensive. The party tried to construct the coming PCC as a multi-party forum to end the one-party dictatorship of the KMT. ⁸⁸ On December 17, the day after his return to Chongqing, Zhou presented in a press conference his party's proposal to reform the one-party government at first and then, through the new coalition government, to unify the different armed forces. ⁸⁹By then, the CCP leaders became more confident in the upcoming PCC. They would treat it as a forum to solve substantive problems over their relations with the KMT and make national post-war political arrangements. ⁹⁰

The Third Force

Who had been encouraged by the American intervention the most, however, were the third force leaders. It seemed that their requirements of political participation had finally gained international support. During the preceding months, these parties had watched from back stage, helplessly observing the KMT and CCP bargaining through bullets and empty words. They had tried many times to raise their voice, but all in vain. After two months of military clashes following the end of the anti-Japanese war, however, the strength of the Nationalists and the Communists finally reached a new equilibrium. Both sides needed support from the third force to break the balance.

Against such a background, the changes of international circumstance became extremely important. Truman's policy statement gave democratic elements unprecedented encouragement to call for peace and democratization. It seemed that they were empowered by foreign governments overnight. In fact, they had nothing to lose but much to gain in the coming political and military reform. Although to what extent they could use the international intervention to mobilize more support was always unclear, the third force activists, themselves, were mobilized at first. Their behavior became more and more active while their argument turned assertive. The upcoming PCC would be their best opportunity ever to fulfill their political wishes and they were determined not to lose it.⁹¹

According to some studies, the Chinese public showed appreciation and enthusiasm towards Truman's statement.⁹² However, this needs further analysis. In fact, according to British diplomats at Chongqing, "the trends of Chinese newspaper comment were not capable of clear-cut definition".⁹³ Both the KMT and CCP expressed themselves in general agreement with Truman's statement, but set out then to pin the blame on the opposing side. On the one hand, the CCP's Xinhua Daily(新华日报), in its editorial "Welcome to President Truman's Statement", was not hesitant to speak out that it was time to modify Sun Yat-sen's political doctrine in general and the interim arrangement of one-party political tutelage in particular, which were the foundations of the KMT's political orthodoxy. On the other hand, the KMT's public reaction also appeared to be quite positive. In fact, however, the government authorities had become somewhat nervous about the public political discussion which now seemed to be out of their control and the all-party conference from which so much was expected.⁹⁴ The main propaganda organ of the party, the Central Daily(中央日报), published an editorial named "On the statement of President Truman", which spared no effort to emphasize two points favorable to the government, the problem of autonomous armies and the continued recognition of the Nationalist government.⁹⁵

In a word, both the KMT and the CCP had their own selective interpretations of Truman's statement. The two sides even debated on the Chinese translation of Truman's statement.⁹⁶ Ironically, the two parties, while still claiming loudly the non-intervention principle, had accepted the fact that China was now under the American sphere of influence, and implicitly treated the U.S. government as the arbiter of Chinese political disputes.⁹⁷

More importantly, the public enthusiasm for political reform was mobilized by the President's December 15 statement. All shades of opinion paid great attention to the passage in Truman's statement advocating a conference by representatives of major political elements in China. Most urban residents hoped that the forthcoming

PCC would be authoritative enough to shoulder its political mission. ⁹⁸Even according to the British diplomats who always kept a cynical view of American mediation,

there was unanimity of opinion expressed as to the hopes of a solution of the present difficulties depending upon the prospective Political Consultative Council. The press had devoted a great deal of attention to this subject and hopes were repeatedly expressed that this body will produce a solution to the present troubles. ⁹⁹

President Truman's intrusion into the realm of Chinese internal politics also brought somewhat mixed reception. Somewhat confused feelings were indicated in the Dagongbao(大公报), the leading non-party newspaper of China during that time. While admiring the frankness of the United States vis-à-vis China, it confessed, "We are heartily ashamed of ourselves when listening to the President's advice". Some other newspapers expressed the hope that American mediation might offer "a great possibility for the improvement of the tumultuous situation in our country."¹⁰⁰

In a word, people's demand for political reform rose to a historical high during this period. The intervention of the Americans pushed the different political elements in China to change their strategy while reframed public discussion on the country's political problems significantly. The American initiative combined with the military stalemate in China in this juncture exerted considerable influence on political development, especially by mobilizing people's enthusiasm, or at least those of the urban political elites, for democratization. The atmosphere of Chinese politics had been definitely changed. All of this would be reflected in the agenda and the process of the upcoming People's Consultative Conference.

The KMT's Return to the Negotiation Table

Because Marshall's mediation effort was so popular among the Chinese public in early 1946, it imposed great pressure on Chiang to return to the negotiations. The Generalissimo knew quite well that he could neither afford to antagonize Marshall by refusing to engage in negotiations with the CCP, nor openly attack the CCP without

alienating public opinion as it would leave the impression that his KMT was the party of war while the CCP, supportive of the mediation effort, was the party of peace.¹⁰¹

Confronting the unprecedented public enthusiasm for political reform, the KMT's initial reaction was rather negative. Only in a few months, the Nationalists quickly lost initiative on political struggles which they had enjoyed in the autumn. As the formation of a coalition government once again became the focus of political discussion, what those KMT propaganda organs could do was to argue that a harsh democratization did not fit China's situation and that the country should have a unified and stable central government at first. Both in their public statements and during their private conversations with small-party leaders, some top officials of the Nationalist party also used the agreement of the Chongqing talks as an excuse to refuse to discuss the coalition government issue in the upcoming PCC.¹⁰²

Within the KMT, there were three different views regarding the CCP problem and political reform in postwar China. The first group, including the C-C clique (C-C系, led by Chen Guofu and Chen Lifu) who controlled the party organization, and the military faction (黄埔系), wanted to terminate the negotiation and eliminate the CCP on the battlefield. Another approach was just the opposite and was held by some liberal leaders, mainly from the so-called Political Study Faction(政学系). These officials suggested that it was impossible to solve the Communist problem by military force. From their point of view, a political agreement with Yan'an that would persuade the CCP to surrender its armed force to a new government in which their party could still keep a leading role would be a more realistic solution.¹⁰³

However, Chiang Kai-shek, the party's authoritative leader, had his own consideration. His plan was to use the KMT's military advantage to impose upon the CCP a quick surrender.¹⁰⁴ Against the new situation, Chiang returned to the political channel reluctantly. Besides ever-increasing public calls for peace and increasing pressure from the U.S. government, military reality also constrained Chiang. The Nationalists once sought a quick victory in their military action against the Communists. Otherwise, it would be very difficult for them to sustain their offensive.

However, their troops performed poorly on the battlefield in the past weeks as the party suffered a serious manpower shortage in northern China, not to mention in Manchuria.¹⁰⁵ Nearly every rail line in northern China was blocked by the CCP troops, which caused economic and social chaos. It was precisely this military deadlock that gave Chiang a fundamental impulse to revise his strategic plan.¹⁰⁶

On December 16, the day after the release of Truman's statement, Zhou Enlai and other CCP representatives flew back to Chongqing.¹⁰⁷ On the same day, those KMT delegates assigned to the political negotiations had a gathering to discuss plans for the upcoming conference. Considering domestic and international pressure, the moderate leaders formulated their own plan for the PCC. First, the unity of the political and military order had to be maintained. Administrative positions in central government could be shared, but only under the condition that the local government authority must be put under effective, central supervision. Considering the National Assembly, its constitution-making role must be maintained. Even if the CCP problem could not be solved, the Nationalist government would give the small parties some participation in the central government, which would win public support and international sympathy.¹⁰⁸

These KMT high-ranking officials, who were now advocating a compromise, had close personal relations with Chiang during this period. The Generalissimo finally accepted their suggestions. On December 23, Chiang made up his mind that it was better to let the CCP participate in the central government than to give it autonomy in local government.¹⁰⁹ It must be pointed out that, until this time, most of the Nationalist leaders, especially, did not pay serious attention to the upcoming PCC. They did not expect that the conference would make real decisions and simply treated it as a talking shop through which they could pacify international and domestic pressures.¹¹⁰ However, the later development of the PCC was quite beyond their expectations and disrupted the whole political plan of the KMT.

The PCC Conference

Marshall's Arrival and the Reaching of Cease Fire Agreement

Marshall arrived in Shanghai on December 20, 1945. After a brief stop, he proceeded to Nanjing and met Chiang there. During their meeting, the Generalissimo asserted that there was a definite connection between Moscow and Yan'an, while he also charged the Soviets with aggression in Manchuria.¹¹¹ Marshall's first meeting with CCP representatives was on December 23 in Chongqing. During their conversation, the Communist representatives expressed their desire for a cessation of hostilities and the establishment of a coalition government.¹¹²

Among the foreign government representatives who directly involved in Chinese politics, Marshall was certainly the most prestigious. After his arrival, the general was heavily lionized and his every movement was front-page news in China. All Chinese factions were seeking advantageous points in the American general's statements. In the eyes of the British diplomats, there was "fever in the political air" of Chongqing.¹¹³ A professor of Peking University, Ma Yinchu (马寅初), once complained in an essay that it seemed that the destiny of China was now in Marshall's hands.¹¹⁴ As recorded by Marshall himself,

*I received a tremendous volume of letters from Chinese throughout the country. The vast majority of these constituted evidence of the awareness of the Chinese people of the critical condition of their country and many of them were pathetic in their assumption that the fate of China rested solely on the success of my mission. This attitude is indicative of the state of mind of many Chinese at present, who see little hope for their country except through the influence of the United States.*¹¹⁵

Marshall's peace mission produced immediate results. To discuss a ceasefire, a committee of three was formed. It included General Marshall as the chairperson, General Zhang Qun from the KMT, and Zhou Enlai. After heated debates, the ceasefire agreement was announced on January 10, 1946, the day before to the

opening of the PCC. ¹¹⁶The agreement called for a general truce to go into effect on January 13, and a halt to all troop movements in northern China, with the right of government forces to take over Manchuria was acknowledged.¹¹⁷ This success was undoubtedly great. ¹¹⁸ With the immense influence of his government, reinforced by his own talents, the American general was able to break the deadlock and succeeded in helping to construct an elaborate structure of agreements to cease military clash.

On January 23, during his private conversation with the Generalissimo, Marshall clearly warned Chiang that two factors in his opinion made it imperative for him to find an agreement with the CCP for a unified government and army at an early date. Firstly, the KMT regime was vulnerable to low-level Soviet infiltration methods of strengthening the CCP while the progressive weakening of the KMT government's position in northwest China and Manchuria. Meanwhile, he warned Chiang that United States forces cannot be continued for long in China.¹¹⁹

The Convocation of the Conference

On December 31, 1945, the Nationalist Government announced that the Political Consultative Conference would be convened on January 10, 1946. Previously, a provisional list of delegates to the PPC had been agreed at Chongqing on November 27, and it was finally published on January 6, 1946. ¹²⁰According to the list, the conference was composed of eight delegates from the KMT, seven from the CCP, five from the Youth Party, nine from the Democratic League, and nine non-party representatives for a total of thirty-eight members. ¹²¹The PCC participants, although not democratically elected, were acknowledged by to be representative of the major and minor political organizations within the Chinese political arena. ¹²²

Considering their basic political originations, the Democratic League delegates usually aligned themselves with the Communists. The Youth Party generally struck a middle-line of their own, while the non-partisans tended to advocate compromises slightly favorable to the KMT. Against such a background, the KMT could not enjoy authority and the role of the third force became crucial.¹²³

One of the most important problems for the PCC was that, prior to its convocation, the scope of authority of the conference and the binding power of its decisions were not clearly defined. Legally speaking, the conference was designed as a consultative body to prepare for the National Assembly. The PCC resolutions should be subject to the governing bodies of each party for approval. In fact, that is why the KMT was willing to assign so many seats to other parties. Nonetheless, with the change of political atmosphere, especially after the American promotion of government reform and multi-party conference, great expectations were placed in the PCC. The conference had become the focus of popular attention and a great symbol of political legitimacy. Even after the conference's failure, as Susan Pepper suggests, the authority of the PCC agreements was still invoked by the Nationalists government and other parties to legitimize their subsequent political actions.¹²⁴

All groups participating were thus morally obligated to accept its decisions. Besides its status, the other significant change brought by the American intervention was the conference's agenda. From the beginning, the KMT insisted on maintaining the agenda that the CCP had agreed at the Chongqing talks. However, as the political circumstances changed, other political forces could no longer accept it.¹²⁵ Both the CCP and the third force expected to initiate substantive political reforms through the PCC.¹²⁶ On January 26, after discussion with his close advisers, Chiang decided to make some substantive concessions in the upcoming conference, including maintaining the status quo of the CCP's local control.¹²⁷

As the conference started, the critical problem of the conference agenda was eventually solved, after heated debates, by the curious expedient of entrusting the decision to the "Five-man Consultation Sub-Committee". The sub-committee would designate the following five subjects: government organization, administrative program, military problems, the National Assembly, and the Draft Constitution. The CCP and those small parties finally managed to reset the agenda of the PCC while attributed the conference function of constitution making.¹²⁸

The Resolutions

The process of the Political Consultative Conference was one of continuous debate and confrontation.¹²⁹ Those most controversial topics of the conference were the National Assembly, Government organization, and the Draft Constitution.¹³⁰ The possibility of package deals or “synergistic linkages” opened up myriad opportunities for negotiators to affect what happened in various arenas.¹³¹

National Assembly

One of the most important issues for the PCC was the question of the National Assembly. After heated debates, delegations from different sides finally agreed to convene a “National Constitutional Assembly” on May 5, 1946. The Assembly would adopt a constitution by a vote of three-fourths of the delegates present. The original 1,200 members under the 1936 law of the Assembly would be retained, but the membership would be increased to 2,050 with the additional delegates chosen from non-KMT sources among various parties and social leaders (700) and from Taiwan and the northeastern provinces (150).¹³²

Throughout debates on the issue of the national assembly, Zhou Enlai and other CCP delegates showed a remarkable degree of flexibility to win the support of non-KMT delegates, and they finally formed a de facto united front to exert pressure on the government representatives.¹³³ The final agreement on this issue represented a concession on the part of the Communists, as it closely approached the original KMT demand to retain the previously elected delegates of 1936 while neglecting the Communist demand that an entirely new election be held for delegates to the assembly.¹³⁴ However, in return for this concession, the KMT delegates agreed to grant concessions on other issues, especially on government reorganization.

Governmental Organization

On governmental organization, the conference resolved that, before the convening of National Assembly, the impotent State Council of the Nationalist government would be reconstituted so that it would become “the supreme organ of the Government in charge of national affairs” with both supreme legislative and executive powers. The council would be a multiparty body made up of forty state councilors, half of them from the KMT and the other half comprising other political parties or prominent social leaders. The Executive Yuan was also to be reorganized as the highest organ under the State Council. General resolutions of the State Council required a simple majority of the councilors present, but resolutions involving changes in major administrative policies would require a two-thirds majority of the councilors present. This coalition government in the form of a new state council and a reorganized Executive Yuan would rule China until the establishment of a constitutional regime. ¹³⁵ In effect, as Tuan-sheng Chien, a leading political scientist of China then, suggested later, the PCC resolutions assured the Communists a veto on any proposal designed by the KMT to perpetuate its power in the upcoming transition stage. ¹³⁶ It was a great success for the CCP and other small parties.

However, the various sides reached a deadlock on the distribution of the seats in the state council among small parties. This question was very sensitive to the parties’ future power, thus instigated great conflict inside the camp of the third force. Small party leaders failed to reach a consensus even when the conference ended, and the issue was left for further discussions. ¹³⁷

Draft Constitution

On the question of the Draft Constitution, the PCC resolved to create a “Committee for the Reviewing of the Draft Constitution” which would draw up a comprehensive scheme for the revision of the 5 May 1936 Draft Constitution (五五宪

草) on the basis of the principles recommended by the conference.¹³⁸ The principles laid down by the PCC to govern the revision embodied the quintessence of liberal thought, which was unfavorable to the KMT.¹³⁹

The most important and controversial principle in the outline was the stipulation that the Legislative Yuan would become the supreme law-making body of the state. It would be elected by the general electorate, while its functions were to correspond to those “of a Parliament in a democratic country”. The resolution also provided for a British-style cabinet form of government with the Executive Yuan responsible to the Legislative Yuan. The President of the National Government was allowed to enjoy emergency powers but only to the extent granted by the Executive Yuan, thus repudiating the KMT’s concept of a strong presidency. Moreover, the province as the highest unit of local government would have its own constitution while provincial governors would be elected by the people. The authorities of the provincial and central government would be divided. In areas recovered from the Japanese, the status quo would be maintained until a settlement was made by a reorganized government.¹⁴⁰

On the Draft Constitution issue, then, the conference proposed radical revisions. The dominant chord of the revisions was distrust of a one-party government, a system to which Chiang and his party were hopelessly tied and which their opponents were most determined to break.¹⁴¹ It also offered a great autonomy of local government, which was closed to the CCP’s position. It was not surprising that this issue would become the focus of conflict after the conference.

The Third Force in the PCC

The PCC was a golden time for those small parties and non-partisan political activists. In fact, delegates who held a more determined and aggressive posture during the PCC were not the CCP representatives but delegates from small parties. The conference was certainly an unprecedented opportunity for them. They had no stake in the struggle over army and territory, thus enjoyed the moral high ground.¹⁴² Their

leaders participated actively in every discussion group and criticized the Nationalist government rigorously, especially on sensitive issues such as government reorganization and constitution-making. They also strongly promoted a western mode of a coalition government.¹⁴³ The most significant instance was Dr. Zhang Junmai (张君勱, also transliterated as Chang Chun-mai or Carsun Chang), the chairman of the China Democratic Socialist Party, who proposed a British-style constitution design which was accepted as a basis for the new constitution.¹⁴⁴ However, unfortunately, this very success caused greatest troubles later.

In sum, the resolutions of the Political Consultative Conference promoted a radical transformation of the Chinese political system. Nonetheless, Marshall's personal remark on the PCC resolution deserves special attention here. During his conversation with British Air Vice-Marshal MacNeece Foster, Marshall once commented privately on the development of the PCC. According to the British account, the American general said that he had to speak some plain words to the "doctrinaire school of democracy". In his eyes, those democratic activists in China who participated in the PCC were adopting an entirely unrealistic attitude, as they were demanding from the start a form of democracy "so advanced that it would have no parallel even in the United States." Such a political institution, according to Marshall, "could only be evolved and made workable after a relatively long process", while the Chinese are "the naturally most conservative and traditional people in the world" in his eyes.¹⁴⁵

Marshall's heaviest doubt rested on the institution design of the Draft Constitution. It had been tentatively approved that the patterns of Chinese central government would follow more closely the British pattern in the future. Marshall was anxious that this was a danger for Chinese democracy in its infant stage. The British-style political institution would lead to the undermining of essential authority, which had to be trusted and effective for peace and reform in China.¹⁴⁶ In retrospect, Marshall's concerns were very plausible. Considering the fragile balance between the KMT and the CCP, while it might have been possible to achieve a temporary

arrangement, any attempt to promote drastic political reform was doomed to failure.

However, those third force delegates, who were in a frenzy at this stage, failed to notice that danger lurking behind. Unfortunately, and ironically, it was exactly those radical reforms advocated by democratic elements, but not those of the Communists, which incited the strongest backlash from the Kuomintang. As things turned out, all of the idealistic progressive principles laid down throughout the PCC became controversial topics that polarized Chinese politics, which made peace diminished in next few weeks.

In retrospect, it was more realistic for the PCC to adopt a moderate scheme of power sharing rather than a drastic institutional change. It would much more helpful for the third force to play a moderate role of mediators between the CCP and the KMT, rather than naively pursuing their own political ideals and interests. The activists pushed the democratization process too harshly, which in turn spoiled the best political opportunity they ever enjoyed.

The Progress

After successfully passing a series of resolutions, the PCC finally closed on January 31, 1946. The news of the success of the PCC became known to people on the following day, which happened to be Chinese New Year's Eve (除夕). This was also the first Chinese New Year after the victory of the war against Japan. Therefore, there were celebrations throughout the country. However, public optimism for peace in the country was short-lived.

The CCP's Enthusiasm

The CCP and those small parties all applauded the PCC Resolution, which indeed fulfilled their major demands.¹⁴⁷ For political institution design, since the CCP leaders knew that they could not capture the executive branch at once, they promoted a powerful legislature that would check and balance the power of the cabinet

dominated by the Nationalists. According to the PCC Resolutions, every party would compete for votes to determine their political fate, which brought better hope for the CCP who had stronger political mobilization and organization capability. Since it was still difficult for the party to take power at the national level soon, the CCP managed to ensure the larger autonomy of the provinces. Its representatives also advocated a popular election of local governments, expecting that their mobilization tacit and well-developed grassroots organizations would give them control over important regions, thus keep a solid power base during the democratic transition. The autonomy of local government would also help the party to keep its liberated areas by another name.

Thus, Yan'an was quite satisfied. The CCP leaders gave the resolution very positive remarks and decided to adjust its political and military strategy accordingly. On January 31, soon after the conclusion of the PCC, Mao immediately authorized Zhou to transmit his deep "appreciation" to Marshall for the general's "fair attitude and methods".¹⁴⁸ The Chairman even expressed his personal appreciation for democracy in America and asked Zhou to tell Marshall that he would like to visit the United States, since "there are so many things I could learn from America."¹⁴⁹ Commenting on the development of the situation, Mao told the entire party on February 2 that the thrust for the success of the PCC was at the first from President Truman, then from the Moscow Conference and its communiqué, and finally from Marshall and domestic democratic elements, including those inside the KMT.¹⁵⁰

No matter whether Mao's message to Marshall was just a gesture or a true reflection of his new evaluation, or even both, the Communists leaders did hail the PCC as a triumph. On February 1, 1946, Yan'an dispatched a confidential circular titled "On the Current Situation and Our Task". It confidently declared, "The new stage of peaceful, democratic development in China had now finally come." Drafted by Liu Shaoqi, but revised and approved by Mao, the circular informed all party members that the PCC resolutions were to implement "the principles of the division between the party and the government", to establish "the parliamentary system and the cabinet government", to provide "self-government in local areas", and the

“popular elections of provincial governors”. “Our party and our army will be legalized”, the circular, asserted,

*The main thrust of Chinese revolution had changed from armed struggle to non-military parliamentary struggle. From then on, domestic issues should be settled through political means; and therefore, the whole work of the party should adjust to the new situation.*¹⁵¹

Yan’an even warned in the circular that the “major danger” within the party was now “the narrow-minded and closed-door outlook among many of our comrades.” Therefore, the circular called upon the whole party to do a better job in overcoming the “leftist” deviation of “not believing that civil war could end, not believing that peace could really be achieved, and not believing that Chiang Kai-shek, under all around pressures, could implement democratic reforms.”¹⁵²

Besides appraising the U.S. government’s mediation, classifying Chiang as a representative of the centralist faction inside the KMT was the other intellectual foundation of the CCP’s strategy adjustment.¹⁵³ A CCP intelligence memo of February 6 reported, “The Soviet Union, Great Britain, the United States, and Canada are all pleased with the PCC resolution”. Moreover, it suggested, “According to the opinions of Sun Ke and those key members of the Political Study Group, Chiang would not change his position on the PCC resolution, despite the KMT militants’ outrage against it”¹⁵⁴ For the CCP leaders, it was particularly important to isolate the “anti-democratic forces” within the KMT to ensure the implementation of the PCC resolutions. Thus, a compromise with the Generalissimo to ensure his agreement was both possible and necessary. As Yan’an suggested on February 7, 1946,

Now we must closely cooperate with Chiang, Sun Ke... and other members of the Political Study Group, to strengthen the forces of pro-democracy within the KMT, and to oppose the forces of anti-democracy within the KMT, the C-C and military cliques.

As a friendly gesture, the CCP thus decided to stop its propaganda offensive against the Nationalist government.¹⁵⁵ Its leaders even considered cooperation with Chiang directly. On February 1, for instance, Zhou Enlai met with Chiang and

conveyed Mao's ideas of "separating party from army, and long-term cooperation" between the two parties, which exactly meant that the army would be separated from political parties, and the KMT and CCP should cooperate with each other on a long-term basis.¹⁵⁶ Zhou also expressed Mao's personal willingness to participate in the reformed central government.¹⁵⁷ According to some historians who enjoyed the privilege of access to classified CCP documents, in an earlier politburo meeting, Zhou Enlai had raised an even bolder plan for cooperation with the KMT. He suggested reaching a gentleman's agreement between the two parties on sensitive issues like power sharing in government, mutual consultation outside official channel, and even running for election together.¹⁵⁸

Preparing for "a new stage of development of peaceful and democratic reconstruction", the CCP also made a series of substantive arrangements. The party decided to restructure its military system and party organization to fit the new pattern of political competition.¹⁵⁹ They even considered moving the station of their party center. On February 2, Yan'an send a directive to General Chen Yi asking him to consolidate the base areas in Jiangsu province, since the party center might move from Yan'an to Huaiyin, a town near Nanjing.¹⁶⁰ Preparation work for such a movement had started.¹⁶¹

The CCP leaders also drafted their nomination list for the new State Council, including four representatives sent for the Executive Yuan. The party's three most prominent leaders, Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai, were all on the list.¹⁶² It was a signal of their commitment to the PCC resolutions, which tried to reassure the KMT. In sum, the CCP was satisfied with the PCC resolutions, and its leaders had shown unprecedented enthusiasm for a peaceful democratic construction and party cooperation with the KMT.

The Army Reorganization Agreement

The biggest concession made by the CCP after PCC was military issue, namely the nationalization of the army, the hub of the dispute between the two parties in past

years. In the February 1 directive of Yan'an, there is a paragraph which has largely been overlooked by former studies, and which in fact hinted at the CCP's changing attitude on this issue:

*The Communist Party will soon join the National Government; all those other parties might also come to our liberated area to participate in government. Our military force will be formally integrated into the national military force and local national guards. After this integration and nationalization of our army, the political supervisor(政治委员) system will be abolished, the party branches at all levels in the army will quit out and the Central Committee will not issue any direct orders to the troops. Currently, this would be the only way to legalize our army and our party, and the only way to get an exchange of nationalizing the KMT's party army. Therefore, this compromise will serve the best interest of the Chinese people.*¹⁶³

Integration of CCP armies and control of liberated areas were the most sensitive issues during the KMT-CCP negotiations. After the conclusion of the PCC, the military reorganization negotiation entered a crucial phase. The CCP was quite anxious on this issue even after the success of the PCC.¹⁶⁴

Nevertheless, with the intervention of Americans again, political conditions turn out to be much more favorable for the CCP than its leaders could expect. Marshall proposed a thorough reform of Chinese military system in early February, not only the CCP troops but the KMT forces were included. Under his influence, the principles for the army reorganization adopted by the PCC resolution were “separation of army and party”, “separation of civil and military authorities” and the “civil control of the army”. That means that the negotiation now under the supervision of Marshall was based on the ideal borrowed from Western civil-military traditions.¹⁶⁵

The point here is that, contrary to the expectation of Chiang and quite beyond the two parties' former agreements, not only the Communist troops but also the Nationalist ones would become the subject of military reorganization. The issue of army reorganization, which used to be to the advantage of the Nationalists, thus became a double-edged sword for both the KMT and the CCP.¹⁶⁶ Marshall's

intervention again reformulated the substance of KMT-CCP bargaining.

Subsequent negotiations focused on two points: the ratio between the Nationalist and Communist troops, and the necessary steps to reorganize and merge the armies.¹⁶⁷ On the KMT-CCP troop ratio, the KMT representative General Zhang Zhizhong proposed a ratio of 7:1 (90 divisions - 15 divisions), while Zhou Enlai suggested 9:2 (90 divisions - 20 divisions). The final compromise of the negotiations was a ratio of 5:1 (90 divisions - 18 divisions).¹⁶⁸ On the procedures to reorganize and merge the armies of the two parties, the Nationalists proposed that at the first stage both the KMT and the CCP forces should be reorganized into mixed formations with the division as the basic unit in 12 months' time. Then, there would be a complete blending of the forces with no further distinction between Nationalist and Communist armies.¹⁶⁹

However, Zhou Enlai strongly objected this proposal. His suggestion was that both sides would separately reorganize their own troops without any mixing of forces at the first stage, and only in the second stage would their armies begin to be merged. The complete merger of forces, Zhou added, would have to await further discussion. In the end, both sides accepted a proposal from Marshall. After the first six-month period of reorganization, the merger of forces, taking the multi-division army as the basic unit, would be carried out in northern China, while all force in the northeast and central China would be reorganized. In the second six-month period, the merger of forces would occur at the division level. The complete merger would be discussed in the near future.¹⁷⁰

Both Mao and Chiang had reservations about Marshall's proposal and their top concerns were quite similar, the integration and deployment problem, which were definitely linked with their respective party's power base. For the CCP leaders, their calculation was realistic; "without an army, we would become another Democratic League".¹⁷¹ Mao gave a speech at a politburo meeting on February 12:

The U.S and Chiang Kai-shek want to wipe us out via nation-wide troop unification. What we want is unification but not being wiped out. The separation of the party from the army is not the most dangerous thing; instead, merger and

redeployment of the troops is the most dangerous... We can only ward off danger by managing things well. The nation-wide unification of forces is something in principle we must support, but at the steps to bring it about, we must look very carefully. This is where we differ from the France.

Here, Mao was inclined to maintain the party's strategy of the preceding months: "participate in the government while firmly keeping arms in hand". Only after repeated explanations of Zhou Enlai did the Central Committee finally decided to accept Marshall's proposal.¹⁷²

Meanwhile, many KMT generals, especially those former warlords, also became anxious about the mixing of forces due to their fear of losing their personal power base.¹⁷³ In his diary, Chiang once expressed his unhappiness on this issue, complaining that Zhang Zhizhong had "really messed thing up".¹⁷⁴ Even General Zhang, himself, became anxious about an early integration of troops.¹⁷⁵ However, Zhang quickly found comfort after receiving Marshall's proposal on February 19. He then suggested to Chiang, "the most important issue in the reorganization of the troops is the problem of integration and deployment; if after 6 months, the troops will merge in the unit of an army, and the deployment problem will be solved simultaneously." Since the redeployment plan would move CCP troops out from their base areas, this was certainly a de facto fulfillment of the KMT's long time goal of dismantling the CCP's territory control.¹⁷⁶ Thus, the KMT leaders accepted reluctantly the reorganization agreement and made certain preparations to implement it.¹⁷⁷

The CCP leaders were fully aware of the value of their armed forces as the party's fundamental asset. Then, why did the CCP leaders, keenly noticing the great risks of army reorganization, finally accept an arrangement that entailed a great concession? In fact, the decision-making process was difficult and there was much discontent inside the party.¹⁷⁸ However, the secret lied more on some details of the military reorganization agreement. According to Article VI of the agreement, each province was authorized to maintain a Peace Preservation Corps in proportion to the population of the province. Even before the negotiation on the military issue started,

Liu Shaoqi had reminded the CCP delegates that the party should pay more attention to the problem of local forces, which would keep more autonomy after the military reorganization. The party could maintain its military strength in this form. As its troops could stay in the base area in the name of Peace Preservation Corps, the CCP could still keep enough forces to secure its local power base.¹⁷⁹

Besides, the schedule of army reorganization was also favorable for the CCP. The enforcement of the agreements would take some months, thus both the nationalization of the armed forces and the convening of the National Assembly would take place only after the new coalition government was established at first.¹⁸⁰ In the previous months, the most crucial and most controversial issue between the Nationalist and the Communist was that political reform or military reorganization which one should be implemented firstly. In effect, the agreements under Marshall's mediation explicitly endorsed the position of the CCP.¹⁸¹ Marshall's presence unintentionally changed the agenda and process of Chinese domestic politics.

The Backlash of the KMT

At the first stage of Marshall's mediation, the Western political-military model became the standard of judging political legitimacy. The Nationalist government repeatedly lost face in the public sphere and it made significant concessions during the Political Consultative Conference. The party also lost its initiative on the military reorganization program, which in turn made its army generals strongly dissatisfied.¹⁸² The KMT was certainly a loser in political game after Marshall's mediation.

In his address to the closing session of the PCC on January 31, the Generalissimo made some statements regarding the resolutions of the conference. He asserted,

“I have followed and studied closely the various resolutions adopted by the conference...I wish to declare first on behalf of the Government that they will be fully respected and carried out as soon as the prescribed procedures have been completed.”

Chiang also swore that as a citizen he would observe the decisions of the conference faithfully and resolutely.¹⁸³ However, it was not long before the serenity of the scene was disturbed. As soon as the PCC adjourned and the military agreement was reached, successful implementation of the agreements became doubtful. Disquieting incidents, such as an attack by alleged KMT plain-clothes men during a mass meeting held at Chongqing to celebrate the success of the PCC, police interference with minority party delegates to the PCC, and an attack on the Communist Party newspaper premises at Chongqing during the nationwide anti-Soviet protest (discussed in next chapter) in February, all served to strengthen the fears that irreconcilable elements in the KMT might sabotage the program worked out by the conference. ¹⁸⁴Commenting on these actions in his personal statement issued on January 7, 1947, Marshall recalled,

*“I must say that the quite evidently inspired mob actions of last February and March, some within a few blocks of where I was then engaged in completing negotiations, gave the Communist good excuse for (such) suspicions.”*¹⁸⁵

Oppositions within the KMT

To understand the breakdown of the PCC agreements, we should pay more attention to the inner-party dynamics of the KMT. The outcomes of KMT-CCP bargaining are contingent upon both intra-party and inter-party dynamics: neither a purely intra-party nor a purely inter-party analysis can account for the fate of the settlement. The adoption and the implementation of the agreements among negotiators are possible only after they have forged sustainable coalitions inside their groups.

Historically, the KMT was quite diverse in its composition, with a number of cliques, factions, and interest groups. The different elements were clearly divided on the proper approach to deal with the Communists, and the policy debate on the CCP problem was inevitably linked to the power struggle inside the KMT during the reception of Japanese surrender, which in turn made the things even more tangled.

Generally speaking, the “hawks” included both the majority of leading generals of the Whampoa faction(黄埔系), as well as General Bai Chongxi(白崇禧) from the Guanxi Clique (桂系), and those conservative civilian leaders who controlled the party organs (notably the C-C Clique and the Youth Corps). On the other end, the so-called “doves” also included influential and pragmatic officials who had a close personal linkage with Chiang, such as Zhang Qun, Wang Shijie, Zhang Zhizhong, and Shao Lizi. From the final phase of the Anti-Japanese War until the conclusion of the PCC, partly due to close personal linkages, but more based on the changing national political agenda, the moderates as administrative experts enjoyed more political privilege and had more influence on Chiang’s decision-making.¹⁸⁶

These “doves” had tried to push some political reforms to expand their party’s power base. They believed that the party must cede its smothering grip on political power to foster national unity and social stability. But their plans faced determined opposition from other KMT leaders enriched by the status quo. With the proceeding of the PCC, right-wing party officials had begun to worry about their future and many KMT generals also expressed anxiousness.¹⁸⁷ Having enjoyed the one-party dominant status for a long time, the Nationalist cadres had little experience of power-sharing and no preparation for open political competition. Its civil cadres and army generals were unwilling to give up their various perks and prestige. The resolutions of the PCC and the prospect of democratization horrified them and intrigued great anxiety inside the KMT.¹⁸⁸

The PCC resolutions immediately caused an uproar from the C-C clique and the military cliques inside the KMT.¹⁸⁹ The C-C clique, who controlled the party administrative system of the KMT, showed their strongest opposition. From a perspective of party capability, the faction’s leader Chen Guofu warned Chiang that the PCC could not bring any favorable result and would only serve the CCP’s advantage at the expense of the KMT. If the transition to a multi-party coalition government came true, Chen said, as the person in charge of KMT party affairs, he was sure that without a robust organization and without sufficient mobilization

capability, the Nationalist party was destined to suffer a disastrous failure.¹⁹⁰

Many other higher-rank government officials, including regional war-lords such as Yan Xishan(阎锡山), also seriously opposed the army reorganization program.¹⁹¹ They questioned the sincerity of the Communists in carrying out those agreements.¹⁹² Nonetheless, in the name of the interest of their party or even national interest, what they were most concerned with was their personal control over the troops and the private prestige that came with it. Against strong pressure from their colleagues, even the liberals turned anxious towards the PCC resolutions.¹⁹³

Chiang Changes His Mind

Meanwhile, moderates inside the KMT, especially the delegates to the PCC, such as Sun Ke, Wang Shijie, and Shao Lizi, still tried hard to defend the PCC resolutions and argued fiercely that both the PCC and army reorganization were in the KMT's interests.¹⁹⁴ Inside the KMT, every faction needed Chiang's support for their program and it was Chiang's attitude that would finally decide the policies of the party. However, on the other hand, the power of the Generalissimo was limited because he had to recognize all factions within the KMT (and some outside), with the result that he served as a balancer and had to resort to compromise to keep a semblance of party unity.

According to Yang Kuisong, it seems that the Generalissimo did not pay serious attention to the PCC, at least at its early stage. Like many of his followers, Chiang regarded the conference as an advisory organ without real power. Facing strong international and domestic pressure, he was also ready to tactically accept some kind of political reform which would enhance his own prestige as the leader of the nation.¹⁹⁵ With the progress of the conference, however, Chiang had started to consider his party's political and military strategy after the conference. For instance, only a week after the Conference's convocation, on January 18, 1946, Chiang personally ordered the head of KMT secret police Dai Li(戴笠) to consider future arrangements of Dai's

work after the government reform.¹⁹⁶ Chiang was quite confident that he could control the situation in the future and he did not refuse to broaden the base of the government.¹⁹⁷ However, there was no sign that he would accept any concession of his personal power.¹⁹⁸

It seems that Chiang's various positive statements toward the PCC in these weeks were not simply gestures. The Central Standing Committee of the KMT convened a meeting on February 2. During the meeting, Chen Lifu warned that the PCC resolutions would severely damage the KMT, while Wu Zhihui(吴稚晖), a longtime right-winger, condemned the PCC as a coup against the KMT. Some members of the Standing Committee even suggested prosecuting the PCC delegates of the KMT, particularly Sun Ke, for their "violation of party rule and criminal behavior". On the same occasion, nearly all the military leaders who participated, headed by General He Yinquin, claimed that they would never accept the resolution.¹⁹⁹

Nonetheless, after hearing all those complaints, Chiang Kai-shek pledged his support for the PCC resolutions. "China needs peace", he said. "How can we say that this is a failure to our country?" After the meeting, Chiang continued persuading the dissatisfied cadres privately. On many occasions, he commented that the Nationalists' setbacks on the battlefield and political arena should be to a greater extent attributed to the loss of the revolutionary morale of the Nationalists. The PCC resolution, Chiang argued, should be treated as a wake-up call for the KMT, "It will bring us good if we can learn from it, not fight against it", Chiang asserted.²⁰⁰ At his meetings with military generals some days later, Chiang also emphasized that it was the party's military shortcomings that caused the party's failure in the PCC. He asked his followers to exercise restraint and compromise.²⁰¹

However, the rapid development of situation went beyond the expectations of the Generalissimo. The PCC had finally decided to set up a regime of multi-party democracy and a cabinet system, which would not only reduce KMT dominance but also Chiang's personal authority. Some of the KMT officials even showed strong direct dissent towards Chiang.²⁰² After examining the text of the PCC resolutions

carefully, the Generalissimo finally noticed the severe challenge to his personal leadership and the threat to his party's unity. He could not tolerate it and then became more and more anxious. As Chiang reflected later, the three weeks around the PCC was the most painful time in his life.²⁰³ What hurt Chiang the most was the draft constitution, which was designed to adopt cabinet system. This arrangement, proposed initially by the smaller parties, would put Chiang in rather an awkward position. If the Generalissimo wanted to hold the highest personal status, he would have to choose to be the president without true power. Instead, if he wanted to grasp administrative power, he would have to choose to be the head of the Legislative Yuan. However, if so, Chiang would suffer the risk of losing power after a popular vote.²⁰⁴ Neither option was in Chiang's favor.

Thus, Chiang's attitude underwent a subtle change. On February 10, Chiang invited some other KMT leaders for consultations. He finally made clear to these people his opposition to the PCC resolutions, especially the draft constitution. He asserted that the draft constitution did not fit China's situation and the political principles of the KMT. To pacify inner-party resentment, Chiang finally found an excuse that the decision to pass the PCC resolutions was based on the behavior of the delegates. As Chiang clearly refuted the PCC resolution, the anti-PCC activities of the reactionary forces received great encouragement.²⁰⁵

Another reason for Chiang's shift of position was that he was dismayed by the military reorganization agreement, which had left the Communists more preservation in the short run while reducing Chiang's personal control over Nationalist troops in the future. The Generalissimo once expected that, through major concessions on political issues, his government would solve the problem of the CCP's military force thoroughly.²⁰⁶ However, he did not get the return he had expected. His entire plan was in vain after Marshall's mediation. As he complained in his diary, this was the "biggest loss of our government". After being frustrated on military issues, Chiang was more determined to have firm control of political power.²⁰⁷

The KMT's Betrayal

Against this background, the Second Congress of the Kuomintang's Central Committee met from March 1 to March 17 to discuss the party's post-war politics and pass the PCC resolutions. It was a conference of endless policy debates and inner-party struggles.²⁰⁸ Forceful attacks were imposed by right-wing factions on cadres who were in charge of the KMT's economic and diplomatic takeovers. Nonetheless, the greatest controversy was the PCC resolutions, and especially on the draft constitution principle. Right-wing leaders, who strongly opposed the PCC resolutions, tried by every means to attack their opponents inside the party. Wang Shijie and other PCC delegates were singled out for attacks by many committee members, the majority of whom were supported by the reactionary party boss.²⁰⁹

At the end, Chiang had to personally appeal to those members to refrain from personal criticism of the delegates. On March 11, Chiang delivered a speech at the weekly memorial service of Sun Yat-sen. He pointed out that recently party members had been attacking and abusing one another in their speeches. Particularly noticeable was the abuse and reproach heaped upon representatives of the PCC. Chiang warned that when mutual trust among comrades in the party is lost, it was tantamount to a loss of confidence in the party. The current PCC resulted entirely from his decision, Chiang asserted. In the future, all problems must be settled politically and it would be more difficult than resorting to arms. The party must employ political deftness as well as forbearance. He concluded that he would accept full responsibility for the PCC.²¹⁰

However, it seems that those cadres in the KMT did not listen to him well. On March 16, Chiang Kai-shek had to personally attend the congress when it discussed the report on the Political Consultative Conference. With Chiang's presence, it was passed without dissent. The report on the investigation of the constitution was handed over to the standing committee.²¹¹

Nevertheless, many influential KMT leaders were determined to revise the PCC resolutions. Chiang himself also changed his mind on this issue. Considering the international and domestic constraints, however, no party dared to openly attack the

PCC resolution, and the conference “ratified unanimously” all PCC agreements in the end. However, opponents did not give up making trouble on the principles approved by the PCC as the basis for constitution making.²¹²

They quickly found an excuse. According to the Program for Peaceful National Reconstruction, “principles of the San Min Chu I (the three principles of people, 三民主義) will be regarded as the highest guiding principles for national reconstruction”. Therefore, propaganda organs of the Nationalist party strongly argued that the Draft Constitution Resolution of the PCC must be revised to conform with Sun Yat-sen’s idea of the “Wu Quan Xian Fa (or Quintuple-Power Constitution, 五權憲法)” and San Min Zhu I of which the Kuomintang itself was the authoritative interpreter. They also argued to place curbs on provincial autonomy and to keep a presidential government, opposed to the cabinet system approved by the PCC.²¹³ They emphasized that the reorganization of the Government to take in other political elements must be based on the existing legal system. The PCC was not a constituent convention legally, they argued, and only the convocation of the National Assembly could bring about the conclusion of the period of political tutelage. With these public criticisms by the KMT leaders upon the PCC resolutions, the political atmospheres became poisoned during the CEC conference. The hope for a political settlement became dimmer.²¹⁴

Reactions of the CCP

Debates on the PCC resolution continued in the Conference’s Standing Committee after the adjournment of the KMT second congress. Apparently, the most controversial issues were whether more power should be given to the National Assembly, whether the tri-power system advocated by the PCC should be abandoned for Dr. Sun Yat-sen’s theory of the five-yuan program, and whether provinces should be granted a separate constitution. The CCP and the Democratic League argued that the PCC resolutions had been agreed upon by duly authorized representatives of all parties, indicating that they would oppose any major changes to the resolutions.²¹⁵

The controversy was also manifested as to the allocation of the twenty (out of forty) seats on the proposed State Council not reserved for the KMT, of which the Communists and Democratic League both demanded fourteen seats, while the Youth Party suggested that the fourteen memberships should be divided among it and those two parties. The Nationalists also made it clear that they would not grant the CCP and the Democratic League joint veto power in the State Council. Due to the conflict among the small parties, the deadlock was finally reached on the allotment of the number of state councilors.²¹⁶

Zhou's Compromise

With enormous pressure from Chiang and conservatives inside the KMT, Sun Ke appealed to Zhou Enlai for concessions.²¹⁷ At this stage, inter-party negotiators were involved both in a competitive relationship and in a cooperative relationship in defending the decisions and outcomes of negotiation, thus they played “over the shoulder” of their respective negotiating partners, seeking to affect the other side’s internal dynamics.

However, the negotiators of the Democratic League refused the suggestions of Sun flatly, while Zhou persuaded them that politics was a very realistic matter and that they should find a way to help the KMT progressives to save the situation and to make the PCC resolutions work in China.²¹⁸ On March 15, Zhou and the representatives of the Democratic Leagues told the KMT delegates that they would make some compromise to accept three revisions on the problem of draft constitution, namely that “the National Assembly will be an actually existing body; that Section 6 Paragraph 2 of the PCC Draft Constitution Agreement, which stated that the Legislative Yuan has the power of consent and power to pass a vote of censure on the Executive Yuan while the Executive Yuan should not have the power to ask for the dissolution of the Legislative Yuan, should be cancelled; and Provincial Constitution should be changed to Provincial Self-Government.”²¹⁹ In exchange, however, Zhou insisted that the KMT must make a public pledge that it would ratify the PCC

resolutions immediately and refrain from raising further revisions.²²⁰ However, Zhou's tacit compromise received little support from the third force. No agreement reached.²²¹

Mao Changed His Mind

Zhou's concession was also quickly overturned by Yan'an.²²² The CCP leaders paid close attention to the struggle inside the KMT. On March 15, at a Politburo meeting, Mao suggested that the reactionary forces of the capitalist world were launching an anti-Soviet, anti-Communist, and anti-Democracy movement for another time, and they were still the main enemy of the CCP. Mao still gave Chiang a middle position evaluation and estimated that a compromise would be possible. Nonetheless, He also paid much more attention to warning his followers of the danger of losing guard.²²³ On March 18, in his telegram to the CCP delegation in Chongqing, Mao expressed strong opposition to Zhou's recent concessions to the KMT. Mao criticized that they were "extremely inappropriate" and "had to be revised immediately." He strongly argued, the KMT's second congress "firmly opposed democratization... In such a circumstance, we should neither participate in the National Assembly nor join in the government."²²⁴

This rapid toughening of the attitude of the CCP leaders has its deep roots. The dissemination of documents in early February had caused a great deal of confusion within the ranks of the CCP. This mood was particularly evident after the CCP signed the military reorganization agreement with the KMT.²²⁵ The prospect of wide-scale demobilization naturally caused great anxiety, especially when many cadres had deep suspicions of the KMT and the Americans. Based on their experience of years struggle with the Nationalists, the overwhelming majority of the CCP military cadres shared Mao's suspicion of Chiang and they had no confidence in Marshall's ability to constrain Chiang effectively.²²⁶ The views of General Huang Kecheng (黄克诚), now with his troops in Manchuria, was typical.²²⁷ In his remarkably sincere memoirs, he recalls his thinking at the time that "I did not have much faith in the KMT's

willingness to really stop fighting”²²⁸

The top leaders of the party, especially Mao himself, were of a double mind too.²²⁹ On the one hand, in the hopes to promote the peace process and political reform, they were ready to implement the cease-fire agreement, the PCC resolutions, and military reorganization agreement. That is why Yan’an issued a series of directives and dispatched high-ranking officials to all the liberated areas to engage in explanatory work for strategy adjustment.²³⁰

On the other hand, however, Mao and his colleagues also kept a high degree of vigilance and tried to maintain strength in case of the KMT’s betrayal. Their trust in the Nationalists and the Americans was rather slim. As Mao warned, “If either the U.S. or Chiang Kai-shek should drag things out for say, half a year, some comrades may forget the second point, namely, that Chiang is tolerating us for the time being so that he can wipe us in the future. They may feel that the world is at peace and everything is hunky-dory. This is extremely dangerous.”²³¹ In the Politburo meeting on March 15, the Chairman made it very clear, “We must reduce the number of our troops, but it is not a case of the fewer the better.”²³²

As the KMT’s reactionary trend became more and more clear, the attitude of the CCP in turn became more and more stern. On May 17, Mao sent a telegraph to the CCP delegates in Chongqing, pointing out that after hearing the news from the KMT’s second CEC, the CCP should take a solid line and reconsider the problem of participation in the government.²³³ On the next day, Yan’an sent a general instruction to the whole party. For the first time in several weeks, it suggested that the reactionary nature of Chiang had not changed. Only through serious struggle could the party change the situation. Mao also dispatched a directive to Chongqing, ordering the revision of Zhou’s earlier concessions.²³⁴

Most importantly, the CCP decided to postpone the convention of a new session of its Central Committee on the ratification of the PCC resolutions. The party leaders also decided to delay the military reorganization process by not turning in the lists of its 18 divisions which were supposed to be reorganized and incorporated into the national army.²³⁵ The CCP’s counteractions caused a further right-turn of the KMT

which made the situation into a downward spiral. The slim mutual trust between the two parties vanished very quickly. ²³⁶

The hardening of the CCP Central Committee's position received support from many of its high-ranking military officers as well as the rank-and-file. Few CCP regional military leaders had really prepared to "leave his sword and gun in the storehouse and set free his war horse in the mountain", as Westad once argued.²³⁷ Instead, many of them, especially those party leaders in Manchuria, had been suspicious of the KMT's motivations ever since the negotiations started. Huang Kecheng and Li Fuchun, two prominent military leaders in Manchuria, wrote to Mao on March 2, 1946, questioning whether a political solution or "make continued concessions" to the KMT was the best way to protect the CCP's interests. If the central leaders supposed that the CCP could reach its goals by concessions, they argued, "We might as well retreat". However, they argued, there was a high possibility that "Chiang and the KMT will not put down their swords because of our concessions," and the "Kuomintang's massacre can break out anytime." This mood was widespread among the party's local leaders, who had fought with the Nationalists for decades. Their recommendation was that the CCP should now raise its guard and prepare to settle the conflict on the battlefield. ²³⁸

The Road to a Final Showdown

Nevertheless, until this point, Mao did not want to go so far as to abandon the approach of a political solution. From mid-March through early July 1946, as many scholars argue, Mao was still convinced that the relationship between America and the Soviet Union was not a matter of when to break up, but a matter of when to reconcile. Thus in his view, Marshall would sooner or later force Chiang to compromise with the CCP. On the other hand, Mao estimated that the "moderate forces" and the "middle forces" represented by Chiang in the KMT had two objectives: the first was a long term plan to wipe out the CCP in the end, the second was the short term objective of preserving the CCP on the temporary basis. ²³⁹

Thus, the best way to force Chiang to compromise, Mao argued, was to demonstrate the CCP's military strength and fighting resolution to deter him, not by continued political concessions to appease him.²⁴⁰ Certainly, the CCP still needed to make necessary concessions, Mao argued, but to win the bargain against the Nationalists, the CCP must fight back against the KMT provocation and resolutely against the "unreasonable demands" of the KMT now. By doing so, Mao believed, "the result will be much better than simply making more compromise and greater concessions to the Nationalists!"²⁴¹

Meanwhile, the CCP still held great expectations regarding Marshall's role in bringing about a further ceasefire in the northeast. Mao repeatedly asked Zhou to tell Marshall that he should return to the U.S. only after resolving the Manchuria problem.²⁴² However, these hopes soon vanished. Following the signing of the military reorganization agreement, the American general believed he should pay a brief visit to Washington and report to the President on the situation in China, and he was particularly anxious to take up the issue of transfer of surplus property and the problem of loans to China. President Truman approved his recommendation. Marshall accordingly departed on March 11, 1946, which marked the end of the first phase of his mission.²⁴³

Soon after his departure, the Soviet troops began to withdraw from Manchuria between mid-March and mid-April. Mao decided that the CCP must speak from a position of strength in the Northeast to force Chiang to make concessions at the negotiation table.²⁴⁴ Beginning in mid-March 1946, Manchuria was thus chosen as the proving grounds of both the CCP and the KMT.

Conclusion

Involvement of the foreign powers, especially the mediation efforts of General Marshall, brought a dramatic change to China's political game in late 1945 and early 1946. Quite beyond people's expectation, it helped to initiate a strong wave of political reform and imposed great challenges upon the Nationalist regime. With

Marshall's presence, the PCC and the negotiation on military reorganization reached a comprehensive settlement of China's problem, generally in favor of the CCP and the smaller parties. However, these negotiated settlements drafted out in accordance with western political ideals did not fit China's reality well. Encouraged and Empowered by Marshall's mediation, the idealistic and political immature third force pushed political reform too harshly. These radical reform plan unfortunately provoked a strong backlash from the Nationalists while the CCP and other parties refused to retreat. The impasses on political settlement thus presented the background for a final military showdown between the CCP and the KMT in Manchuria.

¹ See Kangri minzu, vol.2, p.16, pp.63-64, and pp.93-97.

² Chongqing shi zheng xie wen shi zi liao yan jiu wei yuan hui and Zhong gong Chongqing shi wei dang xiao eds, Guo min can zheng hui ji shi comp, *Guo min can zheng hui ji shi*(The Records of the People Political Council, 国民参政会)(Chongqing : Chongqing chu ban she),vol.2,pp.1348-1349

³ Wang Shijie, "Tanpan jingguo(The Process of the negotiation)" in Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong hui yi lu*(The Memoir of Zhang Zhizhong,张治中回忆录)(Beijing : Wenshi ziliao chubanshe, 1985),pp.708-711,see also, Stuart to the Secretary of State, 27 September 1946, FRUS, 1945,vol.7,pp.230-231

⁴ *Guo min can zheng hui ji shi*, pp.1436-1437.

⁵ Record of the KMT-CCP negotiation on 10 September 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (2), p.53 for a more detailed discussion on this issue, see Deng Ye, 2003, p.260.

⁶ "Zhengzhi huiyi wenti tanhua yaodian(Note of the Discussion on the political conference issue)",in Deng Jiuru,*Hetan fuzhe zai zhongguo*(The Negotiation Failure in China, 和谈覆辙在中国),Taipei,Wenhai chubanshe,pp.143-145. For a detailed record on the discussions of PCC issue during the Chongqing Talk, see, Lee Ben-nan, *Zhengzhi xieshan huiyi yu guogong tangpan*(The Political Consultation Conference and the KMT-CCP Negotiations, 政治协商会议与国共谈判)(Taipei,Yongye chubanshe,1993),pp.46-58

⁷ "Summary of Conversations between Representatives of the National Government and of the Chinese Communist Party", For a English Version, see *The China White Paper*,p.578, 580

⁸ Deng Ye 2003, p.201. Deng Ye 2011, pp.209-215.

⁹ *Chongqing Tanpan Jishi*, pp.410—417 and Yang Kuisong, *Shiqu de jihui*,p. 222

¹⁰ *Marshall's Mission to China, December 1945-January 1947: the report and appended documents* (Arlington, Va.: University Publications of America, 1976), (here after Marshall's Mission), p. xxv. See Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China*,p.402

¹¹ Wang Chaoguang, "Zhang yu he de bianzou" (A Variation on War and Peace: The Evolution of China's Political Situation from the Chongqing Negotiations to the Political Consultative Conference), *Jindaishi yanjiu* (Modern Chinese History Studies, 近代史研究) 2002(1) , p.32 and Deng Ye, p.262; See also *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*,pp.734-736

¹² For more detailed analysis on this issue, see, Suzanne Pepper, *Civil War in China : the Political Struggle, 1945-1949*(Berkeley : University of California Press, 1978), Westad, *Cold War and Revolution* ,p.139

¹³ *Marshall's Mission to China* p.xxvi.

¹⁴ *Chongqing tangpan jishi*, pp.407-411. See also, Zhou Nianpu, 21October 1946, p.573.

¹⁵ Tang Tsou, *American's failure in China*, p.403

¹⁶ In fact, Chiang was more flexible on the date of National Assembly than the PCC while Mao once asked Chiang to postpone the conference. See, "Entry of October 11",in Qin Xiaoyi, ed, *Zongtong jingong dashichangbian chugao* (The First Draft of President Chiang's account of major events, 总统蒋公大团长编初稿, hereafter cited as *Zongtong dashi*) Taipei:n.p., 1978 Vol.5(2) See also, Riben chan jing xian wen gu wu kui er, *Jiang zong tong mi lu : Zhong Ri guan xi ba shi nian zhi zheng yan*(The secret stories of President Chiang,蒋总统密录) ; *Zhong yang ri bao yi*. (Taipei Shi : Zhong yang ri bao, 1986) vol 14, p.26

- ¹⁷ Deng Ye, 2011, p.283.
- ¹⁸ Zhou Enlai suggested that the PCC should be held after the two parties reach general agreement on the problems of military and liberated areas. Yang kuisong, op cit., p545 and Wang Chaoguang, “Bianzhou”, p.25.
- ¹⁹ Zhou Enlai(*Zhong gong zhong yang wen xian yan jiu shi* ; Zhongguo ren min jie fang jun shi ke xue yuan eds), *Zhou Enlai junshi wenxuan* (Selected Military Writings of Zhou Enlai, 周恩来军事文选) (Beijing : Ren min chu ban she chu ban fa xing, 1997) Vol.3,p.6-8 For public calling for an earlier convocation of the Conference, see, Lee Ben-nan, *Zhengzhi xieshan huiyi yu guogong tangpan*, pp.75-79
- ²⁰ See Mao Zedong wenji(Collections of Mao’s work, 毛泽东文集), Beijing:Renmin chubanshe 1996, vol.4,p57
- ²¹ ZZWX,Vol.15,p.317,p.337
- ²² Yangkuisong,op cit.,p545
- ²³ Liu Wusheng ed, Cong Yan’an dao Beijing : jie fang zhan zheng zhong da zhan yi jun shi wen xian he yan jiu wen zhang zhuan ti xuan ji(From Yan’an to Beijing: A Collection of Military Records and Research Publications of Important Campaigns in the Liberation War,从延安到北京)(Beijing : Zhong yang wen xian chu ban she 1993), pp.31-33
- ²⁴ The CCP central to Liu and Deng, ZZWX,Vol.15.p.319,pp.359-360. Li Wen, Wang Rofei zhuan (The biography of Wang Rofei)(Shanghai: Shanghai renming chubanshe 1986) pp228-231; See also Qing Simei , *From Allies to Enemies : Visions of Modernity, identity, and U.S.-China Diplomacy, 1945-1960* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 2007).(here after, Qing, *From Allies to Enemies*) p.77
- ²⁵ See next chapter and Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, chapter 4, esp.pp.95-97.
- ²⁶ *Zhou Nianpu*, 1 December 1945, p.629.
- ²⁷ Jiefang tongyi. p.33
- ²⁸ For an analysis of the democratic parties’ movements in the period, see Li xin eds, *Zhongguo xinminzhuzhuyi gemin shiqi tongshi*, Vol.10, pp.328-338.
- ²⁹ Shi Fuliang, ”He wei Zhongjianpai (What is the middle Force,何为中间派)”, *Wenhui bao*(Wenhui Daily) 14 July 1946 Shanghai
- ³⁰ “Zhongguo minzhu tongmen linshi quanguo daibiao dahui zhengzhi baogao”,11 October 1945, Minzhu tongmen wenxian(The Documents and Materials of the Democratic League,民主同盟文献)(Beijing: Mingzhu tongmen zongbu, 1946),pp.63-64
- ³¹ See Qing, *From Allies to Enemies*, pp.25-26
- ³² See, Deng Ye, 2011, pp.37-38, p.284, p.308.
- ³³ Zhongguo min zhu tong meng zhong yang wen shi zi Liao Wei yuan Hui ed., *Zhongguo min zhu tong meng li shi wen xian* (Historical Documents of the Democratic League, 中国民主同盟历史文献, 1941-1949) (Beijing: Wen shi zi Liao Chu ban she 1983.). P.101
- ³⁴ Zhou Enlai, “On KMT-CCP Negotiation” , 5 December 1945, from Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, *Zhonggong Nanjing shi weiyuanhui ed., Zhou Enlai 1946 nian tanpan wenxuan*(Selected documents from Zhou Enlai’s negotiations in 1946, 周恩来 1946 年谈判文选),pp.9-10 See also Zhang Baijia, "Zhou Enlai and the Marshall Mission," in Larry I Bland, ed, George C. Marshall's Mediation Mission to China, December 1945-January 1947(Lexington, Va. : George C. Marshall Foundation, 1998), p.207
- ³⁵ Zhou Enlai, “On KMT-CCP Negotiation,” *Zhou Enlai 1946 nian tanpan wenxuan*, pp.9-14. See also *Zhou Nianpu*, pp.630-631.
- ³⁶ These charges of Hurley would fester for years until culminating in the anti-Communist allegations of the McCarthy era. See *The China White Paper*, pp.581-584.
- ³⁷ *The China White Paper*, pp.607—609 and Qing Simei, “From Allies to Enemies”, pp.58-62
- ³⁸ Tang Tsou, *American’s Failure in China*, pp.344-345
- ³⁹ *The China White Paper*, p.p.132; Memorandum by Vincent, no date, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol.7, pp.745—747. Herbert Feis, *The China Tangle: the American Effort in China from Pearl Harbor to the Marshall Mission* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953) (here after *The China Tangle*), pp.405- 412; Truman, *The Memoirs of Harry S. Truman* (Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., Suffolk, 1956), Vol.2, p.67.
- ⁴⁰ Tang Tsou, *American’s Failure in China*,pp.349-400
- ⁴¹ Memorandum by Vincent, no date, *FRUS* 1945 vol.7 , p.746 p.749
- ⁴² Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs of Harry S. Truman* ([Great Britain] : Hodder and Stoughton, 1955-1956),vol.2, pp.65-66,p.92
- ⁴³ *Marshall’s Mission to China*, vol.1 p.1-2
- ⁴⁴ Keith E. Elier, “Devotion and Dissent: Albert Wedemeyer, George Marshall and China),in Larry I Bland, ed, *George C. Marshall’s Mediation Mission*,p.92 and Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!*, p.363
- ⁴⁵ Zhang Suchu, “Why Marshall’s Mission Failed”, in Larry I Bland, ed, *George C. Marshall’s Mediation Mission*,p.45-64
- ⁴⁶ Michael Schaller, *The U.S. Crusade in China, 1938-1945*(New York : Columbia University Press, 1979),p.292
- ⁴⁷ Qing Simei, “From Allies to Enemies”, p.64, Tang Tsou, *American’s Failure in China*, p.256.
- ⁴⁸ Marshall to Leahy, 30 November 1945, from *The Complete Records of the Mission of General George C Marshall to China, December 1945-Janurary 1947*(Microfilm, U.S. National Archives Publisher; Scholarly Resources Held by Keio University) reel 1, pp.7-8.
- ⁴⁹ Report by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee, 22 October 1945, *FRUS* 1945, Vol.7, pp.583-590 .See, Wang Chen-main, “Marshall’s Approach to the Mediation Effort.” In Larry I Bland, ed, *George C. Marshall’s Mediation Mission*,pp.24-25

- ⁵⁰ Memorandum by the Secretary of State, 9 December 1945, *FRUS* 1945 Vol.7 p.760-763, Memorandum by Marshall, p.768 p.770 While Marshall was not simply the victim of this contradiction, as pointed out by later historians for many times, he was actually in part the author of it. See *Marshall's Mission to China*, p.xx and Memorandum by Marshall, 30 November 1945, *FRUS* 1945, vol.7,p748
- ⁵¹ Odd Arne Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, p.133
- ⁵² *The China's White Paper*, p.133 and pp.607-609
- ⁵³ Feis, *The China Tangle*, pp.423-424
- ⁵⁴ *The China White Paper*, p.608
- ⁵⁵ *The China White Paper*, p.605
- ⁵⁶ For example, Zhang Zhengjiang, *Lengzhan yu neizhan*.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p.186-192
- ⁵⁸ For the full text of the communiqué in English, see, *FRUS*, 1945, vol2, pp. 815-825.
- ⁵⁹ Edmund. S. Wehrle, "Marshall, the Moscow Conference and Harriman", in in Larry I Bland, ed, *George C. Marshall's Mediation Mission*, pp.66-69, See also, Lanxin Xiang, *Recasting the Imperial Far East : Britain and America in China, 1945-1950*(Armonk, N.Y. : M.E. Sharpe, 1995), p57
- ⁶⁰ *FRUS*, 1945, vol.2 pp.811-12 .See also Edmund S. Wehrle, "Marshall, the Moscow Conference and Harriman", pp.68-69 note.9 and note.11
- ⁶¹ Xiang, *Recasting Imperial Far East*, p57 and pp.75-76
- ⁶² Such an influence were more clearly on the CCP side. Hu Qiaomu, *Hu Qiaomu huiyi Mao Zedong*, p.426. See Deng Ye, 2011, pp.292-293.
- ⁶³ Here Westad more emphasized the expectation while Chinese historians mainly focused on the shock of the Nationalists. See, Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, p.136-137
- ⁶⁴ Chiang to Zhang Jiaao and Jiang Jingguo, 7 December 1945, Chiang to Wang Shijie and Wang Shijie to Chiang, both in *ZZSC*, Vol.7(1), p.167 p.157-158 p.150-151
- ⁶⁵ Westad, p.136 , Wei Daoming to Chiang, 6 December 1945, *ZZSC*, Vol.7(3), p.47
- ⁶⁶ Chen Lifu, Wo yu jiangjun (I and General Marshall, 我与马歇尔将军), in *ZZSC* Vol.7 (3), pp.277-278; Chen Lifu, *Cheng bai zhijian: Chen Lifu huiyilu*(The Lessons of Win and Lost: the Memorial of Chen Lifu, 成败之鉴)(Taipe:Zhengzhong Shuju, 1994), pp.343-344.
- ⁶⁷ Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer reports!* p.361 and Feis, *The China Tangle*, pp.385-86 and pp. 416-417
- ⁶⁸ "Huanying maxieer jiangjun,"[Welcome General Marshall, 欢迎马歇尔将军], *ZZSC* Vol.7 (3) , pp 43-44
- ⁶⁹ Wei Daoming to Chiang, 1 December , 6 December, 18 December, 1945, *ZZSC*, Vol7(3), p.42, p.47, p.61
- ⁷⁰ Zhang Jia'ao' Diary, 1 January 1946. *Lost Chance in Manchuria*, p.188.
- ⁷¹ Deng Ye, 203, p.247.
- ⁷² *Xinhua* ribao, 18 December 1945, *Jiefang* ribao, 18 December 1945.
- ⁷³ Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, p.117.
- ⁷⁴ Liutong, *Huabei jiefang zhanzheng jishi*, see also Wang Chaoguang, *Zhonghua mingguoshi*, p.39.
- ⁷⁵ Niu Jun, "Guomindang and CCP Policies toward the United States during the Period of the Marshall Mediation", in Larry I.Bland edited, *George C. Marshall's Mediation Mission*, p241-242
- ⁷⁶ CCP center to sub-bureaus, 28 November 1945, *Jiefang tongyi*, p.32
- ⁷⁷ See, Zhang Baijia, op,cit., pp.207-209 ; Niu Jun, op cit., pp.241-242
- ⁷⁸ *Zhou Nianpu*, p.624.
- ⁷⁹ "Zhongyang guanyu dui Mei-jiang douzheng celue de zhishi (CCP center on the strategy in the struggle with Chiang Kai-shek and the U.S.)", 28 November, *ZZWX*, Vol 15 p.406-407.
- ⁸⁰ "Guanyu guogong tangpan (On KMT-CCP Negotiations)", Zhou Enlai 1946 nian tanpan wenxuan, p.6. See also, *Zhou Nianpu*, p. 630.
- ⁸¹ See Michael M Sheng, *Maoist dualism and Chinese communist foreign relations, 1935-1949*. York University, Ph.D. dissertation, 1991, Yang Kuisong, *Zhongjian didiai de geming*, and Niu Jun, *From Yan 'an to the World*.
- ⁸² See, Deng Yanze, "Meiguo duihua tiaochu zhengce he disantiao daolu de xingshuai (The U.S. Mediation Policy and the Third Road, 美国对华调处与第三条道路的兴衰)", *Zhonggongdangshijianjiu*, 1992(3), p.46. Only on Manchuria issues, the attitudes of the Russian were mostly concerned and suggestions from Moscow were more valued. Zhou also once told Americans that although the Soviets played a predominant role in the war of Europe, its influence in the Far Eastern affairs was, without doubt, inferior to that of the U.S. See, Zhou Enlai, "(China should not become tool of other country but seek friendly relations with all countries)" 9 June 1946, *Zhou Enlai 1946 nian tanpan wenxuan*, p.540.
- ⁸³ Liu Nianpu , Vol.1, p.543; CCP center to sub-bureaus, 29 December 1945, *ZZWX*, vol.15, p.494, English Translation based on Zhang Baijia, op cit., p210
- ⁸⁴ Zhang Baijia, op cit., p.209. "Huanying maxieer lai hua chujing zhongguo heping (Welcoming Marshall for Mediation, 欢迎马歇尔来华促进和平)", 23 December 1945, in *Zhou Enlai 1946 nian tanpan wenxuan*, p.23.
- ⁸⁵ Huqiaomu huiyi, pp.426-427. *Jiefang* ribao, 16 December 1945.
- ⁸⁶ The CCP central to Chongqing delegates 2 January, 1946 and Chongqing to CCP central, 3 January, 1946, quoted from Yangkuisong, *Guo min dang de "lian gong" yu "fan gong* (Kuomintang : unity with communists and anti-communism, 国民党的联共与反共) (Beijing : She hui ke xue wen xian chu ban she, 2008). p.586 and see Hu Qiaomu huiyi Mao Zedong, p427
- ⁸⁷ Yalton to Wedemeyer, Yenan, 20 December 1945, *FRUS*.1945 vol.7. p.793

- ⁸⁸ Wang Chaoguang, op cit.,p.38
- ⁸⁹ Zhou Nianpu, p.633.
- ⁹⁰ *Liu Nianpu*, vol.1, pp542, 543 or vol 2 p.4; Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, *Renbishi Nianpu*(Chronological Biography of Ren Bishi)(Renminchubanshe1993),p.506. *Dong Biwu Nianpu*(Chronological biography of Dong Biwu, 董必武年谱)(Beijing:Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe,1991),p.238
- ⁹¹ Dagongbao's editorials during this period, see also Deng Ye, 2003, p.294.
- ⁹² For instance, see Deng Ye, 2011, pp.309-311.
- ⁹³ *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: reports and papers from the Foreign Office confidential print*. Part IV, From 1946 through 1950. Series E, Asia vol.1 Far Eastern affairs, January 1946-June 1946 , here after *BDOFA*, p.52
- ⁹⁴ The KMT's Department of Propaganda to local office,22 December 1945,in Zhongguo dier lishi dananguan, *Zhonghua mingguoshi danan ziliao huibian*(Comprehensive Collection of Archival Papers on History of Republic of China. 中华民国史档案资料汇编),Collection 5 vol.3 "Politics", Book 2(Nanjing,Jiangsu guji chubanshe),pp.88-92 Wang Chaoguang, op cit., p.37.
- ⁹⁵ *Zhongyangribao*, 17 December 1944.
- ⁹⁶ *Xinhua ribao*, 22 December 1945, page.2.
- ⁹⁷ Deng Ye emphasized the KMT's resentment. Deng Ye 2003,p.269
- ⁹⁸ Qing Simei, From Allies to Enemies, p.49; Deng Ye, 2011, pp.302-304.
- ⁹⁹ Mr.Wallinger to Mr. Bevin, 25 December 1945, *BDOFA*,pp.52-53
- ¹⁰⁰ "Huangying Maxieer jiangjun(Welcome General Marshall)", Editorial of Dagong bao, 24 December 1945.page 2; "Press Reactions to President Truman's statement on 16th December," Mr.Wallinger to Mr. Bevin, 26th December, 1945 F515/515/10 No. 1324, *BDOFA*,p54
- ¹⁰¹ Deng Ye 2003,p.272
- ¹⁰² *Zhengzhi xieshan huiyi jishi*,vol.1,p.136,p.137,p.141,p.147
- ¹⁰³ *Tang Zong riji*, p.580; Deng Ye 2003, p.278-280. Yang Kuisong, *Guoming dang de liangong yu fangong*, p.592.
- ¹⁰⁴ For the CCP's evaluation on the internal debates of the Nationalist,see,"Guanyu guogong tangpan (On KMT-CCP negotiation, 关于国共谈判)",in *Zhou Enlai 1946 nian tanpan wenxuan*,p.8.
- ¹⁰⁵ Yang Kuisong,*Guomindang de liangong yu fangong*,p.582
- ¹⁰⁶ Deng Ye, 2011, p.p.234-235, pp.285-286. Wang Chaoguang, *Zhonghua mingguo shi*, p.67.
- ¹⁰⁷ Zhou Nianpu, p.602.
- ¹⁰⁸ Wang Chaoguang, op cit., p.40
- ¹⁰⁹ Qin Xiaoyi, ed, *Zongtong jinggong*, Vol.5(2),p909
- ¹¹⁰ Deng Ye, 2003, p.298.
- ¹¹¹ *Marshall's Mission*,p.6
- ¹¹² *Marshall's Mission*, p.8
- ¹¹³ F518/515/10 No. 1325 Mr. Wallinger to Mr. Bevin, Chungking, 27th December, 1945 ,*BDOFA* p.55
- ¹¹⁴ *Xinhua ribao*, 11 January 1946.
- ¹¹⁵ *Marshall's Mission*,p.8
- ¹¹⁶ Minutes of Meeting of Military Sub-Committee, 8-9 Jan. 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol.9. p.73,pp.99-101
- ¹¹⁷ *Marshall's Mission*, p. XI and Suzanne Pepper, "The KMT-CCP conflict 1945-1949", John K. Fairbank and Albert Feuerwerker eds., *The Cambridge History of China*, Volume 13, Republican China 1912-1949 , p.731
- ¹¹⁸ This edifice consisted of three closely interrelated parts: the cease fire agreement of January 10, 1946; a set of give resolutions passed by the Political Consultative Conference; and the military reorganization agreement of 25 February.1946.
- ¹¹⁹ Minutes of Meeting between Marshall and Zhou, *FRUS* 1946, Vol.9, China, p.143.
- ¹²⁰ *Zhongyang ribao* (The Central Daily), Chongqing, 7 January 1946.
- ¹²¹ For the analysis of the social backgrounds of those delegations, see, Lee Ben-nan, *Zhengzhi xieshang yu guogong huitang*.
- ¹²² *The Cambridge History of China*,Vol.13, p.731
- ¹²³ Zhou Enlai on KMT-CCP negotiations,5 December 1945, *Zhou Enlai 1946 nian tanpan wenxuan*, p.12
- ¹²⁴ *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol.13, p.731
- ¹²⁵ *Zhengzhi xieshang huiyi jishi*,vol.1 p.106,293,238 136-141
- ¹²⁶ Deng Ye 2003, pp.273- 278
- ¹²⁷ Wang Shijie riji, Vol.5, p. 26 January 1946, pp.255-256.
- ¹²⁸ *Zhengzhi xieshan huiyi jishi*, Vol.1, p.396-422.
- ¹²⁹ For a genial summary of the PCC process, see, *Zhongguo xinminzhu zhuyi geming tongshi*, Vol.10, pp.347-346.
- ¹³⁰ For two very detailed studies on the conference process, See, Lee Ben-nan, *Zhengzhi xieshan huiyi yu guogong tangpan* and Zhang Jiuru, *Hetang fuzhe zai zhongguo*.
- ¹³¹ On the main resolution of the PCC, the translation of the text below were based on Larly N, Shyu, "In search for Peace in Postwar China", in Larry I, Bland ed. *George C. Marshall's Mediation Mission to China*, pp. 285-286, *BDOFA* pp.110-112, China White Paper with the revision of the author check based on Chinese sources from *ZZSC* Vol7, pp..229-50.
- ¹³² For English version of the agreements, see *The China White Paper*, pp.145-72 and pp.617-619.
- ¹³³ Larry N, "Shyu In Serach of peace in Postwar China",p.285

- ¹³⁴ Zhou Enlai on KMT-CCP negotiations, 5 December 1945, *Zhou Enlai 1946 nian tanpan wenxuan*, p.12
- ¹³⁵ Carsun Chang, *The Third Force in China* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1952) pp.192-196
- ¹³⁶ Tuan-sheng Chien, *The government and politics of China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967) p.319-320. See also, Tang Tsou, *American's Failure in China*, p.407-408
- ¹³⁷ Carsun Chang, *The Third Force in China*, pp.148-149.
- ¹³⁸ Ibid, *The Third Force in China*, p.149.
- ¹³⁹ Tang Tsou, *American's Failure in China*, p.408.
- ¹⁴⁰ *The China White Paper*, p.620; See Deng Ye, 2011, pp.328-329.
- ¹⁴¹ Chien Tuan-sheng, *Government and Politics of China*, p.318.
- ¹⁴² Zhou Enlai on KMT-CCP negotiations, 5 December 1945, *Zhou Enlai 1946nian tanpan wenxuan*, p.9
- ¹⁴³ Deng Ye 2003, p.284. For more detail information, see. Lee Ben-nan, *Zhengzhixieshan yu guogongtangpan*
- ¹⁴⁴ Carsun Chang, *The Third Force in China*, p.149-150, Deng Ye 2003 p.296-299
- ¹⁴⁵ "Report on meeting with General of Army, George Marshall", on 16th February. *BODFA*, p.128-129
- ¹⁴⁶ He also expressed same kind of view during his meeting with the Soviet Diplomats, see Andrei M.Ledovsky, "Marshall's Mission in the Context of U.S.S.R.-China-U.S. Relations", in Larry I. Bland, *George C. Marshall's Mediation*, p.428
- ¹⁴⁷ See Xinhua ribao (Xinhua Daily), 1 Feb.1946 and 2 Feb.1946
- ¹⁴⁸ *Zhou Enlai 1946 nian tanpan wenxuan*, p.92-93
- ¹⁴⁹ Zhou Enlai on KMT-CCP negotiations, 5 December 1945, *Zhou Enlai 1946 tanpan wenxuan* p.7-8. see also, Qing, "From Allies to Enemies," p.78
- ¹⁵⁰ Xinhua ribao, 13 Feb. 1946
- ¹⁵¹ "Zhongyang guanyu muqian xingshi yu renwu de zhishi (CCP center on current situation and tasks, 中央关于目前形势与任务的指示)" 1 February 1946, *ZZWX*, Vol.16 pp.62-67. Besides the directive, Liu Shaoqi on the same day made some further explanation in a conference which was even more optimistic. See Lin Yunhui, "Shijiu wenti de baogao", quoted from Lin Yunhui, "Gaogang fanan yu zhonggong qijieerzhongquanhui de zhaokai", *Zhonggong danshi ziliao* (Materials on the CCP History), vol.57, p.150
- ¹⁵² CCP center on current situation and tasks, February 1946, *ZZWX*, vol. 16 p.66-67
- ¹⁵³ CCP center to NEB, 12 February 1946, *Jiefang tongyi*, p.77
- ¹⁵⁴ Memo "The Response to the PCC Resolution among Different KMT factions", CCP Intelligence Department, 6 Feb 1946. Quoted from Qing, *From Allies to Enemies* p.79
- ¹⁵⁵ Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji vol.16, pp.72-73, and Confidential Circular "Temporary Stopping of Propaganda Warfare against the KMT, the CCP central Committee to CCP members and Organizations". 7 Feb, 1946 Quoted from Qing, *From Allies to Enemies*, p.79.
- ¹⁵⁶ Quoted from Deng Yanze, "Meiguo duihua tiaochu zhengce he disantiao daolu de xingshuai" p.51
- ¹⁵⁷ Deng Xiaoping Nianpu, p.389. Zhou nianpu, 1 January 1946, p.638.
- ¹⁵⁸ Wang Pei, "Quangguo Jiefang zhanzheng shiqi guogong tangpan shulve", in *Zhonggong danshi yanjiu* (The Study of the CCP History), 1992(4), p.51. Wang Chaoguang, "1946 nian zaochun zhongguo mingzhuhua de ducuo", *Lishi yanjiu*, 2000(6)
- ¹⁵⁹ Mao Nianpu, Vol.3, p.59.
- ¹⁶⁰ In early March, Mao separately told this arrangement to Liang Shuming, a leading member of the Democratic League, and General Zhang Zhizhong. Liang Shuming, *Yiwang tanjiulu* (A Memoir of Liang Shuming) (Beijing, Zhongguo wensi chubanshe 1987) pp.176-178. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu* (A Memoir of Zhang Zhizhong, 张治中回忆录) (Beijing, Wenshi chubanshe), p.750
- ¹⁶¹ Guang Wenwei, *Guang Wenwei huiyilu xubian* (A supplement of the Memoir of Guang Wenwei, 管文蔚回忆录续编), Beijing; Renming Chubanshe, 1988, p.292-293
- ¹⁶² Mao Nianpu, Vol.3, p.55. The CCP also planned to propose Zhou as the deputy head of the Executive Yuan. Zhou nianpu, p.640.
- ¹⁶³ Confidential Letter, "CCP Central Committee to CCP members and Organizations", 1 Feb 1946 English Translation based on Qing, *From Allies to Enemies*, p.78-79
- ¹⁶⁴ *Ren Bishi Nianpu*, 2 February 1946,
- ¹⁶⁵ *Marshall's Mission to China*, vol.1, p.40
- ¹⁶⁶ *Mao Zedong junshi nianpu 1926-1958* (Chronological biography of Mao Zedong's Military Activities 1926-1958), (Guanxi renming chubanshe, 1994), p.473
- ¹⁶⁷ For the negotiation process, see Minutes of Meeting Between General Marshall, General Chang Chih-chung, and General Zhou En-lai, Feb, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 25, 1946, all in *FRUS 1946*, vol.9, pp.220-292
- ¹⁶⁸ Zhou Enlai junshi wenxuan (Selection of Zhou Enlai's Military Writings), 5 Feb.1946, vol.3, pp.53-54. An amazing instance here is that after Marshall arrived in China, he presented Chiang with a proposal in which the KMT-CCP ration was set at 2:1. Moreover, he suggested that the Communists would occupy one-third of the navy and air force. Chiang at only rejected this proposal. See Deng Ye 2003, pp. 309-312; Zhang Baijia, op cit., p.217
- ¹⁶⁹ See *ZZSC*, Vol.7 (3), p.77. Zhou Enlai 1946, pp.103-105.
- ¹⁷⁰ Ibid; "Basis for Military Reorganization and for the Integration of the Communist Forces into the National Army" 25 February 1946, *The China White Paper* p.623. See also Deng Ye 2003, p.316-317 and Zhang Baijia, p.218
- ¹⁷¹ *Ren Bishi Nianpu*, p.508
- ¹⁷² Mao Nianpu, Vol.3, p.57; Zhang Baijia, op cit., p.218

- ¹⁷³ Li Zongren, *Li Zongren huiyilu* (The Memoir of Li Zongren 李宗仁回忆录), Zhongguorenzhengzhixieshanhuiyi guanxizhuanzhuzizhiqiu weiyuanhui wenshiziliao yanjiushi, 1980, vol.2, p.851
Deng Ye, p.315
- ¹⁷⁴ *Zongtong dashi*, vol.6 p.56
- ¹⁷⁵ Zhang Zhizhong's report to Chiang, 15 February 1946, ZZSC, Vol 7(3), p.76.
- ¹⁷⁶ Zhang Zhizhong's report to Chiang, 19 February 1946, ZZSC, Vol7 (3), p.77; Deng Ye p.316
- ¹⁷⁷ Wang Chaoguang, *Zhongguo jin dai tong shi* (The Modern History of China), Vol.10(Nanjing : Jiangsu ren min chu ban she, 2006-2007) p.49-50
- ¹⁷⁸ CCP center to NEB and Chongqing, 13 March 1946, ZZWX, Vol.16, p.90
- ¹⁷⁹ Zhou Enlai, "Yinian yilai de tanpan yu qiantu (Negotiations in the past year and its prospect)" 18 December 1946, *Zhou Enlai 1946nian tanpan wenxuan*, p.707, Liu nianpu, 8 February 1946, p.19
- ¹⁸⁰ Ibid.
- ¹⁸¹ Qing, *From Allies to Enemies*, p.77
- ¹⁸² Chen Cheng huiyilu, Vol.2, pp.157-158.
- ¹⁸³ Translation on the full text of President Chiang Kai-shek's speech in the closing session of the PCC, from *BDOFA* p.124
- ¹⁸⁴ For an insightful study, see Yang Kuisong, *Guomindang de liangong yu fangong*, p.550.
- ¹⁸⁵ *The China White Paper* p.687
- ¹⁸⁶ Deng Ye, 2011, p.301-301; Wang Chaoguang, "Duncuo", pp.46-47.
- ¹⁸⁷ *Tang Zong riji*, 31 January 1945, p.581; *Wang Shijie riji*, Vol.5, pp.260-262 31 January 1945. Noticeably, Fu Sinian. A pro-KMT independent participants, sent a letter to Wang Shijie arguing that the result of the Consultative Conference would led the breakdown of the KMT regime in half a year. No matter how unsatisfied, Fu also voted for approval of the agreement at last. *Wang Shijie riji*, Vol.5, 31 January, Feb. 1, 1946.
- ¹⁸⁸ Deng Ye, p.301-301, p.320-325
- ¹⁸⁹ Here, General Marshall's observation was noticeable. Much seemed to him to depend on whether the influence of the reactionary elements could be increasingly diminished. The general referred, with considerable feeling, to the obstructive and reactionary attitude of the powerful C.C clique, who he thought attacking his in every way. *BDOFA*, pp.128-129
- ¹⁹⁰ Xu Yongping, *Chen Guofu zhuan* (The Biography of Chen Guofu, 陈果夫传) (Taipei, Zhengzhong shuju, 1978), p.935.
- ¹⁹¹ Yan Xi Shan, the warlord from Shanxi, once alarmed that the mediation and negotiation could only help the Communist to win election, and he even suggested that the CCP would enjoy 90% of success in Northern China, and 1/3 in Southern. See, *Xu Yongchang riji* (Diary of General Hsu Yung-Chang) (Taipei: Zhong yang yan jiu yuan jin dai shi yan jiu suo, 1991.), 15 April 1946, p.258.
- ¹⁹² *Tang Zong riji*, 26 January 1946, 24 February 1946, p.582 since the two were proceed simultaneously according to the agenda Chiang believed that he could control the situation.
- ¹⁹³ *Wang Shijie riji*, 4 February 1946, Vol.5, p.263. Wang Chaoguang, *Zhongguo mingyun de juezhuan*, p.34.
- ¹⁹⁴ *Tang Zong riji*, 27 February 1946, p.593, *Wang Shijie riji*, 3 Feb, 1946, p.263.
- ¹⁹⁵ Yang Kuisong, *Guomindang de liangong yu fangong*, p.605.
- ¹⁹⁶ *Tang Zhong riji*, p.580, p.584.
- ¹⁹⁷ Chiang's reply to Chencheng, quoted form *Tang Zhong riji*, p.582
- ¹⁹⁸ Yang Kuisong, *Guomindang de liangong yu fangong*, p.606
- ¹⁹⁹ Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Standing Committee of the KMT, Feb.2 1946, The GMD Central Committee File, SNAC, Nanjing, Quoted from Qing, *From Allies to Enemies*, p.77-78.
- ²⁰⁰ Qing, *From Allies to Enemies*, p.78 Deng Ye, pp.324-325
- ²⁰¹ *Tang Zong riji*, 16 February 1946, p.591
- ²⁰² *Tang Zong riji*, 8 February 1946, p.588.
- ²⁰³ Qing Xiaoyi, *Xianzongtong jiangong sixiang yanlun zongji* (The Collection of the Works of Former President Chiang, hereafter cited as *Zongtong jiangong* 先总统蒋公思想言论总集), Vol.
- ²⁰⁴ Liang Shuming, "Wo canjia guogong hetang de jingguo" (My Participation in the KMT-CCP Negotiations, 我参加国共和谈的经过), *Zhonghua mingguo shiliao chugao*, supplat vol.6, p.67
- ²⁰⁵ *Zongtong dashi*, Vol.6(1), p.41-43
- ²⁰⁶ Yang Kuisong, *Guomindang de liangong yu fangong*, pp.606-607.
- ²⁰⁷ Qing, *From Allies to Enemies*, p.90
- ²⁰⁸ Wang Chaoguang has published a series of papers on this issue, see Wang Chaoguang, *Guogong zhengzheng yu zhongguo mingyun 1945-1949* (The KMT-CCP Political Struggle and the Fate of China 1945-1949) (Beijing: Shehui kexue webxian chubanshe 2010), pp.53-94 pp.121-128
- ²⁰⁹ *Tang Zong riji*, pp.593-597.
- ²¹⁰ Sir H Seymour to Mr. Bevin 16 March 1946, *BDOFA* p.129
- ²¹¹ *Zhongyang ribao*, 17 March 1946, p.3. *Wang Shijie riji*, 13 and 17 March 1946, *Tang Zong riji*, 17 March.
- ²¹² Deng Ye 2003, p.322.
- ²¹³ *Zhongyang ribao*, 17 March 1946 and 19 March 1946.
- ²¹⁴ Deng Ye 2011, pp.405-406. Wang Chaoguang, "Duncuo", pp.144-146.
- ²¹⁵ *Zhengzhi xieshan huiyi jishi*, Vol.1, pp.720-726.
- ²¹⁶ Qing, "From Allies to Enemies", p.79.

- ²¹⁷ *Zhengzhi xieshan huiyi jishi*, vol.1 p.724, Zhou Enlai on KMT's second CEC, 18 March 1946, *Zhou Enlai 1946nian tanpan wenxuan*, p.148, p.152 Qing, "From Allies to Enemies", p.80
- ²¹⁸ Liang Shuming (*Zhonghua wenhu shuyuan xueshuwei yuanyuanhui ed.*), *Liang Shuming quanji* (Collection of Liang Shuming's work, 梁漱溟全集) (Jinan: Shandong renming chubanshe, 1993), Vol6. p.904.
- ²¹⁹ Zhou Nianpu, 14-15 May 1946, p.657.
- ²²⁰ Liang Shuming, *Yiwangtanjiuru* (My Memory 忆往谈旧录), *Zhongguowenshichubanshe*, 1987, p.180.
- ²²¹ *Liang Shuming quanji*, Vol6, p.904
- ²²² Zhonggong zhongyang jiefangzhanzheng shiqi tongyizhanxian wenjianxuanbian PP.86-87. This telegram was drafted by Liu Shaoqi and revised by Mao Zedong., *Liu Nianpu* Vol.2, p.27; *Mao Nianpu*, vol.3, p.62
- ²²³ *Mao Zedong wenji*, pp.96—98
- ²²⁴ CCP center to various local leaders, 18 March 1946, *ZZWX*, Vol.16, pp. 96-98.
- ²²⁵ He Di, "Mao Zhedong and the Marshall Mission", in Larry I. Bland, *George C. Marshall's Mission*, p.187
- ²²⁶ See Deng Xiaoping Nianpu, Qian Simei, "From Allies to Enemies", 79.
- ²²⁷ The early experience of General Huang's troops to Manchuria will be discussed in Chapter 5.
- ²²⁸ Huang Kecheng, *Huang Kecheng zhishu* (Huang Kecheng's own story, 黄克诚自述) (Beijing, Renming chubanshe, 1994) p.203
- ²²⁹ As Westad stated in his 1993 book "to what degree the party's leaders—and in particular Mao Zedong was acting in good faith when they accepted the actual stipulations of the agreement remains one of the most debated topic in CCP historiography." This is still the case today. Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, p.155
- ²³⁰ He Di, "Mao Zhedong and the Marshall Mission" p.187
- ²³¹ *Mao Nianpu* 15 May, Vol.3, p.53. English Text based on Stevin Levin's translation of He Di's essay, p.188-189
- ²³² He Di, "Mao Zhedong and the Marshall Mission", p.189
- ²³³ *Mao Nianpu*, 17 May 1946
- ²³⁴ CCP center to various local leaders, 18 March 1946, *ZZWX*, vol.16, pp.97—98 *Mao Zedong wenji*, pp.96—98
- ²³⁵ Deng Ye, 2003, pp.389-402.
- ²³⁶ Huang Yanpei's Diary, 18 June 1946, quoted from *Zhonghua mingguoshi ziliao conggao zengkang*, vol.5
- ²³⁷ Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, p.155
- ²³⁸ Quoted from Qing Simei, *From Allies to Enemies*, p.83
- ²³⁹ Mao's speech, CCP politburo meeting, 15 March 1946, quoted from He Di, "Mao Zhedong and the Marshall Mission" p.190.
- ²⁴⁰ Mao's Comments on Zhou's telegram, 16 March 1946, quoted from He Di, "Mao Zhedong and the Marshall Mission" p.190.
- ²⁴¹ Mao to General Li and Huang, 6 July 1946, Quoted from Qing Simei, *From Allies to Enemies*, p.84
- ²⁴² Zhang Baijia, op cit., p.221, He Di, op cit., p.189
- ²⁴³ *The China White Paper*, p.145.
- ²⁴⁴ Those word are quoted by He Di, op cited, p.191-192 as from *Mao Nianpu* However, the author didn't find the exact word in Mao but in *Liu Nianpu* and *Zhou Nianpu*, 18 May 1946. For the CCP's Manchuria strategy, see also latter chapters.

Chapter 4.

Breakdown of the KMT-Soviet Compromise

Shortly after Marshall's departure for Washington, military clashes between the KMT and the CCP broke out in Manchuria, which in a few months escalated to a full-scale civil war. Historians had devoted great effort to investigating the influence of U.S.-Russia rivalry in the course of the KMT-CCP competition in Manchuria. Their interpretations place great importance on the Soviet occupation of Manchuria and assistance to the CCP which obstructed the Nationalist government in controlling the region.

The linchpin of the problem was Chiang Kai-shek's failure to reach a deal of economic cooperation with Stalin to win Soviets support in Manchuria in the spring of 1946. On November 24, 1945, the Soviets presented a proposal for Sino-Soviet economic cooperation in about 80 percent of Manchuria's heavy industry. To ensure such a deal, in the coming months, the Red Army postponed its withdrawal from Manchuria three times. Meanwhile, the Soviets repeatedly indicated that if Chongqing agreed to their demands, they would constrain the CCP's development in Manchuria.¹ The KMT leaders had seriously considered the option of accepting the Soviets demands. However, they insisted on starting the cooperation only after the Soviets troops had withdrawn from Manchuria. Negotiations between the two sides lasted for months but achieved no result. In the end, the Red Army withdrew completely from Manchuria in May 1945. However, before and after their departure, the Soviets offered the Chinese Communists great support and encouraged the CCP's aggressive posture in Manchuria.²

Why did the Nationalists fail to reach a further compromise with the Russians? Many historians, Westad for instance, suggest that it was the intervention of the U.S. government against the background of the rising Soviet-American confrontation that

pushed the KMT to lean towards the Americans while resisting Soviet demands.³ However, as this work will show later, the dilemma that Chiang and his followers faced was much more complicated.

The fundamental obstacle for the KMT to accept Moscow's economic cooperation proposal was its desperate need to defend the regime's nationalistic legitimacy claim. As the ruling party, the KMT had the political and moral obligation to defend the country's sovereignty and national interests. For decades, the Nationalists had promised to seek the end of foreign privileges throughout China. Granting the Soviets special privileges in Manchuria would only serve to hamper their legitimacy claim. In spring 1946, the Soviets' brutal behavior in Manchuria and the publication of the Yalta Secret Agreement stirred up violent anti-Soviet feelings among Chinese public, instigating student demonstrations across the country.⁴ Meanwhile, the agreements of the Political Consultative Conference had attracted strong criticism inside the KMT. The fierce inner-party struggle made the atmosphere even tenser, which in turn made the negotiation fully paralyzed. If Chiang had agreed to the terms of the economic discussions with the Soviets, there may have been a strong backlash against his regime and his personal leadership. Meanwhile, the KMT got little substantive encouragement or support from the Americans.

In a word, the KMT leaders were constrained more by domestic oppositions than by international pressure. Although this dimension of the story has received mention from some historians such as John Garver, until now it has played too small a role in the understanding of the breakdown of the Chiang-Stalin relationship.⁵ In this chapter, we explore the tension between the KMT's various considerations, especially great domestic constraints on its foreign policy decision-making process.

The Manchuria Dilemma

The Soviet Occupation of Manchuria

Historically, Manchuria was an arena of intense great power rivalry. After the

Mukden Incident in September 1931, the Japanese seized the entire region. Grabbing abundant coal, iron, and other resources of the northeast, the Japanese in their fourteen years' occupation built Manchuria into one of the largest and most modern industrial regions in Asia while using it as the base of their operations in China.⁶

After the defeat of the Japanese, the disposition of the region soon became a problem among the Allies. Once the Soviets entered the war against Japan, they chose the northeast as the main battleground. By the end of August, the Red Army controlled all strategic points in Manchuria. The strong presence of the Red Army in China gave Stalin great say in China's internal politics.

A primary concern of the Soviets in East Asia during this period was to create a buffer zone adjoining the border to guard against the emergence of any new aggressive power that might pose a threat to their eastern territories. Thus, Manchuria became a critical arena for its national security. Meanwhile, the Soviet leaders had never given up their Tsarist geopolitical ambitions in the region, nor did they ease suspicion against the Nationalists, who would very likely follow U.S. guidance in the post-war age.⁷

Stalin thus tried to prevent China from becoming an industrialized, anti-Soviet power exclusively aligned with the Americans. On the one hand, the Soviets made certain efforts to secure the neutrality of the KMT. For them, a civil war in China might lead to intervention by the Western powers, particularly the United States, and might even develop into a direct clash with the Americans. Stalin had to avoid this scenario. On the other hand, the Soviets consciously sought to use their military presence to extract more political and economic privileges in Manchuria. In the eyes of Soviet leaders, even if it was not enough to prevent American penetration, they at least needed some arrangements that could help the region function as a buffer zone. Thus, as things turned out, whether the Russians would actually honor their former pledges depended heavily on the KMT's willingness to make further concessions beyond those embodied in the Yalta Agreement and the Moscow Treaty.⁸

To address these interdependent needs, Moscow adopted a dualistic policy. One part was to keep in line with the U.S. policy of recognizing Chiang's personal

leadership and the Nationalist government. The other was to impose pressure upon Chongqing, including a certain degree of military control over some Chinese territories abutting the USSR, to force the Nationalists to implement policies friendly and favorable to them. Their ultimate goal was to force the Nationalist government to adopt neutrality between the United States and the Soviet Union. ⁹

The Dilemma of the Nationalist Government

The Nationalists played a rather awkward role in the rivalry for Manchuria as they always sought to solve simultaneously the intertwined problems of Sino-Soviet relations and KMT-CCP conflict. They had to persuade the Soviets to leave Manchuria smoothly and in such a way that control of the region would pass to them instead of the Communists. They also knew it quite well that unless enough concessions were made to the Soviets, Moscow would actively support the CCP and the threat contained would be even greater. In Chiang's eyes, Soviet infiltration of the northeast was "an ache in the joints," but the Chinese Communist Party was "a disease of the heart." Therefore, he was ready to conciliate the Soviet Union by making certain further concessions in Manchuria. ¹⁰

However, if Chongqing recognized the Soviets' privileges in Manchuria, it would attract unbearable domestic criticism for his regime. Its own weakness made Chongqing extremely dependent upon U.S. support. For another time, the KMT tried hard to play up mutual Soviet-American suspicions thus "invite" the Americans to check and balance the Soviets' ambition, which implied that they would closely follow U.S. policy in the Far East. However, the Americans made no substantive effort to support the KMT position. ¹¹

The Poor Preparation of the Nationalists

Ever since the disposition of Japan became a topic among the Allies, the Nationalist government argued that all Japanese possessions on Chinese soil should

be conceded to China. Based on its claim to sovereignty over all of China, the Nationalist government was obsessed with recovering Manchuria after the war. Ceding the region to any other power would make a mockery of China's wartime losses, annul its victory over Japan, and belie its new, internationally recognized status as a great power. ¹²

However, from the beginning, the Big Three totally ignored Chinese sovereignty over Manchuria. Roosevelt made a compromise with Stalin at Yalta in February 1945, which in effect yielded to the Soviet Union the same privileges that tsarist Russia had enjoyed before the Russo-Japanese War. During the negotiation in Moscow, T.V. Soong had argued with Stalin that all Manchuria's industries should be owned by China. In response, however, the Soviet leaders only suggested that the enterprises in Manchuria belonging to "special organizations" should be regarded as war booty of the Soviets Red Army, while those belonging to Japanese individuals could be handed back to China. The Chinese delegates were so eager to make the conference succeed that they did not pursue the matter with Stalin. They merely included Stalin's words in the minutes of the conference. Thus, the discussion on the disposition of Japanese wealth in Manchuria was inconclusive.¹³

Preparing for the takeover of Manchuria, the ROC government sent a memorandum to Moscow and Washington on September 18, 1945, suggesting that all Japanese assets in China should be used to compensate Chinese people. The Soviets, however, had a very different view. In fact, ever since their entry into Manchuria, the Russians had been dismantling and removing most of the machinery in Manchuria's factories to their country. The Red Army also started issuing its own military currency in the northeast on September 24, with the excuse that T.V. Soong had rejected in Moscow that Chongqing would assume the expenses of their occupation forces.¹⁴

Chiang Kai-shek was not blind to the strategic significance of Manchuria.¹⁵ However, Chiang's regime never established real control of the northeast even before the region was lost to the Japanese in 1931. Moreover, the fragmentary nature of the KMT stalled the party's political planning for recovering the region. For instance, without the former warlord of the northeast Zhang Xueliang (as Chiang refused to

consider this option), the position of the top governor of the northeast sparked fierce competition inside the party. In the end, Chiang appointed General Xiong Shihui as the head of the Northeastern Headquarters. This appointment, however, did not eliminate but intrigue even more controversies.¹⁶

Together with the appointment of Xiong Shihui, Zhang Jia'ao, one of China's most capable bankers, was designated by Chiang as the chairperson of the Northeastern Economic Commission. The initial assignment of Zhang was to expedite the transfer of Japanese assets to the Chinese government, supervise the services necessary to restore economic activity, and represent the government in the Sino-Soviet management of Manchuria's central railway.¹⁷ Zhang would play an important role in the bargaining with the Soviets in Manchuria and he is at the center of our narrative.¹⁸

Soon after arriving in Chongqing in mid-September, Zhang Jia'ao got surprised that no agreement had been reached about the procedure for taking over of Manchuria. The diplomatic authorities issued no instructions concerning how the Soviets would transfer political power and economic enterprises in their possession to the Chinese. In Zhang's eyes, these officials presumed that all problems would naturally be resolved once their troops had arrived in the northeast, and there would be no problem at all concerning the withdrawal of Soviet troops.¹⁹ This diplomatic oversight turned out to be disastrous for the Nationalists.

As the designated date of the Red Army withdrawal approached, the KMT forces had to hurry to enter Manchuria and build up their own political and military positions. They were dependent upon American support to get their troops transported to the northeast, and to ensure Soviet cooperation. On September 10, Chongqing requested the United States' assistance to provide vessels to transport its troops from Guangdong to Dalian, hoping that they would get into Manchuria as soon as the Red Army began its withdrawal in accordance with their agreement in Moscow.²⁰ On October 1, the Nationalist government notified the Soviet ambassador in Chongqing of its intention to dispatch its army to land at the port of Dalian.²¹

A disturbing reply came soon. On October 6, the Soviet Ambassador informed the Nationalists, “according to the Sino-Soviet Treaty, Dalian is a commercial port”. Therefore, the landing of troops at Dalian, of whatever nationality, was a violation of the treaty, and would be opposed by Moscow.²² Petrov also delivered a memorandum stating that the Red Army would complete its withdrawal by the end of November. Moscow appointed Marshall Malinovsky as its delegate to discuss the army withdrawal issue with the Chinese representative in Changchun.²³

The Problem of Troop Transportation

To take over Manchuria from the Soviets’ hands, the ROC delegation arrived in Changchun on October 12. Soon after their arrival, the KMT officials received a report saying that the Soviets had been plundering industrial equipment, vehicles, and even furniture to ship to their homeland. For instance, six of the eight generators at the Fengman Power Plant had already been taken away by the Soviets.²⁴

The next day, the Chinese delegation called on the general headquarters of the Soviet Red Army to have their first talk with Marshall Malinovsky. During their conversation, Malinovsky stated clearly that ROC troops could not land at Dalian until both governments agreed on the status of the city. Instead, he suggested that the KMT transport its troops by rail (rail communication had already been cut by the Communists). He also repeatedly devised excuses to delay the Nationalist from taking over local administrative organizations. On economic issues that Zhang raised, Malinovsky also gave only muddled answers.²⁵

Two days later, the Chinese delegates met with Malinovsky for their second talk. Xiong Shihui presented the Nationalist plan of the entry of Nationalist troops into Manchuria and Chinese government’s takeover of industries formerly managed by Japanese and Manchukuo. In reply, Malinovsky suggested that KMT troops could land at Huludao(葫芦岛) and Yingkou(营口) in early November, but he again firmly rejected the option of Dalian. Considering Japanese assets, Malinovsky for the first time revealed his government’s requirement that all factories operated by the Japanese

should be regarded as war booty belonging to the Soviet army. Even factories formerly operated jointly by Chinese and Japanese should also be regarded as enemy assets, since the Chinese involved had cooperated with the enemy.²⁶

At this stage, the main problem between the two sides was the entry of Nationalist troops into Manchuria, while Dalian became the focus of the debate between them.²⁷ Orally, the Soviets granted that they could assist in the early repair and restoration of the railroads between Manchuria and north China for the transportation of the KMT troops. However, in fact, they took various measures to obstruct the Nationalist army's movements. It had already become clear that the Soviets were reluctant to see a large number of KMT troops transported into the northeast.²⁸

Chongqing thus decided to accelerate its army's advancement. Chiang insisted that sea and overland transportation of the troops should proceed simultaneously. Most importantly, he was determined to have his troops transported by sea to land at Dalian and he refused to consider other places. Considering the unclear terms of the Sino-Soviet treaty, Chiang was determined to establish the KMT's presence at the port. In his reply to the northeast headquarters, the Generalissimo asserted, "There must be no wavering on this point regardless of the Soviets' obstruction".²⁹

Meanwhile, Chiang did not give up hope of reaching a compromise with the Soviets. He met with Petrov on October 18 and requested again Soviet agreement of his troops' landing at Dalian.³⁰ On the same day, Xiong Shihui visited Malinovsky for the third time and posed the same requirement. However, both suggestions were refuted by the Soviets.³¹ Apparently, before their requirements in the northeast were met, the Soviets would not permit the presence of large numbers of Nationalist troops in the region. The Soviets Red Army adopted a series of measures to obstruct the KMT's advancement. These Soviet army stipulations guaranteed that the KMT troops, whether they entered the northeast by sea, land, or air, were certain to encounter difficulties one after another.³²

At this stage of negotiations, economic problems received not much attention. Meanwhile, Soviet troops had already dismantled and shipped away a great amount of

machinery from various factories and power plants in Manchuria. Zhang Jia'ao reported to Chiang this situation on October 20. He informed Chiang of the Soviets' position that all Japanese assets in the northeast would go to the Soviets as war booty, which meant almost all important industries in Manchuria would fall into their hands.³³ As the person in charge of economic issues, Zhang Jia'ao immediately noticed its significance and suggested that Chongqing should initiate government-level talks on the "war booty" issue immediately. He also strongly pressed the government to nationalize all the enemy and puppet assets and ask the Soviet troops to stop dismantling machinery. If the Chinese government must pay for the expense of Soviet troops, Zhang suggested, it would be unwise to compensate them with shares in industries and mines.³⁴

However, at this time, the prominent concern of the Nationalist leaders was to enable their troops to enter Manchuria speedily. Chiang referred the problem Zhang raised to the Foreign Ministry, nevertheless he was still hesitant to discuss economic problems with the Soviets, as he confessed to Zhang in a cable, "right now we can only do whatever is possible, and wait for the circumstances to change".³⁵

On the other hand, the Soviets were not in any rush to initiate talks on economic issues. They were still busy on dismantling movable machinery in Manchuria and it was all right for them to wait. On October 27, Zhang and M.I. Sladkovsky, the economic counselor of the Soviet army command, had their first talk with each other, but both of them adopted a cautious probing attitude.³⁶

In the middle of October, when the Nationalist forces, carried in American vessels, arrived outside the port of Dalian, no agreement had been reached between the two governments on Dalian. The Soviets insisted that Nationalist troops could not land at Dalian because that would violate the Sino-Soviet treaty. Instead, they offered that the Nationalists were free to land their troops anywhere else in southern Manchuria.³⁷ However, Chiang was determined to ask the Soviets to allow the landing of his troops in the port. He wanted to signal his government's resolve to maintain its sovereignty over the city. In fact, Chiang chose Dalian also because he believed that the Americans had great interest in keeping the port from Soviets

domination, and therefore would be willing to support him.³⁸

However, Moscow's position was diametrically opposed to Chiang's plan. The KMT's invitation of American assistance incited even stronger backlash from the Soviets.³⁹ When the Chinese delegation met again with Malinovsky on October 29, the Soviets' countenance turned very stern. He complained repeatedly that a U.S. warship had sailed into the port of Dalian. He also explicitly stated to the KMT officials that his government was unwilling to see American political influence infiltrate the northeast by means of American dollars.⁴⁰

Facing strong opposition from the Soviets, Chiang reluctantly agreed to land his forces at Yingkou and Huludao.⁴¹ However, when the American ships with KMT troops anchored outside Yingkou, they were repulsed by the CCP troops on shore. The Americans decided to abort the landing and they finally put the KMT troops ashore in northeastern Hebei.⁴²

On November 5, the Soviets for the first time openly admitted to Nationalist officials the presence of the CCP troops in Yingkou and Huludao. They also stated that they would not interfere in China's domestic issues.⁴³ This statement amounted to making it impossible for the KMT troops to land at either of the two ports. Post-war antagonism between the United States and the Soviet Union and the fact that the KMT must rely on the Americans became an important factor obstructing Nationalist troops' entry into Manchuria.

Besides that, the Soviets never gave up their suspicions towards the Nationalists. At various occasions, Red Army officials complained of anti-Soviet activities and hinted that KMT organs were behind them. In retrospect, it is hard to say whether Chongqing issued any instructions hostile to the Soviets.⁴⁴ Nonetheless, due to the Red Army's hard line in Manchuria, the KMT's plan to seize the initiative by sending a small, elite group of troops into the region to finish takeover came to naught.⁴⁵

On the other hand, the Nationalist officials still tried to convince Washington that the Soviets were obstructing the movement of their troops into Manchuria, although they knew well that what the Soviets objected more was the presence of American forces in Manchuria. Their tactic was to make use of American suspicions

of Moscow in order to secure their commitment to transport more KMT forces to northern China and Manchuria.⁴⁶

However, as things turned out, the U.S. government was reluctant to offer more help. Chiang got only contradictory signals from the Americans. The United States would help move Nationalist troops to Manchuria and support their efforts to assert military control over the area, but would not send American troops there and would not support “fratricidal war” with the Communists.⁴⁷ In fact, after fighting between the KMT and CCP broke out south of the Great Wall in mid-October, General Wedemeyer, himself, worried that he might have to take responsibility for committing U.S. troops against the Communists. Referring to Washington’s order not to get involved in Chinese “fraternal strife”, he recommended to the War Department on November 5 that his government should refuse Chiang’s urgent request to transport yet another KMT army to Hebei.⁴⁸

The Start of the Economic Cooperation Negotiation

Just when their negotiations stalled on the army transportation issue, the Soviets raised their new requirements for economic cooperation in Manchuria. Malinovsky held a reception of the anniversary of the Soviet Union’s October Revolution on November 7. During the meeting, He suddenly came to talk with Zhang Jia’ao and told Zhang that, “hereafter, the work of the first stage will be Your Excellency’s. I hope Your Excellency will not be swatted by the gold dollar.” This conversation merited a good deal of retrospection on Zhang’s part.⁴⁹

The confusion of Zhang Jia’ao did not last long. On November 13, he learned from Takasaki Tatsunosuke, the former general manager of the Manchurian Heavy Industry Company, that Sladkovsky, the economic advisor to the Soviet Army command, had coerced the Japanese man into preparing an affidavit on October 24 which transferred the Manchuria Heavy Industry Company to the Soviet Union. The Soviets also compelled those persons in charge of other large Japanese companies in Manchuria to “voluntarily hand over those enterprises to the Soviet Union”. After

receiving these messages, Zhang finally recognized “how concerned the Soviets are with the industry and mines of Manchuria” and discerned the significance of Marshall Malinovsky’s statement on November 7.⁵⁰

On November 14, Sladkovsky for the first time mentioned briefly to Zhang that the Soviets intended to treat those “confiscated enemy property” as “war booty” but would “cooperate” with the Chinese. Zhang quickly recognized that the Soviet Union wanted to establish the strongest possible property claims to Manchuria’s economic enterprise and there would be no way to resolve the problem of the takeover without solving the economic problem. Chongqing had to arrive at a thorough understanding with the Soviets as soon as possible. All other negotiations, in comparison, were nonessential, Zhang believed.⁵¹

Meanwhile, the KMT delegation continued to debate with the Soviets over the transportation and takeover procedure while the Soviets continued to foil the KMT’s plan to ship its troops into Manchuria. At the end, the KMT had no alternative but to adopt a plan with high combat risk and logistical difficulties by landing their force at Qinhuangdao.⁵² On November 11, Chiang Kai-shek recalled his son Chiang Ching-kuo to Chongqing to prepare for a trip to Moscow. Four days later, to press the Soviets to negotiate the transfer of Manchuria, the ROC government decided to move its Northeast Headquarters from Changchun to Shanhaiguan and delay the settlement about Manchuria after they pacify north China.⁵³ However, until this moment, Chiang did not give up his hope to reach a deal including economic cooperation with the Soviets. In a handwritten letter to his son, he still suggested, “If there still is hope of retrieving the situation...in economics we can cooperate with the Soviets.”⁵⁴

On November 16, Zhang informed Sladkovsky of the Northeast Headquarters’ decision of retreat. Their discussion then shifted to the disposition of Japanese assets. Sladkovsky told Zhang that the Soviets wanted to establish joint management with the Chinese over Japanese enterprises in Manchuria, in accordance with the principle that both China and the Soviet Union would have an equal share. The two men then discussed the type of large-scale organization for joint management, and Japanese enterprises that would fall under the control of this organization. To probe the Soviets’

attitudes, Zhang suggested that political and economic problem should be settled at the same time, hinting that for the exchange of economic cooperation, the Soviets should assist the Nationalist takeover. Sladkovsky did not refuse. The two then agreed to consult with their government about drawing up a list of Japanese enterprises that the two sides could manage jointly. ⁵⁵The negotiation of economic cooperation thus began. Although disagreements still existed between Sladkovsky and Zhang, Zhang concluded from the meeting that the economic question was the key factor of his government's swift takeover and that there was still room for negotiation.⁵⁶

On November 20, Sladkovsky passed on to Zhang Jia'ao the concrete plan of Moscow concerning industrial cooperation in the Northeast. The Soviets maintained that the various enterprises formerly belonging to the Manchurian Heavy Industry Development Company and the Manchurian Electrical Company were war booty of the Red Army. However, Moscow was willing to have the enterprises belong to the two companies jointly managed by both Chinese and Soviet representatives, in keeping with the principle of equal ownership. The Soviets would contribute half of the assets of the two aforementioned companies in the form of shares in the new joint managed company. Considering the details of how the Soviets and Chinese would jointly manage various enterprises, the plan suggested, the Chinese representative would be the general director of the company while the executive duties would be performed by a general manager designated by the Soviets. To lure the Nationalists, Sladkovsky promised at the end, "The environment can be overcome by fruitful work."

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In reply, Zhang suggested that the issue should be discussed by the ministers of their respective governments. After his meeting with Sladkovsky, Zhang quickly wired his government about the Soviet government's proposal and he flew back to Chongqing on November 25 to consult with the top KMT leaders.⁵⁸

The Debates inside the KMT

On November 28, the Nationalist leaders held a meeting to hear Zhang's report

and discuss the recovery of Manchuria. During the meeting, T.V. Soong and Wang Shijie, who were in charge of the negotiations with Stalin in Moscow, strongly opposed any economic negotiation with the Soviets before the political takeover of Manchuria had been completed. For his part, Soong emphasized that it was not within the bounds of the Sino-Soviet treaty, for which he was in charge of negotiations, for the Soviets to regard Japanese investment in the northeast as their war booty. He suggested waiting calmly for a change of international circumstances. Meanwhile, Wang Shijie, who personally signed the Moscow Treaty, adopting a legalistic view, suggested that the matter of disposing of Japanese assets in Manchuria would have to be decided by the Allied Council in Japan. He also warned that discussing economic cooperation before an accompanying takeover was bound to arouse resentment among the people.⁵⁹

The meeting reached no decision. In Zhang's eyes, the views of Soong and Wang were correct both from a legal angle. However, Zhang also knew it quite well that if the Nationalist government adopted the position of the two, it would be impossible to come to terms with Malinovsky, who was determined to conclude an economic agreement before the Red Army withdrew from Manchuria. In Zhang's eyes, it was all right to discuss both political and economic problems simultaneously. Even if a settlement of the economic question would not necessarily result in the takeover being unhindered, Zhang believed, such a settlement would solve the greater part of the problem.⁶⁰

However, Zhang could not change the views of Soong and Wang. The duplicity of Soviet behavior had made it difficult for ROC government leaders to trust them.⁶¹ In fact, both Soong and Wang were deeply worried that, even after obtaining the right of economic cooperation, the Soviets would not allow the KMT to accomplish the takeover without hindrance, so that the Nationalist government in general and the two who were in charge of the former negotiation in particular would have assumed too great a responsibility.⁶²

Thus, after contacting a wide range of people in Chongqing, Zhang became deeply anxious. He complied with his superiors' rigid conduct of the negotiations with

the Soviets over Manchuria but repeatedly expressed his frustrations with this policy, especially after he noticed the rapid expansion of Chinese Communist presence in the northeast.⁶³ Zhang strongly believed that an economic agreement with the Soviets was possible and it was necessary to hasten the recovery of Manchuria. With his colleague's help, Zhang formulated a three-point principle for discussing economic cooperation with the Soviets on November 28, which was quickly approved by Chiang.⁶⁴

According to the document, firstly, as more than one country was involved in the handling of enemy assets, Chongqing suggested, the question should be discussed in the future by the Allied Control Council for Japan. Secondly, as for specific measures for industrial and economic cooperation, these could be discussed after the takeover of administrative power was settled. Thirdly, within limits permitted by its economic reconstruction plan, Chongqing would try its best to cooperate with the Soviets.⁶⁵ In a word, Zhang tried to persuade the Soviets to discuss economic cooperation after their withdrawal from Manchuria, while he promised that his government would make every endeavor in cooperating with the Soviets.

Meanwhile, against the KMT's diplomatic offensive of withdrawing its Northeast Headquarters and after the CCP's military setback at Shanhaiguan, the Soviets showed more gestures of cooperation towards the Nationalists in mid-November. On November 17, the Soviets notified Nationalist officials that the Red Army would postpone its withdrawal to assist the KMT in establishing political power in the northeast. This notice served two purposes. One was to demonstrate their spirit of adhering to the Sino-Soviet treaty. The other was to afford ample time for discussing the economic question. On November 23, the Soviets granted the Nationalists permission to airlift troops into Shenyang and Changchun. After the KMT troops occupied Jinzhou on November 26, the Soviets became more cooperative towards the Nationalists since they recognized that the KMT was more likely than the CCP to grant them substantive economic concessions beyond the terms of former agreements.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, the anxious Zhang sought personal contact with the Communists and

met with Dong Biwu on November 30. Zhang informed Dong that Malinovsky considered it necessary to open the railroad between Shanhaiguan and Shenyang in an expectation that Yan'an might change its attitude and not obstruct the advance of the KMT troops, since the Soviets were tacitly allowing the Nationalists to open the railroads. He also asked Dong to persuade the CCP forces to withdraw altogether from the critical rail corridor between Shanhaiguan and Mukden. Dong promised to transmit the message to Yan'an.⁶⁷ After consulting with his superiors at Yan'an, Dong affirmed that the CCP troops would evacuate the rail corridor on the condition that the KMT units refrained from attacking them during the pull-back.⁶⁸

However, Zhang did not get approval from Chiang before his communication with Dong. On December 8, Chiang plainly reminded Zhang that "while in the northeast and particularly in front of the Soviets, don't mention again Dong Biwu and matters related to the Communist Party".⁶⁹ Apparently, at this stage, Chiang tried to separate the domestic issue from diplomatic bargaining while denied the CCP's legal presence in Manchuria. The Northeast problem thus should be handled within the diplomatic framework but not become a domestic one.⁷⁰

Zhang and some other officials finally drafted out a proposal for economic cooperation in Manchuria on December 1. They suggested that the Soviets provide financial and technical expertise and discussed with the Chinese government which former Japanese industries should be operated in tandem. Chiang approved this outline, but T.V. Soong and Wang Shijie still showed hesitation. With their insistence, a major change was added that the question of enemy assets must be discussed by the two governments and approved by the Allied Nations. Moreover, the negotiations on economic cooperation must not begin until the ROC government had recovered Manchuria without further hindrance.⁷¹

The Bargaining at Shenyang

Zhang returned to Changchun on December 4 and conferred with Marshall Malinovsky the next day. Malinovsky revealed the date of January 3 as the new

deadline for the withdrawal of Soviet troops but he suggested that the requirement of withdrawal delay should be raised by the Chinese side.⁷² Therefore, the Soviets and the KMT reached a quid pro quo agreement after mid-November on delaying the Soviet withdrawal to allow the KMT time to move its forces into Manchuria while the two sides continued the economic discussions. The Soviets believed they could still use their military presence to extract the promise of additional economic concessions from the KMT. The Nationalists, for their part, desperately needed Soviet assistance to restrain the CCP from occupying the cities and railways.⁷³

As a result, in late November 1945, the Soviets constrained their contact with the CCP in order to advance their economic interests in Manchuria with the KMT. From November 17 to January 16, 1946, the Soviets also started to coordinate their withdrawal with the KMT's military advance into Manchuria. General Dong Yanping, the head of the KMT military delegation attached to the Soviet Military Command in Manchuria, attributed this to the ongoing Soviet-KMT economic cooperation negotiations.⁷⁴

On December 7, 1945, Zhang called on Sladkovsky to resume economic cooperation negotiations. Sladkovsky made it clear again that the Soviet promise of assistance was contingent upon a quick resolution for economic cooperation. Zhang then presented the ROC plan and added that "in order to avoid misunderstanding among Chinese citizens", economic problems must be discussed only after his government's takeover of the northeast and the withdrawal of Soviets troops. Sladkovsky quickly rejected it. He responded that he hoped discussions would take place before Manchuria reverted to the Nationalist government.⁷⁵

The difference between the two sides became apparent. Zhang told Sladkovsky that the Soviet proposal "has made the Chinese government and Chinese opinion feel as if the Soviets are following the example of the Japanese." His intention was quite clear, to remind the Soviets of the domestic opposition his government faced, and by this mean to solidify his bargaining position. Immediately, however, his remark provoked a strong backlash from Sladkovsky. The reply of the Soviet official was stern, "Your Excellency should know that the war booty is in the hands of the Red

Army, China has only two options. One is to try to cooperate and continue joint management; the other is to do nothing and let everything deteriorate.” Meanwhile, to induce Zhang, Sladkovsky again indicated that a settlement on the economic question would result in settling political problems. ⁷⁶

After the meeting, Zhang turned more anxious that the Soviets would find reasons to delay their withdrawal until his government agreed with them. The takeover would not be accomplished until the economic question had been resolved. In his report to Chiang the next day, to facilitate the negotiation process, Zhang advised Chongqing to speedily decide which types of enterprises would be managed jointly with the Soviets. He also suggested that Chiang should send some officials of the Commission of Economy and Resources to handle settlement of the economic issue. ⁷⁷

Two days later, Zhang met with Malinovsky again. Malinovsky for another time tried to ensure Zhang that in requesting economic cooperation with China, his government merely sought to obtain security for itself. He also warned that the question must be resolved through speedy and simple measures. ⁷⁸ On December 11 and December 13, Sladkovsky informed Zhang of the inventory of enterprises that Moscow suggested being jointly managed. According to what Sladkovsky had presented, in comparison with the output of industries and mines belonging to jointly run enterprises, the Soviets proposed that of all industries and mines, the output of coal mines belonging to jointly run companies comprised 18% of total coal output, the machine building industries 33%, mines producing metallic ores 81%, cement factories 37%, electric industries 89%. In detail, the Soviet plan comprised the following items: nine coal mines, fourteen steam power plants in various places, three steel-and iron-making factories, two ore-selecting factories, three iron mines, two brick factories, nineteen nonferrous metal and light metal industries, six machine-building factories, eight chemical engineering plants, two oil refineries, two stratified-rock oil factories, eight civilian airports, and a salt flat. To manage these enterprises, the Soviets suggested eleven jointly managed companies would be organized. In the case of the Iron and Steel Company, the Nonferrous Metal Company,

the Hydroelectric Power Plant Company, the Civil Aviation Company, and the Northern Coal Mine Company, Soviet shares would comprise 51 percent. In the case of the rest, they would comprise 49 percent.⁷⁹

According to the Soviets, the reason behind their requirements was that all products of industries and mines in the northeast had indirectly met Japanese military needs. Thus, all those enterprises that formerly served the Japanese Kwantung Army were “war booty” of the Red Army. This argument was certainly indefensible. However, as Zhang Jia’ao pointed out, “(I)f the Soviets logic sustained, then, in this age of total warfare, everything in the world is related to the military. Even grain or the people’s labor can be claimed as war booty.”⁸⁰

Chiang’s new instructions for economic negotiations reached Changchun on December 15. The Generalissimo asserted that he would never acknowledge the Soviet Union’s request for war booty. However, he would allow the Soviets to have a portion of Japanese investment in Manchuria as compensation for losses suffered by the Soviets during the war. Zhang and others could negotiate with the Soviets about jointly organizing the operation of Sino-Soviet industrial and mining enterprises while the ROC government must retrieve control of as many of the kinds of enterprises as possible that the Soviets wanted to be jointly operated.⁸¹

For further instruction, on December 18, Zhang flew to Nanjing to meet with Chiang. In Nanjing, Zhang participated in some high-level discussions on how to speed up the recovery of Manchuria. The Nationalist leaders finally agreed that their troops would be airlifted into the four main cities of Manchuria and that Ministry of Economics should send a team to Changchun to investigate the kinds of enterprises that would be jointly managed with the Soviets. They also decided to pay the Soviet Union a sum, not to exceed ten billion yuan of the national currency, for a capital share in those enterprises that both countries would jointly manage. However, these leaders emphasized, those enterprises should not be controlled by any single, large company as the Soviets proposed. They also refused to incorporate electric enterprises into jointly managed companies.⁸²

Zhang returned to Changchun on December 21, and he presented his

government's plan to Sladkovsky three days later. Zhang also revealed his government's offer of ten billion yuan as compensation for the Soviets. Most importantly, Zhang reiterated the Nationalists' position that there should be no more discussion of the war booty issue, emphasizing that this phrase would create many misunderstandings and leave a lasting, unfavorable impression of the Soviets among Chinese people. The two men then discussed how each enterprise would be separately managed rather than placed under a large conglomerate. No agreement was reached.

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Although Zhang and Sladkovsky continued to meet and discuss the details of economic cooperation in the last week of the year 1945, Sino-Soviet negotiations stalled as the two sides wrangled over whether economic cooperation talks should begin before or after the total withdrawal of Soviet troops. Only Chiang had the power to break the impasse but he was hesitant to exercise it.⁸⁴

In this period, a number of KMT troops were airlifted into Changchun in early January 1946. However, the CCP troops had already been operating nearly everywhere in the northeast. Zhang Jia'ao worried that the KMT troops entering southern Manchuria were not moving northward rapidly enough to occupy the major cities along the Changchun railway. Meanwhile, as the new year of 1946 came, some Nationalist leaders at Chongqing, Wang Shijie in particular, expected that the Americans might constrain the Soviets in their negotiations with China.⁸⁵ Nonetheless, Zhang, as the person negotiating directly with the Soviets, had quite a different assessment. In his eyes, Wang and others had never come to understand the fact that "the Soviets have a regional strategy for the northeast that will not be altered by any change in the international situation".⁸⁶

Zhang also held a different evaluation towards American intervention. On January 5, General Wedemeyer remarked at a press conference following his arrival in China that, with American assistance, General Du Yuming's troops would be sent to the northeast. He also expressed his desire to take a trip to the region. Unlike his colleague, Zhang got alarmed after hearing this news, as he feared that further expression of American intentions to foster China's military presence in the northeast

would provoke the Soviets. Against the new situation, Zhang estimated that Soviet suspicion toward the Nationalists was bound to increase, and it would create more troubles for the ROC government's takeover of Manchuria.⁸⁷

Meanwhile, the ROC Foreign Ministry still employed only ordinary, everyday procedures to deal with economic negotiations. The preparation and liaison work of the KMT troops was also poor. There was less than a month left before the withdrawal of Soviet troops, but no arrangements had been reached.⁸⁸

However, as Zhang anticipated, the Soviet attitude gradually turned tough. On January 10, the Soviets, with the excuse of a shortage of vehicles for transportation, informed the Nationalists that their troops in Shenyang would not start withdrawing until January 15. They also said that they had no way of estimating the date when their troops would complete their withdrawal from Changchun and Harbin.⁸⁹

Meanwhile, the domestic political bargaining in China developed rapidly. On January 10, the Nationalists and the Communists reached a cease-fire agreement under the mediation of Marshall. To implement the order for a truce, a military mediation headquarters would be organized by the Nationalists, the Communists, and American representatives. For Manchuria, the agreement contained a vital supplementary statement that the truce would not affect implementation of the Nationalist government's "sending its troops into the nine Northern provinces for the purpose of restoring its sovereignty or its transferring of troops within the nine northeastern provinces."⁹⁰

Nearly at the same time, Chongqing drafted a new plan for economic cooperation, according to which the Soviets would be allowed to rent former Japanese properties. The representative from the Ministry of Economics, Sun Yueqi, finally arrived in Changchun on January 16 and brought the central government's new instructions. In general, Chongqing approved of the following points: Firstly, it agreed to merge the three mines into a jointly managed Sino-Soviet coal mine company. Secondly, it offered to turn the Penhsi-hu(本溪湖) Iron Works into a jointly managed iron and steel company. Thirdly, Chongqing conceded to merge those motor vehicle manufacturing and repair plants into a Sino-Soviet manufacturing company.

Noticeably, the new plan did not mention again compensation for the Soviet withdrawal.⁹¹

Thus, the gap between the KMT government's new offers and the Soviets' demands was still wide, or even wider than before. In that very night, Zhang wrote a letter to Chiang and Wen Wenhao, emphatically pleading that the central government should grant further concessions to win Soviet supports. He warned his superiors that the government's takeover of administrative power in various place was more apparent than real. Without further concessions, he warned, the procrastination of the KMT leaders would only push the Soviets to impose more difficulties on their takeover.⁹²

In the past weeks, under the pretext of avoiding a clash with the CCP troops, the Soviets were rather passive in assisting the Nationalists' takeover. Meanwhile, with the Soviets' assistance, the CCP forces had pervaded the entire northeast. The result would be that before Nationalist troops arrived, the CCP forces would have already gained a strong foothold in the northeast.

On the other hand, after orders for the truce were issued and political negotiation resumed, the CCP tried to publicize and legitimize its presence in Manchuria. Zhou Enlai stated at a press conference in Chongqing that, "except for other stipulations in our public notices, once the truce begins, Chinese Communist troops will remain where they are, to await a settlement by the Political Consultative Conference." Hearing that news, Zhang Jia'ao got anxious that it was within the CCP's capacity to create a situation that while the KMT occupy cities it would take control of the countryside.⁹³

As the situation turned more complicated, Zhang regretted that the central government did not dispatch a team to Changchun to negotiate with the Soviets and speedily settle the issue in December 1945. Had both sides agreed to some terms, Zhang believed, the Soviet attitude would now be more cooperative.⁹⁴

To win Soviets good will, Chiang Ching-kuo made a secret trip to Moscow in late 1945. During his meetings with Stalin, the Soviet leader openly expressed his suspicion that although on the surface Chongqing was friendly to the Soviet Union,

secretly, it actually was hostile to Moscow. Stalin also suggested that the Nationalist party should be able to coexist with the CCP. According to the younger Chiang, Stalin also warned that the KMT should not permit American troops to be stationed on Chinese soil and he criticized the American open-door principle as an instrument of imperialist invasion. Considering the economic cooperation problem in the northeast, Stalin refused to discard the term 'war booty', while he agreed that the jointly managed enterprises could be divided into a number of companies. Stalin also insisted that everything must be discussed before the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the northeast and subsequently published.⁹⁵

Thus, the younger Chiang's visit to Moscow achieved no breakthrough for the economic cooperation talks. After his return, Chiang Ching-kuo also brought Zhang Jia'ao a handwritten letter from his father on January 18, which clearly stated the Generalissimo's consideration:

*with respect to the principles underlying economic cooperation, for the time being we can only reduce their scope; we ought not to make them too broad. I have no alternative...It is enough if our sovereignty and legality are not adversely affected in such a way as to give others a precedent.*⁹⁶

Chiang was under a difficult situation and he was thus hesitant. As a result, the Soviets' irritation at the Nationalist government's rejection of their terms mounted. When Madame Chiang visited Manchuria in late January 1946 to console Soviet troops and to meet with top Soviet commanders, Marshall Malinovsky found an excuse to be absent. Meanwhile, Sladkovsky toughened his negotiating stance with Zhang Jia'ao.⁹⁷

The day after he met with the younger Chiang, Zhang and Sun Yueqi argued for further concessions to the Soviets to facilitate a speedy settlement. They also urged their government to accelerate the pace of negotiation. In their report to Chiang, they suggested that if the government conducted negotiations at this time, they were more likely to succeed, since the date for Red Army' withdrawal was approaching thus the Soviets were anxious to settle the economic question. Conversely, Zhang and Sun suspected, after withdrawing their troops, and acting on the pretext that the industries

and mines in the northeast were their war booty, the Soviets might send troops to control various enterprises that were earmarked for joint management in the inventory. By that time, negotiations would turn even more difficult. Thus, the two appealed to Chongqing to speed up the negotiation.⁹⁸

In reply, however, Chiang only reminded Zhang that his government could never agree to the Soviet proposition that all former Japanese assets were Red Army war booty and Zhang should only discuss selecting enterprises for Sino-Soviet management. Chiang also suggested that the former South Manchuria Railway and the Fu-shun Coal Mine, as well as their affiliated enterprises, must not be jointly managed with the Soviets. Besides, Chiang emphasized that the result of negotiations must not be formalized as agreements until after the Nationalists completed their takeover of the northeast.⁹⁹

The reason behind Chiang's uncompromising attitude was that, just at this time, the Soviet ambassador once again stated in Chongqing that those Japanese enterprises were war booty of the Soviet Army, which provoked serious concern among the Chinese public.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, Chiang's attitude returned to one of rigid insistence on principle, legality, and reason, while he keenly noticed his party's peculiar position in Manchuria.¹⁰¹

On January 25, Zhang delivered to the Soviets his government's new term. In the following days, Zhang and Sladkovsky met to discuss the proposal. Zhang proposed again to leave the war booty question aside temporarily while Sladkovsky repeatedly complained that he really dared not report the new Chinese offer to his government. Sladkovsky also suggested that the Chinese side should reconsider and revise its proposals so that both sides would quickly reach an agreement. The reason why the Soviets wished to enter into intimate economic cooperation, he emphasized, was that the Soviets did not want a third nation to enter the northeast. At the end, Sladkovsky warned, "further procrastination is bound to affect all military and political issues".¹⁰²

As the planned date for the withdrawal of Soviets troops arrived, Zhang thought he had to cut the Gordian knot. On January 28, when he met Sladkovsky again, Zhang requested that the Soviets revise their original plan and make the greatest concessions.

In exchange, he said the Chinese side would also reconsider and make final concessions. Zhang also tried hard to convince the Soviets that the spirit of the Chinese proposal was just not to disappoint its people. With the restoration of the Northeast, Zhang suggested, the Chinese public presumed that the country's sovereign rights would be restored. If the two countries would jointly manage nearly all of those important industrial and mining enterprises in the northeast, people might point out that, although the region had been restored to them, still nothing further had been obtained. However, his explanation did not move the Soviet colonel. After these meetings, Zhang warned Chongqing that Soviets plans to eliminate threats through economic cooperation reflected a basic regional strategy that in the future the Soviets would pursue toward Manchuria and Xinjiang. The Nationalists government must get alarmed.¹⁰³

A Tragic Incident

Thus, no progress was achieved in January 1946. When the negotiation reached an impasse, a brutal murder occurred. On 6 January, after reaching an agreement with the Soviets to take over the Fushun coal mines, Zhang Jia'ao dispatched Dr. Zhang Xingfu, special envoy of the Ministry of Economics for the takeover of industries and mines, to assume charge of the task. Zhang Xingfu was accompanied by five other engineers. However, before his meeting with Sladkovsky on January 26, Zhang Jia'ao got a report that on their way back to Mukden from Fushun, at 8 p.m. on January 16, Zhang Xingfu and his team of people were dragged off their train by armed irregulars and ferociously stabbed to death. Zhang Jia'ao was stunned to hear the news. Zhang Xingfu was a famous specialist on mining. His murder would certainly provoke indignation among the Chinese public, especially among intellectual circles, which would make the economic negotiations even more difficult, if not impossible.¹⁰⁴

The murderer of Zhang Xingfu was a controversial issue for decades. The Soviets and the CCP traded blame on the "armed irregulars" while the Nationalists suspected that it was committed by both the Soviets and the CCP.¹⁰⁵ In the year

2009, however, the official publisher of CCP history in mainland China, the CCPCC Literature Press (中央文献出版社), published a biography of Mr. Wu Liangping (吴亮平), the man who was the CCP local leader of the Fushun district when Zhang Xingfu was murdered. As the book reveals, according to a memorial document that Wu wrote during the Cultural Revolution, it was the CCP soldiers who, under the direction of Red Army officials, killed Zhang Xingfu and his followers.¹⁰⁶

The Domestic Politics Entangle

The Soviets halted their military pullout from Manchuria on January 16, 1946. At the end of the month, the Soviets claimed that there would be another delay of their withdrawal from Manchuria. Their excuse was inadequate fuel supplies. However, it was obvious that the crux of the Soviets' postponing was the still-unsettled status of economic cooperation. Meanwhile, the Nationalists achieved no progress on their taking over. While the Soviets were transferring the cities along the Changchun railway line to the Nationalists, they allowed CCP forces to occupy the hinterlands. Zhang speculated that as the economic cooperation had been in limbo, the Soviets would give more aid to the CCP and then leave without being concerned.¹⁰⁷

The situation became even more complicated after the CCP made public its presence in Manchuria. As the Political Consultative Conference convened on January 10, Sino-Soviet relations with respect to the northeast was encumbered by the relationship between the Nationalists and the Communists. On January 20, Yan'an announced its plan to push ahead with elections of new officials for the provincial and sub-provincial governments in the Northeast. Meanwhile, as the PCC proceeded, debates between the KMT and the CCP on whether the PCC scheme should be applied to the northeast intensified quickly.¹⁰⁸ To the Nationalist negotiators, before the conference, the northeastern questions involved only bargains with the Soviets, but then questions concerning the CCP had become part of the problem.¹⁰⁹ Development of domestic politics made it even more difficult for Chongqing to consider compromising with the Soviets before their withdrawal of troops.

For Chiang, when the Soviets would withdraw and whether they would support the CCP to occupy territories were his top concerns. He estimated that the purposes of the Soviet's delay of withdrawal were possibly twofold; they had not reached their goals in economic cooperation, or they tried to press the U.S. marines' withdraw from north China. However, Chiang was still willing to make certain additional concessions to ease Soviets attitudes. As he confessed in his diary entry, he was ready to make sweeping economic concessions to the Soviets but he would do so only after the Soviets had withdrawn from Manchuria. Thus, he chose to wait again. Chiang did not respond to Stalin's proposal for a summit meeting, and his government turned a deaf ear to the Soviets' requirement of continuing their delay of withdrawal.¹¹⁰

Meanwhile, Nationalist officials repeatedly raised the question of the Soviet demands in Manchuria before the Americans. In the evening of January 19, Vice Foreign Minister of the ROC Liu Xie informed American officials at Chongqing of the economic negotiations in Changchun. He told the American officials that no agreement had yet been reached and that deadlock had added great difficulty to the taking over of administration in Manchuria.¹¹¹

Chiang Kai-shek also personally met with Marshall and Harriman on January 29, when the latter was visiting China. Chiang informed the two of the development of economic negotiation. He tried hard to raise the consciousness of the American officials as he warned them that if Chongqing acquiesced to Soviet demands, Moscow would dominate Manchurian industry and economy. This would seriously affect American commercial interests and its whole policy of the open door. The Generalissimo also told Marshall and Harriman that he was unwilling to negotiate with the Soviets while their troops were still in Manchuria and he believed it was in America's interests to resist the Soviets' demands. He asserted that Moscow did not intend to withdraw unless an agreement was reached on the industrial properties. However, he chose to face this situation rather than make an agreement under duress. Chiang also informed the two Americans that he planned to prolong the negotiations until after February 1, at which time the Soviets were obligated to withdraw their

troops. Apparently, Chiang tried to invite American involvement again. ¹¹²

In reply, Marshall advised the Generalissimo to delay his negotiations on economic cooperation until an agreement with the CCP for political unification was reached. The Generalissimo accepted this advice. After their meeting with Chiang, Marshall and Harriman recommended that Washington must give immediate attention to the matter and state the U.S. position promptly to the Soviets. ¹¹³ On January 29, Marshall told Wang Shijie again that Chongqing should not be hurried to reach an agreement with the Soviets before its position strengthened. ¹¹⁴ The Americans got involved.

The Slim Hope

On February 1, Zhang Jia'ao conferred with Malinovsky and Sladkovsky, which turned out to be their last meeting. Sladkovsky and Zhang reviewed their previous negotiations and agreed that, although each side had drawn up different lists of Japanese enterprises they wanted to be included under joint management, the paramount obstacle was that the Chinese side was unwilling to use the term 'war booty', whereas the Soviet side refused to withdraw that term from discussions. ¹¹⁵

Zhang tried again to make the Soviets understand the political constraints that the Nationalist leaders faced. He told the Soviets that the Chinese government had been plunged into a very difficult situation. The public reproached the Nationalists for spending several months to receive only a few cities in Manchuria, while their taking-over of provinces had also been nominal. Zhang then asked Malinovsky when the Soviet troops planned to withdraw from Manchuria. ¹¹⁶

Malinovsky gave no concrete answer to Zhang's question. For the CCP problems, he offered the excuse that his government cannot interfere in China's internal affairs. Instead, Malinovsky again urged Zhang to include more enterprises for Sino-Soviet management. Most importantly, Malinovsky for the first time suggested that the two sides could set aside the war booty question, although only temporarily. He said the Soviets wished to settle upon the measures for economic

cooperation quickly. He also assured Zhang again that the plan for cooperation was merely a precautionary measure for the Soviets' own safety. However, he also warned, "if the Chinese continue to procrastinate on the question of economic cooperation, then the industry will come to a standstill and continue to be destroyed, and the social order never will be restored." ¹¹⁷

To exert even more pressure on the Nationalists, Malinovsky also admitted, for the first time in the presence of Zhang Jia'ao, that CCP military forces may number as many as 500,000 troops, and that they were everywhere in southern Manchuria. He suggested that Chongqing should formulate another plan for Sino-Soviet economic cooperation so that an agreement could be reached before Soviet troops left Manchuria. The threat contained in Malinovsky's statement was obvious. ¹¹⁸

This talk with Malinovsky was exceedingly important as Soviet views were fully disclosed. Zhang Jia'ao interpreted Malinovsky's remark as an ultimatum and he believed his government could no longer procrastinate or remain irresolute. He decided to take a trip back to Chongqing immediately. After returning to Chongqing on February 4, Zhang discussed with Chiang and other KMT leaders on how to break the impasse with the Soviets. ¹¹⁹

He immediately reported Malinovsky's views to his superiors. To persuade them, Zhang outlined his concerns and ideas. Presciently, he predicted that that in the future, the rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States would become an unalterable fact and they would compete with each other in expanding their spheres of influence. As part of their global competition, Zhang warned, the Soviets certainly would utilize the CCP to expand their influence in China on both sides of the Great Wall. If the northeast turned red, then the future of China would be nothing more than to provide a field of contention between Moscow and Washington. For the time being, by utilizing the CCP forces, it was possible that the Soviets might establish a local regime in the Northeast, totally ignoring the Nationalist government. ¹²⁰

Therefore, Zhang strongly recommended that the Generalissimo should reconsider the party's guideline for the negotiation. He presented two options. One was to terminate discussion with the Soviets on economic cooperation. The other was

to offer the Soviets the greatest possible concessions to reach a complete settlement. Preferring the latter course of action, Zhang hinted that diplomatic talks might take place in Peiping or Chongqing instead of Changchun.¹²¹

However, Chiang's thinking was still that, if the Soviets did not withdraw their troops at first, the Nationalists would not advance the issue of economic cooperation with them. In Chiang's own words, "We will shelve it and see what happens". Zhang also talked with other leading officials and learned that no additional Chinese troops would be sent to Changchun until an agreement on a Soviet troop withdrawal from Manchuria was reached.¹²²

On February 7, the Generalissimo held a top-level dinner meeting at his residence. At the conclusion, the KMT leaders decided to make some concessions by adding the Anshan(鞍山) Iron and Steel Works and the Hegang(鹤岗)Coal Mines to the list of jointly managed enterprises. The Chinese side would also approve joint management of the Civil Aviation Company in Manchuria. These would constitute the Chinese side's final concessions. At once, Zhang Jia'ao suggested notifying the Soviets of this decision as soon as possible. He also argued that under the exceedingly urgent circumstances, his government should take the quickest way to resume the talks with the Soviets. The government should not again go through "the various procedures of first formulating a plan, then discussing it and finally submitting for approval and instructions." As Zhang concluded in his diary, "in my innermost heart there is only a burning anxiety",¹²³

During their private conversation, the Generalissimo informed Zhang that the reason for his hesitation was the lack of a definite date for the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Apparently, suspicion and distrust between the Chinese and the Soviets deepened day by day. Since they feared being intercepted and plunged into a trap, the Nationalist leaders postponed their troops' advance in Manchuria. On the other hand, the Soviets would not totally withdraw their troops from Shenyang, for suspicion that the Nationalists would refuse further negotiation.¹²⁴ Chiang also estimated that the Soviets dared not withdraw from Mukden totally, for fear that the Chinese would take over the enterprises they wished to operate jointly.¹²⁵

Meanwhile, the CCP leaders made great efforts to solidify their newly gained position in Manchuria. On February 8, Zhou Enlai and Dong Biwu visited Zhang to inquire as to the state of KMT-Soviet negotiations. They suggested to Zhang that the northeast problem should be settled politically by adding representatives of various other parties to the so-called Northeastern Political Commission. Zhang inferred that the CCP representatives made these proposals because their armed forces in the northeast were sufficient to resist the government troops. Furthermore, they tried to use the truce agreement and the PCC resolutions to back them up.¹²⁶

Two days later, Chiang gathered Zhang Jia'ao, T.V. Soong, Wang Shijie and Wen Wenhao to discuss the plan to be proposed to the Soviets. They finally decided to notify the Soviet ambassador in Chongqing about the plan they formulated during the February 7 meeting, which would constitute the Chinese government's final concessions. The most important point was that Chongqing would add Hegang Coal Mines for joint management, but the Soviets must hand back to China the Fushun Coal Mines. They also decided to dispatch Zhang to take the proposal back to Changchun and resume negotiations with the Soviets.¹²⁷

Before his departure, Zhang consulted with some high-ranking officials of the Nationalists government. Again, T.V. Soong expressed his pessimistic view. He believed nothing would result from the negotiations and that continued negotiations would merely plunge the Nationalists into a deeper predicament. His suggestion was to shelve these problems. Meanwhile, some other KMT leaders were more optimistic. For instance, Sun Ke, who generally adopted a pro-Soviet position in this period, suggested continuing negotiations and some compromise with the Soviets.¹²⁸

The Intervention of the Americans

When the Nationalist government was ready to initiate another round of negotiations, however, the United States finally intervened and, inadvertently or not, set in motion a chain of events that ultimately led to the failure of KMT-Soviet bargaining. In late January and early February, the U.S. government lodged a formal

diplomatic protest to both the KMT and the Soviet Union. More importantly, however, Washington released the Yalta Accord. As a result, the Soviets became rigid again on the war booty issue while mass anti-Soviet protests broke out in various cities of China. The delay of the Soviets in leaving Manchuria, which the KMT originally accepted in November 1945 in order to check the CCP's expansion, now seriously threatened the KMT's nationalist credentials while incited struggle inside the party.

Not long after the Moscow Foreign Ministers Conference, a fierce rivalry developed between the United States and the USSR over Iran, Turkey, and other questions. These sea changes in Soviet-American relations posed many new challenges for Chinese politics. The intervention of the U.S. government in Sino-Soviet negotiations, which some Nationalist leaders had expected for a long time, finally came in early February 1946. ¹²⁹On February 7, the U.S. State Department addressed a communication both to Chongqing and Moscow, stating that Washington would never accept exclusive Sino-Soviet control over those industries in Manchuria as this would be contrary to America's traditional Open Door policy. Furthermore, the Americans argued, the question of Japanese reparations should be settled by the Reparations Commission of the Allied States. Washington also required both the Chinese and Soviet sides to notify the U.S. government about the state of their negotiations. ¹³⁰

Most importantly, the U.S. government published the secret Yalta agreements at this crucial moment. On January 22, 1946, a journalist asked Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson during a news conference whether there was "a secret agreement" at Yalta that gave the Soviets possession of the Kurile Islands. Acheson replied that the Yalta Agreement had been concerned with the Soviets occupation of the Kurile but that it was not a final territorial decision. This interpretation was disputed by Moscow. ¹³¹ In his news conference on January 29, Byrnes revealed to the public that the Yalta Agreement had referred to Dalian and Port Arthur as well as the Kurile Islands. Two days later, President Truman stated that the Yalta Agreement would be made public if Moscow and London had no objection. As a result, the Agreement was simultaneously released on February 12 by the three governments. ¹³²

The publication of the Yalta secret agreement at this time had an unexpected effect in China. Months ago, without obtaining the consent of the Chinese government, these three powers entered into the agreement of selling China's national interests, which had led to the conclusion of the Sino-Soviet Treaty in Moscow. Undoubtedly, when the Chinese people read about the agreement, they were enraged. Their resentment was further strengthened by the delay of the Red Army's withdrawal and the extent of Soviet economic ambition and brutal behaviors in Manchuria.¹³³

Meanwhile, as we discussed in the last chapter, soon after the PCC adjourned and the military reorganization agreement was reached, successful implementation of the domestic agreements became unlikely. A powerful group of the KMT officials and generals showed strong resentment against the PCC resolutions and the military reorganization agreement that would threaten their own personal privileges. These KMT conservatives vigorously argued that the PCC had taken a dangerous step by including the CCP and various other parties to share political power. For them, to cooperate with the Chinese Communists was impossible as the CCP's participation in the government would only lead to political unrest. The CCP's rapid expansion in the northeast made them even more anxious. They thus showed strong misgivings to the party's policies after the war.¹³⁴

Without a doubt, the publication of the Yalta Agreement would only strengthen the hand of the opponents of the KMT-CCP accord. In fact, people who were in charge of the Political Consultative Conference and the Sino-Soviet negotiations was the same group of high-ranking KMT officials, namely the Political Study Faction. When the Manchurian problem emerged, their opponents inside the Nationalist Party, especially the right-wing C-C clique, were now in a better position to charge them for sacrificing the country's and the party's interests to appease the communists, to sign the Sino-Soviet Treaty, and to grant political concessions to other parties.¹³⁵

Thus, soon after the U.S. government revealed their opposition to Sino-Soviet economic cooperation, Zhang Jia'ao worried that it would further restrain the KMT diplomatic authorities from dealing with the Soviets. The conservatives who argued that the Nationalist government should adopt a stiff attitude would receive the

impression that the government could resist the Soviet demands by relying on American support, which in turn made the negotiation even more difficult. Although those liberals inside the KMT party still supported negotiations with the Soviets, they also keenly noticed that they must not take lightly the agitated feelings of people incited by the right-wing nationalists after the publication of Yalta accord.¹³⁶

Thus, Zhang Jia'ao expected that Chongqing would publicize the facts of Sino-Soviet negotiations while at the same time continuing talks with the Soviets. Otherwise, he argued, prolific speculations in various circles would merely add to misunderstanding and the issue would soon become politicized. Those so-called nationalists would certainly take the moral ground and revile those officials in charge of the negotiations, making it more difficult to carry out the negotiations. In his eyes, "A situation has already been created that leaves no means of settling the matter."¹³⁷

The public disclosure of the Yalta agreement, the formal recognition of the independence of Outer Mongolia and the news of Dr. Zhang Xinfu's murder, unleashed a public Nationalism storm. On February 16, Manchurian natives living in Chongqing started demonstrating in the streets. This was the first manifestation of popular dissatisfaction over the Sino-Soviet exchanges in the northeast. A great number of people attended. The participants demanded that the government ask for the Soviets to provide a precise explanation for Zhang Xingfu's murder. The Soviet government must apologize, make amends for the loss, and guarantee that similar incidents would not reoccur. Most importantly, people argued, the Soviets must withdraw troops from Manchuria in accord with a scheduled date. After the rally, they marched to the government to present a petition.¹³⁸

According to Zhang Jia'ao, the matter arousing resentment among the KMT cadres, especially northeast natives, was the CCP's policy statements on the question of the northeast. Yan'an argued that the organization for the takeover of Manchuria should not be monopolized by the KMT but must be reorganized to include as many as possible of the "democratic elements to enjoy equal and effective representation". Chongqing should also recognize the "democratic autonomous regime" in the various

prefectures of the Northeast. Most importantly, Yan'an argued, the National government should recognize the Anti-Japanese Democratic Forces, the CCP troops in fact, and let them maintain local order. Therefore, Chongqing should limit the number of the troops it would send into the northeast, which in their words would "lighten the burden of the people and contribute to peace".¹³⁹ The CCP's comments provoked strong criticism from the Nationalists, especially those Northeast natives.¹⁴⁰

Until then, however, the Nationalist leaders still tried to resume the economic negotiations at Changchun. On February 18, when he was preparing for the trip back to Changchun, Zhang received a letter from the Generalissimo through Wang Shijie. Chiang asked Zhang to make a final effort to put into effect the plans formulated ten days ago. Meanwhile, the Generalissimo also emphasized that under no circumstances could one more word be added, and measures for economic cooperation could be implemented only after the Soviets completed their withdrawal and the Chinese government had finished its takeover.¹⁴¹

On February 19, Wang Shijie met with the Soviet ambassador and asked Soviets to withdraw their troops soon. He also informed Petrov that Zhang Jia'ao would return to Changchun for one more discussion with the Soviets. The counter-plan Zhang brought contained the greatest concessions that the Nationalists could make. Unfortunately, the Soviet ambassador raised the war booty issue again and he asserted that the issue comprised the nub of the question. If the two sides did not settle it, he said, nothing could be resolved. Petrov also protested the anti-Soviet demonstration held by northeastern compatriots.¹⁴² Apparently, against the background of American intervention, Moscow was inclined to show their resolve in front of the Nationalist government and exerted more pressure to force the Chinese side to accept its formula. As the war booty issue came back, the bargaining suffered a stiff downturn.

Since he planned to return to Changchun on the next day, Zhang Jia'ao packed his luggage and forwarded it to the airport on February 19. At ten o'clock that evening, however, he suddenly received a long distance call from Chiang Kai-shek, who was then in Nanjing. The Generalissimo asked Zhang to postpone his trip

temporarily. Chiang had received a report from Wang Shijie on his talk with the Soviet ambassador, which indicated that the war booty question was still unsettled. As a result, Chiang turned even more hesitant and decided to postpone Zhang's trip.¹⁴³

Again, the problem of "war booty" turned out to be the obstacle. Personally, Zhang believed that since the Chinese government had already promised to replace it with a compensatory sum, the discrepancy existed merely in words. The most critical problem for the KMT, Zhang believed, was that the CCP was gaining strength in the northeast, and that time was running out for Chongqing. If an economic cooperation agreement was not quickly settled, it might be impossible to agree on the Soviet withdrawals from Manchuria. Even if Chongqing could negotiate an agreement with Moscow, Zhang suspected, since the CCP had become so strong in the northeast, it would still be very difficult for the government to take over most areas. He regretted again that the question was not solved when it involved bargaining only with the Soviets.¹⁴⁴

The Anti-Soviets Demonstrations

The situation became even more complicated very soon. After the publication of Yalta Agreement, leading intellectual and political activists published many statements of protest.¹⁴⁵ The disclosure of the links between the Yalta agreement and the Sino-Soviet treaty finally threw the Chinese public into a state of high agitation. On February 21, Zhang Jia'ao received a report saying that academic circles in Chongqing were preparing to stage a big demonstration.¹⁴⁶ On the next day, from the early morning, students from various universities and middle schools in the Shapingba district of Chongqing, numbering over thirty thousand, staged a large-scale demonstration. The students strongly criticized the Soviet government, demanded that Red Army must be withdrawn from Manchuria, and called on the Nationalist government to "eliminate all puppet governments" in the northeast. The demonstrators also protested the murder of Zhang Xingfu.¹⁴⁷

The demonstration proceeded rather orderly. The demonstrators were prevented

by police from going to the Soviet embassy, the building of the Foreign Ministry, or the building of the National Government. However, some demonstrators held up various kinds of Anti-soviets caricatures, including one depicting Stalin being stabbed by a knife. On the same day, the site of the CCP newspaper Xinhua Daily was demolished.¹⁴⁸ Besides this, no big incident occurred, but the demonstrations soon spread all around the country. Students and citizens at Shanghai, Nanjing, Beijing, and Hangzhou also held large-scale demonstrations.¹⁴⁹ Records of their inner circle discussions indicated that, the KMT conservatives tried to shift the target of protest from the Soviets to the Chinese Communists, although they also keenly recognized the danger of provoking the Soviets.¹⁵⁰

From the vantage point of the KMT's anti-Communist strategy, the demonstrations fulfilled a function.¹⁵¹ In terms of the party's general strategy, however, it was rather counterproductive. It made a compromise with the Soviets nearly impossible. Chiang Ching-kuo and Zhang Jia'ao feared that the Soviet government would take some counter measures and they suggested that it was necessary for Chiang Kai-shek himself to state explicitly the attitude of the ROC government so that relations with the Soviets would not deteriorate further. The two also agreed that under the circumstances in hand, it would be futile for them to return to Changchun.¹⁵²

As a result, the ROC leaders decided that Soviet anger should cool before Zhang returned to Changchun to resume Sino-Soviet economic cooperation negotiations. Meanwhile, some KMT leaders even held an exaggerated expectation that if the crisis of the northeast escalated, it might provoke conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union, which perhaps would benefit them later.¹⁵³

The Soviets showed strong reactions to those demonstrations. They stated that the Chinese government had signed the treaty that provided for their presence in Manchuria and they had completely lived up to all the terms of the Sino-Soviet Treaty. Moreover, they argued that Chongqing had originally requested twice the delay in the Soviet withdrawal from Manchuria. Privately, the Soviets also complained that the KMT was using Chinese public opinion to force additional concessions in the

economic negotiations while weakening the existing Soviet position in Manchuria.¹⁵⁴ On February 26, the Soviet ambassador delivered to Chongqing a written protest. He condemned that the students' demonstration was an organized anti-Soviet activity and declared that the Chinese government must take responsibility. The reason for the delay in withdrawing Soviet troops did not lie with the Soviet Union but was the result of technical reasons. Zhang Xingfu was murdered by a mob. The Soviets also remarked that the withdrawal of Soviet troops would not be completed later than the U.S. marines' withdraw from China.¹⁵⁵

These developments thus placed the Generalissimo in a very difficult position. On February 25, Chiang returned to Chongqing from Nanjing and he stated explicitly his attitude toward the Soviets. He tried hard to pacify the public mood. In his speech, Chiang said that he hoped the people of the entire country would trust the government. It would reach a reasonable settlement with the Soviets concerning the question of the northeast. People should not be misled by groundless speculations circulating outside the government or indulge in overly agitated speeches or activities. During the current Sino-Soviet discussions concerning economic cooperation, Chiang assured, the government had instructed the northeast headquarters to adhere to the following principles: the Soviets must honor the Sino-Soviet Treaty and other international agreements. The friendship between China and the Soviet Union was necessary not only to both China and to the Soviet Union but also to peace and cooperation in the world.¹⁵⁶

Chiang thus decided to move Sino-Soviet negotiations to the central government to be dealt with. Zhang agreed with Chiang but he suggested that in order to avoid hurting the feelings of Soviets in Changchun, Chongqing should refrain from openly announcing it. After his departure, Zhang noticed that Chiang had also invited Mr. Chen Lifu for a talk. According to Zhang, during the talk Chiang severely reprimanded Chen for arranging the student demonstration.¹⁵⁷

So far as we know now, the protests around the country were not, as the Soviets condemned at the time, organized and directed by the KMT, at least not by its top leaders. In fact, Chiang had even tried to censor news of the anti-Soviet nature of the

protests. The KMT had also not been seriously pushing for a Soviet withdrawal until February 1946, as its troops had a hard time pacifying southern Manchuria after the Soviets withdrew from the area in the fall of 1945. It was not in their interest to offend the Soviets. A rapid Soviet withdrawal from northern Manchuria would pose even more challenges for them. ¹⁵⁸

Ironically, the CCP was also in no position to capitalize on the public outcry over the Yalta Agreement. Zhou Enlai refused to support the protests, saying that “we cannot associate ourselves with any anti-foreign movement for we cannot afford to lose international cooperation.”¹⁵⁹ In fact, the Chinese Communists were guilty by their association with the Soviets and their earlier praise for the Sino-Soviet Treaty, and could not, therefore, join in or support the popular protests. Instead, it had to eschew even the perception of being tied to Moscow, while attributing the cause of the demonstrations to the KMT right wing’s plots.¹⁶⁰

On March 2, Zhang learned that Sladkovsky was expecting him to return early to Changchun to resume negotiations.¹⁶¹ Meanwhile, Chiang still did not want to close the door to negotiations too. Nonetheless, after the publication of the Yalta Agreement, the KMT had to insist, against a rising national tide of anti-Soviet sentiment, on a complete Soviet withdrawal before resuming any sort of negotiation. The Nationalist leaders also decided that it was better to wait until Soviet misunderstandings dissipated to resume the negotiation.

Zhang Jia’ao had planned to return to Changchun around February 14. However, incidents occurred one after another in the month and his stay in Chongqing was prolonged for various reasons. Furthermore, as the Second Congress of the KMT’s Central Executive Committee would convene soon, the Generalissimo asked Zhang to return to Changchun after the congress. As things turned out, Zhang Jia’ao stayed in Chongqing in March and April while communicating with Xiong Shihui and General Dong by telegram. ¹⁶²

The Inner-party Struggle

The Second Congress of the Kuomintang's Sixth Central Committee convened on March 1, 1946. Zhang's worst fears were realized. The failure to work out a Soviet withdrawal quickly became a political issue dividing the KMT party. Dissidents towards diplomatic failure got entangled with the oppositions towards political democratization and postwar interests' distribution among party elites. At the CEC congress, the conservative factions finally got a chance to attack their opponents, who were involved in the recovery of the northeast and the political negotiations with the CCP.¹⁶³

Thus, after the Sino-Soviet entanglement, the U.S. intervention, and the anti-Soviet public demonstration, the question of the northeast sparked fierce political struggle inside the Nationalist party. Zhang Jia'ao commented in his diary,

*This amply demonstrates that diplomacy on the part of weak nation invariably will lead to political upheavals within that nation. On the other hand, positive assertions by a friendly nation that it will act in accord with what is right not only cannot help solve the problem but will intensify the dilemma of the weak nation. The situation in the northeast is becoming even darker.*¹⁶⁴

To prevent and pacify the inner-party struggles, at the beginning of the CEC conference, Chiang Kai-shek delivered a speech on March 4 in the weekly memorial service of the central government. The Generalissimo pointed out that some officials in the party reproved the government for being too dependent upon foreigners. They also reproved the party for catering to various other parties and factions, which in their eyes would make the strength of the party itself diminished. Chiang argued that this kind of viewpoint did not fit with the current situation. He warned his followers that if they wanted their party to increase its strength, they had to make concessions to various other parties and factions domestically. Furthermore, international cooperation had already become a worldwide trend, which means compromise and good relations with foreign powers were necessary. Finally, Chiang asserted that the government would adhere to the Five-Power Constitution, which indicated that the PCC

resolutions must be revised.¹⁶⁵

Chiang's statement did not achieve immediate results, however. On March 5, in the afternoon, Wang Shijie reported to the Congress on diplomacy. Concerning the question of the northeast, Wang told the congress that the Soviets had broken their promises to withdraw from Manchuria several times. He also emphasized that no agreement had been reached on the war booty issue and, to begin with, there was no condition attached to the withdrawal of Soviet troops in the Sino-Soviet treaty. Consequently, the dispute on war booty should not constitute a reason for delaying the withdrawal of Soviet troops.¹⁶⁶ However, his explanation achieved nothing. At the end of Wang's report, many stood up to demand an answer or to reprove him.¹⁶⁷

On the next morning, the congress critically examined the diplomatic report that Wang made. There was a prolific objection to the Sino-Soviet friendship treaty. Some officials argued that the government should submit the treaty to the UN Security Council or demand that the Soviets revise it. Moreover, the government must toughen its negotiating stance with the Soviets. Meanwhile, some right-wing officials even argued that the party should launch a popular movement against the Soviets. Not only Manchuria but also the problem of Outer Mongolia should be raised. They also requested that Chiang must dismiss Wang Shijie as the foreign minister or persuade him to resign.¹⁶⁸

On the same day, Xiong Shihui asked the KMT officials in Changchun to inform the Soviets that once the Red Army had withdrawn from Changchun, the Nationalist troops would enter and be stationed in the city. However, Zhang suspected that if Soviet troops withdrew before the two governments reached a compromise, the Soviets would give the CCP troops growing supports.¹⁶⁹

On March 8, the CEC meeting critically examined the report of the Political Consultative Conference. There were prolific attacks on the party's failure of negotiations, as well as on the CCP for not keeping its word. T.V. Soong was intentionally absent. However, some members of the congress strongly demanded his presence. Naturally, after he arrived, he was subjected to ferocious, relentless attacks and got very embarrassed.¹⁷⁰

Meanwhile, the situation in Manchuria deteriorated further. Zhang wired officials in Changchun and asked them to pay close attention to movements of the Soviets and determine whether they would withdraw by the end of March. Dong Yanping tried to make an appointment to see Malinovsky but failed. It was widely suspected that the Soviets were going to allow the CCP troops to take over in places from which the Soviets withdrew.¹⁷¹

Moscow did not retreat from its former positions and their attitudes became even more rigid. In reply to the Americans, the Soviets asserted that Japanese enterprises in Manchuria that met the needs of the Japanese army should be regarded as war booty of the Soviet Army, and a number of Japanese assets in Manchuria had already handed over to the Chinese authorities. As for the rest, the Soviet government proposed to Chongqing joint management.¹⁷² However, the Soviets still did not close the door to economic negotiations. Sladkovsky repeatedly expressed his hope that his negotiation with Zhang would be soon finalized in Changchun. He also made it clear that the economic negotiations were linked to the KMT's takeover of Manchuria. Meanwhile, Soviet troops began their withdrawal from Shenyang and they proceeded smoothly. Some KMT leaders even estimated that the Soviets' attitude had "improved". Nonetheless, armed clashes between Nationalist and Communist troops quickly broke out in various places of Manchuria. The situation became more and more severe.¹⁷³

The KMT's CEC continued to discuss the Manchurian problem.¹⁷⁴ To ease inner-party struggle, on March 11 Chiang delivered another speech at the weekly memorial service. He criticized those party members who attacked and abused one another. He also suggested that the party members must employ political deftness as well as forbearance. However, political conflict inside the party for the northeast did not ease.¹⁷⁵

The congress continued to discuss the Manchurian problem, while criticisms increased about the Northeast Headquarters under Xiong Shihui's leadership. Many members, especially those with a northeastern background, strongly condemned Xiong's personal behavior and urged the central government to disband Xiong's

commission. On March 14, when Zhang Jia'ao was delivering his economic report on the Northeast in the CEC conference, a group of petitioners shouted outside the hall and fiercely attacked Xiong Shihui. Apparently, these attacks were organized.¹⁷⁶

On 16 March, Chiang Kai-shek attended the congress again and gave an explanation in respect to the northeastern problem. He said that, concerning the Soviets, the party could only adhere to the Sino-Soviet treaty and settle any questions through diplomatic channels. He also explained that in dealing with the Soviets, Xiong Shihui and other cadres of the Northeast Headquarters had always followed his instructions and that he personally must assume all responsibility.¹⁷⁷

Then the Second National Congress ended. Under Chiang's personal prestige, the report on the investigation of diplomatic affairs was passed without revision. It asserted that China would not be restricted by the secret agreements of foreign powers and that the Nationalist government would faithfully implement the Sino-Soviet treaty. Further, China must have priority in the distribution of Japanese reparations to allied nations.¹⁷⁸

Meanwhile, Dong Yanping informed Zhang that Soviet troops had withdrawn from the city of Sipingjie (四平街). On the next day, however, Dong reported that CCP troops had controlled the airport at Sipingjie, while communications with the city had been cut. As things turned out, the battle between the KMT and the CCP for the city became the prelude to a full-scale civil war in China.¹⁷⁹

Discussions with Soviet officials continued. Chiang asked Zhang Jia'ao to appeal and discuss with Sladkovsky whether the Soviets would confer with the Nationalists before withdrawing their troops and would help transport KMT troops to Changchun on 18 March. Zhang immediately informed Dong of this decision, but he only learned that Soviet officials had again complained that Chinese local authorities did not protect Soviet citizens in Manchuria well. Zhang interpreted this Soviet response as being unwilling to offer the Nationalists any more assistance.¹⁸⁰

On the same day, Soviet officials openly complained that the Chinese side had not sent troops northward much sooner to protect the Changchun railway so that Soviet troops could speed up their withdrawal. However, according to Zhang, the fact

is the railway and the communications system between Shenyang and Changchun had been disrupted before any Chinese troops could reach Changchun. It was very clear that the Soviets had been giving more and more assistance to the CCP while obstructing the KMT's takeover.¹⁸¹

In fact, the Soviets changed their tactics to impose pressure soon. On March 22, the Soviets stated that they could speed up their withdrawal and they intended to make the end of April as the deadline. The total withdrawal of Soviet troops became imminent. Yet, until that time, the Soviets refused to assist the transportation of the Nationalist troops. They also refused to specify the date for the KMT to take over the defense of Changchun and Harbin and asked the Nationalist troops to stay for ten days south of Changchun.¹⁸²

Nonetheless, the Soviets still did not abandon economic negotiation, and in late March they agreed to send Sladkovsky to Chongqing to continue the negotiations. The KMT was also eager to resume the bargaining, which would be presided over by the central government. However, after the domestic opposition storm in past few weeks, Chiang insisted that his government must notify the United States and observe Washington's reaction first.¹⁸³ The negotiation was postponed again.

When the end of March came, the Soviets still stayed at Changchun, although they promised they would complete their withdrawal from Manchuria in weeks. Soviet officials also told Dong Yanping that in areas north of Changchun, the Red Army would not wait for regular KMT troops to replace its defenders. Instead, it would be "forced" to transfer areas under their control to "whatever armed forces currently existed". This indicated that the Soviets were determined to retain a sphere of influence in northern Manchuria even if the two governments could reach some agreement on economic cooperation.¹⁸⁴

Despite these new developments, however, the Soviets still kept the door open for a possible agreement with the Nationalists. On March 27, the Soviet ambassador Petrov presented an eight-part proposal for economic cooperation to Wang Shijie. He listed a minimal number of enterprises in Manchuria that both sides could manage jointly and then proposed that these should be organized under a Sino-Soviet joint

stock company. The arrangement would last 30 years, after which these enterprises would revert to the Chinese side without compensation. However, in reply, Wang Shijie still refused to discuss this question and asserted that now he would only discuss his government's takeover of Manchuria.¹⁸⁵

At this moment, as Zhang feared, even if Chongqing agreed to these new economic cooperation terms with the Soviets, its troops would still be unable to replace the Soviet troops in northern Manchuria. They must compromise with the CCP, who had already achieved a strong foothold there, to form a "united government" with them. Under the Americans' mediation, four truce teams were dispatched to Manchuria to mediate the conflict already raging between the Communists and the Nationalists.¹⁸⁶

On March 30, Zhang Jia'ao conferred with Zhou Enlai. Zhou urged the two sides to reach a political agreement on Manchuria in accordance with the PCC scheme while troops of both sides should remain where they were in Manchuria. Zhou also warned that, as large numbers of Nationalist troops were marching northward, the CCP would defend their current positions by force and the KMT troops would be further obstructed at Sipingjie.¹⁸⁷

Meanwhile, Soviet officials had become more hostile to the Nationalist government and more supportive of the Communists. Although they had promised to withdraw their troops, the Soviets obstructed in a variety of ways the northward advance of the KMT troops. When the CCP troops repeatedly attacked Nationalist trains, the Soviets widened the railroad gauge in northern Manchuria. On some other occasions, Soviet officials often demanded that Nationalist troops halt, using the pretext of inspecting troops for plague and so forth. The Nationalist troops thus encountered serious obstacles when they tried to occupy various places in Manchuria following the withdrawal of the Soviets.¹⁸⁸

Nonetheless, Zhang still tried to save the negotiations for economic cooperation. On April 1, the Soviets claimed that their headquarters in Changchun would decamp for their home between April 10 and April 15. The Soviet troops would complete their withdrawal from Harbin on April 25, and by the end of April their troops would be

entirely out of Manchuria.¹⁸⁹ On April 3, Dong wired Zhang to express his concern about Nationalist troops arriving soon enough to establish a suitable defense in Manchuria's major cities and that the Soviets would act as they pleased in northern Manchuria.¹⁹⁰

On April 4, Zhang met with Chiang Kai-shek and other KMT leaders. Since the Soviets had already fixed their date of withdrawal, Chiang suggested that the time was ripe to resume economic cooperation negotiations with them. That afternoon, Wang Shijie informed the Soviet ambassador that the Chinese government was willing to discuss immediately the plan for economic cooperation proposed by the Soviets.¹⁹¹

The Soviets also did not give up their hope of an agreement. On April 6, Chinese officials in Changchun gave Malinovsky a farewell banquet. Malinovsky suggested that Chongqing should now negotiate directly with Moscow about when Chinese troops could occupy Changchun and Harbin. Zhang interpreted this statement as a move to await the outcome of further negotiations on economic cooperation. If these negotiations were successfully concluded, Soviet officials would not obstruct Nationalist troops from taking over northern Manchuria.¹⁹² Zhang immediately drafted a new list of enterprises to be managed jointly by the two countries. However, when Zhang delivered his plan to Wang Shijie, the Foreign Minister still insisted that discussions with the Soviets should not be resumed until the government received the Soviets' reply on whether they would assist Nationalist troops to advance northward. Wang's idea was that his government could still wait to see whether the U.S. government would take further measures.¹⁹³

On 9 April, Zhang again conferred with Chiang and other KMT leaders. Chiang suggested again that, in order to replace the defenses along the Chinese-Changchun rail line quickly, the government should resume negotiations with the Soviet Union immediately. However, Wang Shijie still insisted that the government should wait for Petrov's reply on the question of Soviet assistance in replacing the defense of the Northeast. In this way, Wang suggested, both matters could proceed at the same time. At the end of the meeting, Chiang instructed the Foreign Ministry and the Economics Ministry to assign their vice-ministers to take charge of the negotiations and asked

Zhang to assist them from the sidelines.¹⁹⁴

On April 12, Zhang joined with the two vice-ministers to discuss how to resume negotiations on Sino-Soviet economic cooperation. However, it was already too late to work out any agreement with the Soviets because the CCP was too well-established in Manchuria.¹⁹⁵ On April 13, Wang Shijie informed the Soviets of his government's willingness to resume the negotiation. Nonetheless, the Soviet ambassador refuted the Chinese proposal that all former Japanese property must be used to compensate China's wartime losses. No progress was achieved. On the next day, Chiang told Zhang Jia'ao that no more concessions would be made to the CCP in Manchuria and that Zhang should delay his return to Changchun.¹⁹⁶

Zhang continued to urge more efforts be made to reach an economic cooperation settlement with the Soviets in next few days.¹⁹⁷ However, Malinovsky replied that Soviet troops could not help Chinese troops replace their defense of Changchun, but hoped Zhang would meet with him in Harbin before April 24.¹⁹⁸ Meanwhile, the CCP troops were pressing closer to Changchun and they entered the city and set up an autonomous government on April 14. A war between the Nationalists and the Communists was imminent in Manchuria. It was then the battlefield but not the diplomatic negotiation that would decide the fate of Manchuria.

Conclusion

The Nationalists government failed to maintain Soviets support in Manchuria in the spring of 1946. The chapter revealed the overall dilemma of the Nationalists in the northeast between partisan needs of Soviets good will and its regime legitimacy needs of nationalistic claims. In late 1945 and early 1946, its worsening relations with Washington induced the Soviets to prevent American penetration into Manchuria and secure a favorable position in Northeast Asia. They thus put increasing emphasis on getting something in return for their army's withdrawal from Manchuria.

On the other hand, Chiang and his followers were realistic enough to recognize the significances of continued Soviets assistance. Especially after the CCP's rapid

development in the northeast, the Nationalist leader was ready to reach another deal with the Soviets through granting certain concessions. However, due to strong domestic oppositions, Chiang and his followers were constrained to grant further concessions to the Soviets in Manchuria, especially before the Red Army's withdrawal. No one would like to shoulder the responsibility. They once tried to seek help from the Americans but the assistance that the Nationalists could win from the Americans was rather limited. Besides oral protestation, the Americans only took a detached attitude toward Sino-Soviet economic negotiations.¹⁹⁹

The greatest influence that the American had exerted, however, was the publication of the Yalta agreement, which was induced by its controversies with the Soviets on other issues, but intrigued strong Chinese nationalistic tide. The KMT conservatives finally occupied a moral highland to attack their liberal counterparts. Facing strong public and inside-party oppositions, Chiang retreated. Thus, the breakdown of the economic cooperation negotiation and the withdrawal of the Soviets, as demonstrated above, were the result of fierce public protest and strong opposition inside the Nationalists party, rather than pressure from the Americans.

As a result, the Soviets gave more and more encouragement and assistance for the CCP's expansion in Manchuria. Thus, when Marshall returned to China on April 18, 1946, he found a much tenser situation. The KMT now insisted on a military solution of the "Communist problem" in Manchuria. At the outset of his mediation, Marshall was able to force Chiang to compromise by threatening the withdrawal of American assistance before the Soviets withdrawal from China. However, when the Red Army was evacuating from Manchuria in April 1946, Marshall's leverage against Chiang was substantially reduced.

¹ Donald G. Gillin and Ramon H. Myers eds., *Last Chance in Manchuria: The Diary of Chang Kia-ngau*, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1989, hereafter cited as *Last Chance in Manchuria*).

² See, Xue Xiantian, "Zhanhou dongbei wenti yu zhongsu guanxi zhouxiang (Northeast Problems and the Direction of Postwar Sino-Soviet Relations, 战后东北问题与中苏关系走向)," *Jindaishi yanjiu*, 1996, No.1; Xue

- Xiantian, "Sulian caiyun dongbei jiqi shebei shuping(Soviets dismantling the Equipment in the northeast, 苏联拆运东北机器设备述评)," *Zhonggong Dangshi ziliao*, Vol.81,Zhongyang dangshi chubanshe,2002. Shen Zhihua, "Sulian chubin zhongguo dongbei: mubiao yu jieguo (Soviets Advancement in the Northeast, Its Goals and Outcomes,苏联出兵中国东北: 目标与结果)," *Lishi yanjiu*, 1994, No.5; Deng Ye, "Dongbei wenti yu siping juezhuan (The Northeast Problems and the Battle of Siping, 东北问题与四平决战)," *Lishi yanjiu*, 2001.No.4; Steven I. Levine, *Anvil of Victory: The Communist Revolution in Manchuria, 1945—1948* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1987); Odd Arne Westad, *Cold War & Revolution: Soviet-American Rivalry and the Origins of the Chinese Civil War* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1993). Yao Songling, *Zhang Gongquan xianshen nianpu chubian*(The Premier Edition of the Chronological Biography of Zhang Gongquan, 张公权先生年谱初编), Taipei: Zhuanji wenxue chubanshe, 1982, Vol.1; the original documents are stored at Chang Kia-ngao Papers, Box 26, Hoover Archives, Stanford University, U.S.A.
- ³ See Westad: *Cold War and Revolution*, chapter 7, esp. pp.150-153.
- ⁴ See Garver, *Chinese-Soviets Relations, 1937-1945*.
- ⁵ Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937-1945*, p 273.
- ⁶ Ramon H. Myers, *The Japanese Economic Development of Manchuria, 1932-1945*, New York : Garland, 1982
- ⁷ Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, p.202 and p.204, see also Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, pp.6-10, pp.84-85, p.120.
- ⁸ Ibid, see also Donald G. Gillin and Ramon H. Myers eds., *Last Chance in Manchuria: The Diary of Chang Kia-ngau*, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1989, hereafter cited as *Last Chance in Manchuria*), pp.7-8.
- ⁹ See Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, p.202, pp. 263-264.
- ¹⁰ Donald G. Gillin and Ramon H. Myers eds., *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.7-8.
- ¹¹ Zhang Zhengjiang, *Lenzhan yu neizhan*, chapter 4. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.24-25.
- ¹² Chiang Diary, 18 November 1943, Quoted from Zhanhou guomingdang dongbei juece yanjiu (The KMT Postwar Decision Making for the Northeast, 战后国民党东北决策研究), Fudan University, Ph.D. Dissertation, 2009. (Hereafter cited as Wang Chaoguang Dissertation), p.14-25; See also, *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.61.
- ¹³ See chapter 2 above and Zhang Jia'ao Diary, 17 October 1945.
- ¹⁴ *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.67
- ¹⁵ As early as the year 1939, the Generalissimo had started to consider the possible CCP development in Manchuria. Chiang's Diary, 3 August 1939, 3 July 1940, 12 January 1943. Quoted from Wang Chaoguang, Dissertation, p.13
- ¹⁶ *Wang Chaoguang Dissertation*, pp.14-19.
- ¹⁷ *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.62
- ¹⁸ From the time of his appointment to the mission on 8 September 1945, Zhang Jia'ao was acutely sensitive to the importance of his mission, and he left a detailed account of his daily experiences in Manchuria. The unusual sincerity of Zhang's account of these negotiations and the events surrounding them make it historically valuable. The use of Zhang Jia'ao Diary here was based on two version accessible, English version from *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, Chinese Version from *Zhang Gongquan xianshen nianpu chubian*.
- ¹⁹ Zhang Nianpu, 14 September 1945, Vol.1, p.516, see also, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.65-67, p.68.
- ²⁰ ZZSE, Vol. 7(1), pp.65.
- ²¹ Zhang Zhengjiang, *Lenzhan yu neizhan*, p.165, p.173. ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), pp.117-118.
- ²² Fu Bingchang to ROC MFA, 7 October 1945, ZZSC, 7(1), p.119.
- ²³ Summary of the meeting between Wang Shijie and Petrov, 9 October 1945, ZZSC, 7(1), p.121., *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.67-68 ZZSC, Vol.7(1),p.117,pp.117-118,p.119.
- ²⁴ ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), pp.121-122. Xiong Shihui's report, 11 October, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), pp.121-122. Zhang Diary 12 October 1945; *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.70.
- ²⁵ Xiong Shihui's Report, 12 October, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), pp. 121-122.Zhang Diary 13 October 1945. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.70-75. Chiang Chingkuo to Generalissimo Chiang, 13 October 1945, ZZSC, Vol. 7(1), p.119.
- ²⁶ Zhang Diary, 17 October 1945; *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.80 See also, ZZSC, Vol. 7(1), p.123.
- ²⁷ Chiang Chingkuo to Generalissimo Chiang, 31 October 1945, ZZSC, Vol. 7(1), p.134.
- ²⁸ *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.80-81.
- ²⁹ Chiang's Message to Xiong and Zhang, 16 October 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.84.
- ³⁰ *Wang Chaoguang Dissertation*, p.25. *Zongtong dashi*, Vol.5 (2), p.851.
- ³¹ *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.71. Zhang Jia'ao to Chiang, 20 October 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), pp.371-372.
- ³² ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), p.247.
- ³³ *Last Chance in Machuria*,p.85
- ³⁴ *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.85-86.
- ³⁵ Handwritten letter from President Chiang to Zhang, 25 October 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.91.
- ³⁶ Zhang Diary, 27 October 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.93-97.
- ³⁷ In fact, the Soviets also did not permitted the CCP troops to land on Dalian. General Luo Ronghuan, the commander of the Eight Route Army forces in Shandong, arrived in Dalian/Lushun area in early October, the Soviets refused to let them disembark. See, *Luo Ronghuang zhuan*. Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, p.88.
- ³⁸ Wang Chaoguang Dissertation, pp.25-26. Zhang Nianpu, p.533.
- ³⁹ Xiong to Chiang, 26 October 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), pp.126-127.
- ⁴⁰ Zhang Dairy, 29 October 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.93-97.
- ⁴¹ Wang Shijie riji, Vol.5, p.201, Zongtong dashi, Vol.5 (2), p.853, p.858.

- 42 Memorandum of Xiong Shihui, 5 October 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), pp.102-104. Wang Shijie riji, 6 November 1945, Vol.5, p.202.
- 43 Chiang Chingkuo to Generalissimo Chiang, 5 November 1945, Xiong to Chiang, 5 November 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), p.138, pp.141-142,p.103-104. Zhang Diary, 5 November. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.93-97.
- 44 *Wang Chaoguang Dissertation*, p.25.
- 45 Deng Ye, 2011, p.248.
- 46 Chiang to Truman, 17 November 1946, ZZSC. Vol.7 (1), pp.148-149; pp.151-152.
- 47 Harold M. Tanner, *Twentieth-Century Battles: Battle for Manchuria and the Fate of China: Siping 1946*.Bloomington, IN, USA: Indiana University Press, 2012. p. 61.
- 48 Wedemeyer to Marshall, 5 November 1945, 14 November, 16 November; The Joint Chief of Staff to Wedemeyer, 9 November 1945, FRUS 1945, Vol.VII, China,pp.603-605;pp.611-613;pp.627-628;pp.635-637.
- 49 Zhang Diary, 7 November 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.108.
- 50 Zhang Diary, 13 November, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.111-116
- 51 Zhang Diary, 14 November, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, .pp.116-117.
- 52 Wang Chaoguang Dissertation, pp.30-31.
- 53 Chiang to little Chiang, 14 November 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), p.146. Diplomatic note of the ROC MFC to Soviet Embassy, 15 November 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), p.147. Deng Ye, p.255-256.
- 54 Chiang to little Chiang, 14 November 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), p.146; *Last Chance in Manchuria*, .pp.118-119.
- 55 Zhang Diary, 16 November. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.119-126.
- 56 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.126.
- 57 Zhang Diary, 20 November, *Last Chance in Manchuria*,.p.131.
- 58 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.134-136.
- 59 Zhang Diary, 28 November 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.137-140. See also, Xu Yongchang riji, 26 November; Wang Shijie riji, 28 November 1945.
- 60 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.139-140
- 61 As Zhang's diary indicated, the little Chiang completely agreed with him, but ultimately he deferred to Soong and Wang. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.138-141.
- 62 Deng Ye, 2011, p.272.
- 63 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.140-141.
- 64 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.141.
- 65 Zhang Jia'ao Diary, 28 November 1945. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.137-138.
- 66 Zhang Zhengjiang, Lenzhan yu neizhan, pp.210-212; Zhang Jia'ao Diary, 18,20,22 November 1945 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.132-136;
- 67 Zhang Diary, 30 November 1945
- 68 Yan'an to Dong Biwu, 1 December 1945, *Jiefang tongyi*, p.33. Deng Ye 2011, p. 365.
- 69 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.158
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- 71 Chiang's Diary, 28 November 1945, 1 October 1945. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.141, p.144.
- 72 Zhang Diary, 5 December 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.187-188.
- 73 Little Chiang to Chiang, 5 December 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), p.158.
- 74 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.189.
- 75 Zhang to Chiang, 7 December 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), p.158.
- 76 Zhang Diary, 7 December 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*,pp.149-158
- 77 Zhang and Little Chiang to Chiang, 8 December 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (1), p.395. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.158.
- 78 Zhang Diary, 9 December 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.159.
- 79 Zhang Diary, 11,13,14 December 1945 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.1161-167;167-174,
- 80 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.174.
- 81 Zhang Diary, 15 December 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.174-175
- 82 Zhang Diary, 19 and 20 December 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.179-181
- 83 Zhang Diary, 24 December 1945, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.185.
- 84 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.186.
- 85 Wang Shijie riji, Vol.5, p.432.
- 86 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.188
- 87 Zhang Diary, 9 January 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.167.
- 88 Zhang Diary, 7 January 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.196
- 89 Zhang Diary, 10 January 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.198-199.
- 90 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.199.p.203
- 91 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.206.
- 92 Zhang Diary, 15 January 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.203-205.
- 93 Zhang Diary, 11, 1, 12nd 15 January 1946.Xinhua ribao, 12 January.
- 94 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.207.
- 95 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.207-208. 25 Minutes of the meetings between Stalin and Chiang Ching-kuo, December 1945-January 1946, *Zhonggong danshi ziliao*(中共党史资料, Materials for CCP History), Vol.61, pp.193-219.

- ⁹⁶ *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.208.
- ⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p.209.
- ⁹⁸ Zhang Diary, 19 January 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.209-211.
- ⁹⁹ *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.212.
- ¹⁰⁰ Zhang Zhengjiang, *Lenzhan yu neizhan*, p.265.
- ¹⁰¹ The KMT leaders also seriously considered the possibility of raising the issue before the Far Eastern Commission. Wang Chaoguang Dissertation. p.32.
- ¹⁰² *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.220.
- ¹⁰³ Zhang Diary, 25, 26, 28 January 1946, *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.217-228.
- ¹⁰⁴ Zhang Diary, 26 January 1946. *The Last Chance in Manchuria* ,p.218. In fact, the chief of staff of the Soviet Army command had already personally told Yang Shunjian, secretary of the Northeast Headquarters, on 23 January that Zhang Xingfu and others were kidnapped by the Eighth Route Army and Mr. Zhang might have been killed.
- ¹⁰⁵ CCP center on current situation, 13 March 1945, *Jiefang tongyi*, p.84
- ¹⁰⁶ Yong Guiliang etc., *Wu Liangping Zhuan*(The Biography of Wu Liangping, 吴亮平传), Zhongyang Wenxian chubanshe, 2009,p.120
- ¹⁰⁷ *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.230.
- ¹⁰⁸ Kangri tongyi, pp.80-81.
- ¹⁰⁹ Zhang Diary, 30 January 1946, *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.229.
- ¹¹⁰ Chiang's Diary, 9, 13, 25.26 January 1946. Wang Chaoguang Dissertation.pp.42-44.
- ¹¹¹ Wang Chaoguang's Dissertation.p.44
- ¹¹² Smyth to the Secretary of State, 20 January 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, China, p.1099, p.1101. Wang Chaoguang's Dissertation.pp.44-45.
- ¹¹³ Smyth to the Secretary of State, 30 January 1946, *FRUS*, 1946,China,pp.1100-1102
- ¹¹⁴ Marshall to Truman, Feb.9, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol.IX, p.426; *Wang Shijie riji*, Vol.5, pp.257-258, 29 January 1946.
- ¹¹⁵ Zhang Diary, 1 February 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.238.
- ¹¹⁶ *Ibid*.
- ¹¹⁷ Zhang Diary, 1 February 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.239.
- ¹¹⁸ Zhang Diary, 1 February 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.234-242.
- ¹¹⁹ *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.243.
- ¹²⁰ *Ibid*.
- ¹²¹ Zhang Diary, 4 February 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.243.
- ¹²² *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.243-245.
- ¹²³ Zhang Diary, 7 February 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.243.
- ¹²⁴ Zhang Diary, 7 February 1946, *The Last Chance in Manchuria* p.244.
- ¹²⁵ Zhang Diary, 7 February 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.244.
- ¹²⁶ Zhou Nianpu, p.622; Zhang Diary, 8 February 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.244.
- ¹²⁷ Zhang Diary, 10 February 1946. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.245-246.
- ¹²⁸ *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.246-248.
- ¹²⁹ *ZZSC*, Vol.7 (1), pp.453-454.
- ¹³⁰ Byrnes to the Embassy in China, 9 February 1946, *FRUS*, 1946,China,p.1104-1106
- ¹³¹ *New York Times*, 23 January 1946, p.10. 27 January 1946, p.19.
- ¹³² This paragraph based on Tang Tsou, *American Failure in China*, p.535.
- ¹³³ *Zhongyang ribao*, 22 February 1946, 23 February 1946.
- ¹³⁴ Deng Ye, 2011, pp.387-389.
- ¹³⁵ Deng Ye, 2011, p.386. Wang Chaoguang Dissertation, pp.235-243.
- ¹³⁶ *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.261.
- ¹³⁷ Zhang Diary, 14 February 1946 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.248.
- ¹³⁸ *Zhongyang ribao*, 17 February 1946, *Wang Shijie riji* , Vol. 5, p.270, 17 February 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*,p.250.
- ¹³⁹ *Jiefang tongyi*, pp.80-81.
- ¹⁴⁰ *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.251.
- ¹⁴¹ Zhang Diary, 18 February 1946. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.252.
- ¹⁴² *Wang Shijie riji*, Vol.5, pp.271-272, 19 February 1946.
- ¹⁴³ *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.253-255.
- ¹⁴⁴ Zhang Diary, 20 February 1946; *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.254.
- ¹⁴⁵ See, *Dagongbao*, 20 February, p.2;24 February 1946, p.2
- ¹⁴⁶ *Mingguo ribao*, 22 February 1946.
- ¹⁴⁷ *ZZSC*, Vol.7 (1), pp.647-648; Zhang Diary, 22 February 1946; *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.255. See also *Zhongyang ribao*, 23 February 1946,p.2; *Mingguo ribao*, 23 February,p.1
- ¹⁴⁸ *Xinhua ribao*, 23 February 1946. *Dagongbao*, 24 February 1946. *Mingguo ribao*23 February 1946
- ¹⁴⁹ *Wang Shijie riji*, 19 and 20 February 1946. *ZZSC*, Vol.7(1),pp.637-642,642-643,p.644. See Jiang Pei and Ji Yaguang, "1946 nian 2 yue fansu yundong shuping (1946年2月反苏运动述评, Review on the Movement against the Soviet Union in the Spring of 1946)," *Jiangxi shifang daxue xuebao*, 2003, No.1, pp.65-72.

- 150 ZZSC, Vol.7(1),pp.638-643;
- 151 Zhongyang ribao, 20 February to 1 March 1946, p.2; See Wang Chaoguang Dissertation, pp.89-90.
- 152 Zhang's Diary, 23 February 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.256.
- 153 Zhang Diary, 23 February 1946. Wang Shijie riji, Vol.5, pp.271-275, 19,21,22,24 February 1946.
- 154 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.258
- 155 Zhang Diary, 25 and 26 February 1946; *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.256-260
- 156 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.258-259. Zongtong dashi, Vol.6 (1), pp.6-631.
- 157 Zhang Diary, 25 February 1946; *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.258-259
- 158 Deng Ye, 2011,pp.378-379,
- 159 Xinhua ribao 23 February 1946, Jiefang ribao, 24 February 1946,p.1
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- 161 Zhang Diary, 3 March 1946, *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.270.
- 162 *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.268-269.
- 163 Wang Chaoguang, "Guanyu zhanhou duisu wajiao ji dongbei wenti de jilie zhenglun", Mingguo dangan, 2006, No.3 pp.118-125.
- 164 Zhang Diary, 1 March 1946, *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.269.
- 165 Zhang Diary, 4 March 1946. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.270. Zongtong dashi, Vol.6 (1), pp.41-43. Xian Zongtong Jianggong, Vol.21, pp.262-267. Wang Shijie riji, p.281, 5 March 1946.
- 166 Zhongyang ribao, 6 March 1946, p.1.
- 167 Wang Shijie riji, Vol.5, p.281, 5 March, Zhang Diary, 5 March, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.271. Wang Chaoguang Dissertation, pp.102-103.
- 168 Wang Shijie riji, Vol.5, pp.281-282, 6 March, Zhang Diary, 6 March; Wang Zizhuang, riji 6 March. 1946.
- 169 Zhang Diary, 6 March; Xiong Shihui Diary, 6 March. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.272.
- 170 Zhang Diary, 7-8 March. *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.273-275. Zhongyang ribao, 3 March 1946.
- 171 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.275.
- 172 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.275.279-280.
- 173 *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.278-279.
- 174 Zhang Diary, 9 March. *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.275.
- 175 Xian Zongtong Jianggong sixiang, Vol.21,pp.268-272. Wang Shijie riji, 11 March, Vol.5, pp.284-285, Zhang Diary, 11 March, *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.277-278 Tang Zong Diary 11 March 1946, p.598.
- 176 Zhang Diary, 13 March and 14 March, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.279-281. Wang Chaoguang Dissertation, p.108.
- 177 Xian Zongtong Jianggong, Vol.21, pp.276-274.
- 178 Wang Shijie riji, Vol.5, p.287, 16 March 1946, Zhang Diary, 16 March, *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.282-283; Tang Zong Diary 16 March, pp.598-599.
- 179 *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.284.
- 180 Zhang Diary, 18 March 1946. *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.285-286.
- 181 *Last Chance in Manchuria*. pp. 286-287.
- 182 Zhang Diary 22 March 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.291-295.
- 183 *Last Chance in Manchuria*. p296.
- 184 Zhang Diary 27 March 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.298-300.
- 185 Zhang Diary 27March. *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.299.
- 186 *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.300
- 187 Zhang Diary 30 March. *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.302-303.
- 188 Zhang Diary 31 March 1946, *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp. 303-304.
- 189 *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.305.
- 190 Zhang Diary 3 April 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.311-333.
- 191 That same evening, Zhang expressed his wish to leave politics, but Chiang disapproved. Zhang Diary 4 April 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.313-314.
- 192 *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.314-315.
- 193 Zhang Diary 8 April 1946, *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.320-321; Wang Shijie riji. Vol.5,pp.299-230, 8 April 1946
- 194 Zhang Diary 9 April 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.321.
- 195 Zhang Diary 12, April 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.324.
- 196 Wang Shijie riji ,Vol.5,pp.302-303, 13 April 1946, *Last Chance in Manchuria*,p.327
- 197 Zhang Diary 17 and 18 April 1946, *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, pp.331-335.
- 198 *The Last Chance in Manchuria*, p.335-336.
- 199 Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, p.672.

Chapter 5.

The CCP' Aggressive Containment Strategy in Manchuria and the Escalation of Conflicts to War

The fire of a full-scale civil war in China started in the northeast. The region was also the decisive theater where the KMT's best armies, trained and equipped by the Americans, were committed but destroyed by the Communists in coming months. The majority of historians now agree that the Soviets played a crucial role in encouraging a radical course of the CCP in the region, while some others suggest that the Americans' intervention was responsible, at least partially, for the KMT's disastrous decisions in the region. This study confirms some of their arguments with newly emerged materials, while it puts more emphasis on the agency of the two Chinese parties to investigate how they dealt with foreign powers in pursuit of their own domestic interests, and how did the intervention of foreign powers lead to the domestic bargaining failure. ¹

This chapter would focus on the evolution of the CCP's military strategy in Manchuria and the escalation of the conflict between the two parties. From September 1945 to June 1946, as the continuation of their expansion ambition in the last stage of the anti-Japanese war, Mao Zedong and his comrades adopted an "unorthodox" (contrary to the conventional image) military strategy that was distanced from their former guerrilla struggles against the KMT and Japanese. They emphasized offensive tactics and fighting some decisive battles to deter their enemies' aggression. In accompaniment with this general strategy, the CCP troops also modified their operational doctrine to one that favored a concentration of arms, mobile warfare, and city defense. ²

This adjustment of CCP military strategy was contingent on a specific

domestic-international circumstance. As this study suggested below, the prominent consideration of the party leaders was to take full advantage of the turbulent situation to secure the party's power position and ensure a favorable domestic political settlement. They expected that with strong domestic and international opposition to a civil war in China, together with the inherent weakness of the KMT, military conflicts with the Nationalists in the post anti-Japanese war period would be brief while intense, so the optimal means of fighting was to initiate preemptive strikes and win some decisive battles to deter their enemies from further aggression. The encouragement from Soviets assistance and Marshall's mediation made them believed this goal was realistic.³

In practice, however, as the situation developed, their local cadres repeatedly encountered a serious contradiction between political necessities on the one hand and military reality on the other, which for many times put their forces into dangerous and indefensible positions.⁴ The adoption of such a pro-offensive strategy culminated at Sipingjie in March 1946 after the Soviets withdrew from Manchuria.⁵ The CCP's field force in the northeast put up a gritty defense in an effort to stop the KMT troops from advancing northward. In the end, however, the Communist forces were outnumbered by the Nationalists and suffered one of the most disastrous defeats in their history. ⁶Encouraged by this success, Chiang Kai-shek raised his price and tried to impose his political settlement upon the CCP through nation-wide offensive operations. The hope of peace finally diminished.

This evolution of strategy of the CCP in the immediate post-war military conflicts(1945–1946) thus deserves attention as it played a crucial role in the failure of Marshall's mediation and in the outbreak of full-scale civil war in China. It is also an ideal case to examine the actual mechanism of foreign powers' influences in Chinese domestic struggles. Nonetheless, former studies have paid only negligible attention to this crucial dimension of history. Few works have engaged in intensive analysis of the development of CCP military strategy. ⁷How can the CCP leaders' adventurist quest for a swift and decisive victory be understood? Many scholars, Michael Sheng and Yang Kuisong in particular, claim that the CCP's civil war

strategy was solely derived from its ideological adherence to Moscow's directions, while some others place the blame on Mao's military romanticism.⁸

Contrary to these accounts, this chapter looks closely at the CCP leaders' decision making against contingent situations, in order to reach a more precise understanding of the party's postwar strategy. Specifically, it suggests that the CCP's adventurous strategy cannot be understood in isolation from its specific international and domestic background. Researchers should not simply attribute their failure to irrational emotion. The essence of CCP's strategic calculation, as this study suggest, was seeking a peaceful political settlement through decisive military victories. In other words, the aggressive posture of the CCP was actually a containment strategy on the part of a weaker combatant, aimed at deterring the stronger enemy, the KMT, from further aggression while securing a favorable peace settlement. Encouraged by the supports from the Soviets and Marshall's mediation efforts, it was a consistent strategy of the party throughout this period, no matter which leader, Mao, Liu or others was in charge of the party work.⁹ However, as things turned out, this military strategy based on estimates of achieving a favorable peace deal drifted from its pragmatic origins and lead to the escalation of the conflict and the outbreak of full-scale civil war.

The CCP's March into Manchuria

The Chinese Communists had expanded significantly both their military power and territorial control during the eight years of anti-Japanese War. Especially after the Japanese Ichigo offensive, as has been discussed in Chapter 1, the CCP leaders even envisioned a power transition and raised an active military expansion plan in late 1944. Their prominent move was to build several anti-Japanese guerrilla bases in southern and central China. This southward expansion, as the party leaders expected, would give their party control over large portions of the Chinese heartland, thus putting it in a strong position either to bargain or to fight with the KMT, before or after the end of the Anti-Japanese war. Throughout this period, the northeast was only

occasionally mentioned by Mao and other party leaders, while the party's top targets were certainly the lower Yangtze area and the Henan and Hunan provinces in central China.¹⁰

The CCP troops also adjusted their military doctrine as the anti-Japanese war drew to its end. An informal trend toward mobile warfare had already been under way among the CCP forces of different regions since the Japanese Ichigo offensive in the summer of 1944.¹¹ In June 1945, the Party's Seventh National Congress passed a resolution to promote a gradual "strategic changeover" from guerrilla tactics to mobile warfare, which the party leaders expected to become the principal means of war in the coming months. Yan'an instructed its forces in various regions to put a greater emphasis on urban areas, to concentrate troops, and to engage in standard, mobile warfare to prepare for the postwar struggle.¹²

This new trend continued even after the end of the anti-Japanese War. Soon after the news of Japanese surrender came, Yan'an instructed its troops around the country to occupy towns and cities whenever possible. The party center also urged its various districts to "quickly concentrate the larger part of its armies and get away from the situation of scattered guerrilla force."¹³ Meanwhile, the southward strategy was maintained. Mao instructed Wang Zheng (王震) and Wang Shoudao (王首道) on August 11 to continue their march southward and strive to construct base area with the party's Guangdong troops to fend off the KMT's "civil war plot".¹⁴ On the next day, Mao asked the N4A units in the southern Yangtze area not to retreat to the north but to keep their operations in the region.¹⁵ All these military strategies and tactics adjustment were derived from the CCP leader's needs of bargaining advantage.

As this study suggested above, the unexpected suddenness of the Japanese surrender caught Yan'an by surprise. The party was far from achieving a strong foothold in southern China when the Japanese surrender came. Facing strong domestic and international pressure for peace and unity, Mao flew to Chongqing for political negotiations in late August, 1945. However, the moderation of the CCP was also based on realpolitik. The party leaders still believed that only military power and territorial occupation could deter its enemies from aggression, and thereby safeguard

the gains of the party in the past years.¹⁶ A directive from Yan'an in the wake of the Chongqing talks urged its regional bureaus to continue expanding their armed forces. "The more battles you win, the safer we are here and the more initiative we have in negotiations", Mao assured his followers.¹⁷

Nevertheless, the superior strength of KMT forces (with the U.S. and Japanese help for them) in southern China forced Yan'an to revise its southward strategy. Meanwhile, under new conditions in the late summer of 1945, the CCP leaders found new opportunities. They swiftly shifted their attention to taking advantage of the Soviet presence in Manchuria and the temporary power vacuum left by the Japanese in the vast region. The strategy of "advance to the south" finally gave way to that of "advance to the north, defend in the south. (向北发展, 向南防御)" This change in strategy meant that northern China and the northeast in particular would play a key role in the imminent KMT-CCP conflict.

The CCP's March to Manchuria

After Moscow's declaration of war against Japan on August 8, the Soviet forces marched into China on several fronts. Even after the capitulation of Japan, the Red Army continued to advance into the provinces of Chahar and Hebei and attacked Japanese forces stationed there. As Niu Jun suggested, by these operations, the Soviet forces put themselves in a position to control northeast China and assist the Chinese Communists in northern China, if they chose to do so. Thus, when the CCP was seeking expansion northward, whether the party could achieve good working relations with the Red Army became the key question. The entire process of devising and implementing the strategy of "expand to the north" therefore was contingent upon the problem of managing relations with the Soviets.¹⁸

Until the eve of the Japanese surrender, the CCP had no significant organization of any kind in Manchuria. However, the party leaders had noticed the strategic significance of the northeast long before they formulated the new "advance to the north" strategy, although they took nearly no concrete measures. For the Chinese

Communists, the region's strategic importance was based on a combination of geographical, political, and economic factors. If the party could seize control of Manchuria as a stable base, the CCP leaders believed, it would break the encirclement imposed by the KMT while giving the party a contiguous base area with advanced industry and direct land contact with the Soviet Union. All were what the CCP leaders had dreamed of for decades.¹⁹ As Mao vigorously pointed out during the Party's Seventh Congress, "Even if we will lose all of our existing base areas, so long as we can possess Manchuria, the foundation of the Chinese revolution will be secured"²⁰.

The Communists also made some preparation for Manchuria operation before the Japanese surrender. According to Niu Jun, as early as late 1944, Mao had ordered General Nie Rongzhen(聂荣臻) to commit some forces from his Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei (晋察冀) Military District to start probing deeper northward into Suiyuan, Rehe, and eastern Hebei.²¹ In April 1945, anticipating imminent Soviet entry into the war, the CCP's Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei sub-bureau issued a directive asking that all its forces step up training and recruitment for the deployment to the northeast. Toward the end of June 1945, its Hebei-Rehe-Liaoning sub-districts (冀热辽分区) organized three detachments and transferred them to infiltrate behind enemy lines into Rehe and Liaoning provinces.²²

During the Party's Seventh Congress, the CCP leaders paid even greater attention to the strategic importance of seizing Northeast China. They earnestly expected that the Soviets would support their plans to seize control of northern China, including Manchuria, once they joined the war. As Mao once claimed during his concluding remarks to the Seventh Congress, "but in the end there will be international assistance ..."²³ When the Soviets finally launched their offensive in the northeast on August 9, 1945, however, the CCP leaders gradually recognized that their hope of receiving Soviet aid was rather slim. Thus, they drew up no plan to seize the northeast after the news of Japanese surrender came. In one of his reports at this time, Mao listed all the areas that the party would seek to control, but he was intentionally silent about the northeast.²⁴

On August 11, 1945, Zhu De issued a public order, dispatching four separate

forces commanded by former Northeast Army commanders to set out at once and march toward Chahar, Rehe, Liaoning, and Jilin provinces to help the Soviets and fight the Japanese.²⁵ For many years, this order was widely regarded as an open announcement of the CCP's intention to advance into Manchuria immediately. However, as recent studies showed, the actual mobilization of the CCP forces did not live up to the Party's announcement. On the very same day, Yan'an explained in an intra-party directive that Zhu's Order No.2 was mainly published "for external propaganda, as a prophylactic measure to stake out a public position at home and abroad." Most of the units that had been publicly dispatched to the northeast were to hold back temporarily until Yan'an could further clarify the situation.²⁶

As a result, at the beginning, only a small force would enter the northeast to establish an initial presence, to ascertain the nature of the enemy, and to establish a working relationship with the Soviet Red Army. On August 22, Yan'an reminded its Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei and Shandong sub-bureaus to take note that the Soviet army had already occupied Rehe and Chahar. Although the Soviets' policy was not yet clear, the party center suggested its local leaders that a large group of cadres should be selected to set off for the northeast, while the directive also emphasized that if the Soviet personnel had some misgivings, the CCP cadres should talk things over with them in a friendly fashion, and work within the limits the Soviets set.²⁷

From August 22 to 26, before Mao's departure for Chongqing, the CCP leader's stance towards the northeast turned even cautious as Stalin's attitude became clear after his two urgent telegrams to Yan'an and the Chiang-Soviet Treaty was formally promulgated on August 24. Yan'an quickly alerted its cadres that "the Soviet Union cannot assist us."²⁸ During this period, the CCP Politburo discussed the problem of the northeast on at least two occasions.²⁹ The party leaders did not give up their interest towards the region and they finally decided to keep the plan of dispatching cadres to start work there. On August 26, Yan'an informed the whole party in its inner party circular about negotiation with the Nationalists that the northeastern provinces had fallen under the purview of the Sino-Soviet Treaty and that the KMT would possess administrative authority within the region. Whether the CCP could send an army to

Manchuria was still uncertain, but the party leaders still believed it was without problem to send cadres to start work there. At present, they added, the troops could go only as far as the border of Rehe to await further orders. If circumstances permitted, these troops could proceed to the northeast. If not, they should stop in Rehe and strive to build a powerful base area there to keep the gate of the Northeast.³⁰

Thus, the Rehe province became a fallback option for the CCP since it did not fall within the scope of the Sino-Soviet treaty. Even if the Soviets were to dash its hopes in Manchuria, Yan'an could still make up for the loss by developing strongholds in Rehe to secure the party's position in northern China and a land contact with the Soviet-controlled area.³¹

Telegrams at this time revealed the party leadership's estimation that Moscow would conform to the conditions set by the Sino-Soviet treaty. On August 29, in a directive regulating the activities of all units preparing to enter Manchuria or the adjacent areas, Yan'an pointed out that the Soviet Union must return the northeast to the KMT and the Nationalists would enter the region for a takeover. After the CCP and its forces entered Manchuria, the party center suggested, the Red Army would be unwilling to communicate with them formally or give them help openly. However, the CCP leaders still did not give up their plan and they believed their party could also take advantage of certain aspects of the Sino-Soviet treaty. As long as the actions of their party and army did not directly impinge upon the Soviet Union's treaty obligations, they expected, the Soviet army "might take a laissez-faire attitude toward us and even show us great sympathy." Therefore, cadres and troops from all the contributing districts should set out immediately, and as long as the Soviet Army did not oppose them, they should enter the northeast informally. Meanwhile, Yan'an emphasized that this must be a covert operation for all units and that the cadres should start their work only in city districts and towns that were not occupied by the Soviet army, as well as in villages.³²

On the same day, Yan'an also instructed its forces crossing the sea from Shandong to the northeast not to seek a formal liaison with Soviet army commanders because the Soviets would be bound by Sino-Soviet treaty obligations, and could not

give approval to CCP actions. Moreover, the Soviets would not hand over the southern Manchurian cities to the Party. Troops entering the northeast should not use the name of the Eighth Route Army. Rather, the CCP tried its utmost to have its troops and cadres enter the northeast and it planned to concentrate their activities in towns and villages unoccupied by the Soviet army.³³

In a word, the CCP continued its advancement plan even after noticing possible Soviets opposition. The Party leadership's arrangement was based on their expectation that the Nationalist army would face difficulties in entering the northeast, while according to the treaty, the Soviet army would complete its withdrawal within three months. That means that the CCP armies still had a very good opportunity to secure control of the northeast provinces as well as Rehe and Chahar in advance of the Nationalists.³⁴ By then, the CCP leaders had few illusions concerning the possibility of assistance from the Soviet army. However, no matter what attitude the Soviets might adopt, the CCP troops would go their own way.³⁵

Nonetheless, as their advance troops met up with the Soviets in Manchuria, the party leaders quickly got relaxed. The first two CCP units to enter the northeast were thirteen thousand men and two thousand cadres of Hebei-Rehe-Liaoning districts under the command of Li Yunchang and a small reconnoitering group that had crossed over the Bohai Gulf (渤海) from Shandong. Li Yunchang's forces set forth from their base area in mid-August and Li later divided his troops later into three columns, dispatching one each to Rehe and Mongolia. Only the third contingent of about 4,000 men formed the vanguard of the CCP forces sent to Manchuria.³⁶ This contingent captured the strategically important Shanhaiguan from Japanese hands with the help of a Soviet artillery unit on August 30, a day after Yan'an ordered its troops to avoid formal contact with the Soviets. In fact, it was a lack of working telegraph wires that prevented Li's armies from learning the terms of the final briefing from its headquarters.³⁷ Later, a portion of Li's forces under the command of Zeng Kelin continued north to take several cities and towns, including Jinzhou, another strategic important city. Having secured Jinzhou, Zeng and his two thousand men then proceeded by train to Shenyang and entered the city on September 6.³⁸

The initial encounters between the Soviets and the Chinese communists were generally good, although not without friction. For instance, as Zeng recalled, when his unit arrived in Shenyang, his men were not allowed to get off the train. Other CCP units also encountered difficulties in trying to establish relationships with the Soviet forces. According to some records, the Soviet representative requested they vacate the big cities.³⁹ However, as more studies showed, on the next day, Soviet army representatives conferred with Zeng and his aides concerning how to coordinate the two sides' activities in the Northeast. Both sides had reached some mutual understanding, and the Chinese Communists were permitted to stay in Manchuria without revealing their real identity.⁴⁰ The Soviets concurred that the CCP soldiers could start operation under the name of the Northeast People's Autonomous Army. Using weapons taken from the Japanese, Li's troops swiftly added to their numbers. Although done in violation of orders from Yan'an, the capture of Shenyang marked the culmination of the CCP's early success in Manchuria.⁴¹

Nearly at the same time, those other units that had been dispatched to the northeast were also sending encouraging messages back to Yan'an. At the beginning of September, troops sent from Shandong to southern Manchuria by sea reported that they had achieved an informal liaison with the Soviets in Dalian, and the Soviets said that they would not hinder Communist forces from starting up work in the countryside. Most importantly, these units found the Soviets controlled only a few large and medium-sized cities—most of the medium-sized and small cities were unoccupied or still controlled by Japanese forces, which were ready and waiting to surrender to the first Chinese troop that showed up.⁴²

The achievements of its vanguard forces went far beyond the expectations of the leadership in Yan'an. Based on these reports, the Central Committee reached the conclusion on September 11 that it was an excellent opportunity for the party to expand in the northeast. Therefore, Yan'an decided immediately to deploy four divisions and twelve regiments from Shandong to start work in the small towns and the countryside of the northeast. The party leaders expected that the interval between Soviet withdrawal and the arrival of the KMT army would be the most opportune time

for their expansion. The party must take advantage of the fact that KMT forces had not yet arrived to expand rapidly its forces and establish a strong position in the northeast. ⁴³

On September 14, accompanied by Zeng Kelin, a representative from Soviet army headquarters in the Northeast arrived in Yan'an to discuss with CCP leaders how to resolve the question of relations between the two sides. ⁴⁴ In accordance with instructions from his superiors, the Soviet representative clarified the Red Army's attitude. He proposed that before the Red Army withdrew from the northeast, the CCP forces should not enter the region openly. He also requested that the CCP forces promptly withdraw from areas controlled by the Soviet army, so that would not create diplomatic troubles for Moscow. After the Soviet army withdrew, he said, how Chinese forces entered the northeast "should be settled by China without interference from the Soviet Union." These statements doused hopes for direct assistance from the Soviets, but also provided significant breathing space for the CCP.⁴⁵

In reply, the CCP leaders promised that their forces would refrain from entering the large cities of the northeast, but they also requested that the Soviet army should turn over to the Communists those districts in Rehe and Liaoning that had originally been "controlled" by the CCP. The Soviet representative agreed. At the end, the two sides reached a tacit agreement: Chinese Communist forces should not openly enter the northeast. However, the party could start working in Manchuria while refrain from engaging in public activity in the large cities or in areas occupied by the Soviet army. On the other hand, the Red Army assented to secure entry routes into the northeast via CCP-controlled territory in Hebei and Rehe, and after the Soviet army withdrew from the northeast, it "would not interfere" in the KMT-CCP struggle for the region. ⁴⁶

This meeting in Yan'an was an important turning point in the development of CCP-Soviet relations. The Soviets recognized the presence of CCP forces in Manchuria and approved the establishment of direct relations with the CCP via the Soviet army in the northeast. Taking charge of the party leadership when Mao was in Chongqing for negotiations with Chiang, Liu Shaoqi chaired an all-night meeting on September 14 in which he and other leaders heard Zeng Kelin's report on the situation

in the northeast. For them, it had now become clear that the presence of Nationalists was quite weak yet in the northeast, and the Soviet troops were about to leave in three months. The interval between Soviet withdrawal and the arrival of the KMT army was the most opportune time to for their party to expand forces and establish a secure position in the northeast. If the party acted correctly, Yan'an believed, it would take control of the three provinces of the northeast.⁴⁷ After the meeting, Liu telegraphed Mao about this new development. "This was a once-in-a-thousand-years opportunity", he reported to the Chairman.⁴⁸

Nearly at the same time, an intelligence report for the party leaders of September 18 indicated that if the CCP fetched control of Manchuria, the British and Americans would soften their stance.⁴⁹ All of this information encouraged the party leadership and led directly to the party's strategic adjustment. In mid-September, party leaders made two important decisions. The first was to shift their strategic focus from southern China to the north, and in particular to the northeast—a strategy called "advance to the north, defend in the south." This phrase was stated in a document telegraphed to Mao Zedong in Chongqing on September 17. The Chairman endorsed it and the decision was restated in more formal terms in a document approved by the Politburo on September 19.⁵⁰

In these directives, Liu emphasized that the party had an excellent opportunity to control Manchuria and make it the basis for a satisfactory postwar settlement.⁵¹ Thus, Yan'an ordered that its forces take control of the two northern Chinese provinces of Rehe and Chahar and occupy as much of Manchuria as possible, including not only rural areas, but also cities and major rail lines. The dispatch of 30,000 Shandong troops to Manchuria by sea would proceed according to schedule, while field forces in eastern China numbering 80,000 were to move northward to fill the vacuum left by the Shandong troops.⁵² Soon afterward, large numbers of CCP forces started their march to concentrate in eastern Hebei and Rehe.

This adjustment fit nicely with Mao and Zhou's negotiations in Chongqing, as they could claim the withdrawal from the south as a concession to the Nationalists. The CCP delegates thus informed the KMT side at Chongqing that the party was now

preparing to evacuate its troops from liberated areas in southern China. This moderation gesture was intended to help the party seize the political initiative while coordinating with the military adjustment to gain control of the northeast.⁵³

The other decision reached by the CCP center was to establish its Northeast Bureau of the Central Committee (NEB) to exercise overall leadership over work in the northeast. Peng Zhen and Chen Yun, both from the thirteen-member CCP Politburo, were selected to lead the build-up of the Northeast Bureau. Peng was appointed as secretary of the Bureau. Besides Peng and Chen, a large contingent of upper-level cadres constituted the new Manchurian party leadership.⁵⁴ Peng Zhen, Chen Yun, and the other leading members of the NEB were flown to Manchuria on September 16 and the headquarters of the NEB was established in Shenyang two days later.⁵⁵ Their presence in the northeast would exercise unified command over all the troops and cadres entering the northeast and they would also contact and coordinate with the Soviets.⁵⁶ Under Soviet protection, the NEB effectively accelerated the Communist expansion in Manchuria.⁵⁷

It must be noted that the plan to send troops to the northeast was not predicated solely on the existence of Soviet assistance, combined with the absence of Nationalist forces there. In fact, it turned out to be a nation-wide strategic adjustment.⁵⁸ Yan'an had already considered the transition from a southward advancement to a new expansion direction in past weeks. The negotiations with Chongqing had achieved little progress. Messages from those units in southern China continuously reported difficulties and urged the adjustment of the southward strategy. For instance, Huang Kecheng, the commander of the N4A's elite Third Division in Jiangsu, telegraphed the Party Center in early September with his suggestion that the party should send a large force into the northeast, whether the Soviet Union liked it or not. Particularly, General Huang suggested that CCP troops must withdraw from their fragmented and isolated southern guerrilla areas to concentrate their forces on taking and holding a single contiguous area, including cities and rail lines, in northern China or the northeast.⁵⁹ Huang's message arrived in Yan'an on September 14, the same day when Zeng Kelin and the Soviet colonel arrived in Yan'an. Yan'an forwarded this

message to Mao on September 15. Mao endorsed their “advance to the north” plan quickly and instructed the troops in the lower Yangtze to get ready to retreat northward. ⁶⁰

Thus taking the situations in the Northeast and in the south both into consideration, the CCP leaders decided to make a fundamental adjustment of their party’s military expansion. According to the new plan, the party would move these troops impeded in southern China to the north and fill the vacuum left by those troops which been dispatched to Manchuria. On September 20, Yan’an ordered the New Fourth Army units then deployed in the south to move immediately to the north of the Yangzi River. Later, some of them should march quickly to the areas of eastern Hebei and Rehe and get ready to advance into Manchuria once the Soviet Red Army would withdraw.⁶¹

The CCP troops in various regions immediately started their march into the northeast once the party leadership had clarified that conditions in Manchuria were favorable. Moscow had made it clear to Yan’an that the Red Army would leave in late November, as stipulated in the Soviet agreement with Chiang. The Chinese Communists thus had less than three months to prepare for a possible confrontation with the KMT over control of the northeast. ⁶²By mid-September, with the assistance of the Americans, the Nationalists had already shipped their elite troops to land on the Peiping-Tianjin area. It had become a matter of greater urgency for Communist forces to enter the northeast ahead of the KMT. ⁶³

Although the two parties signed the “October Tenth Agreement” at Chongqing, the major differences between the two parties remained unsettled. With the development of the situation, it was no longer a question for the CCP leaders of whether or not to expand into the northeast in cooperation with the Soviet army, but rather one of how to develop in the quickest and most effective manner. Yan’an urged its various units to step up their pace of transferring forces to the northeast in late September and early October. Besides taking land routes, a large number of CCP troops were shipped from the northern coast of Shandong to ports in eastern Manchuria. ⁶⁴

In cooperation with this grand redeployment, while dispatching a large number of forces from various districts into Manchuria, the CCP garrison troops also initiated large battles in northern China in order to tie down some of Chiang Kai-shek's major forces and thus to slow his ability to send troops to the northeast. Meanwhile, their local troops carried out large-scale disruptive operations along the rail lines in north China in order to delay the Nationalist army's penetration of north China and entry into the northeast.⁶⁵

Thus, the CCP's advance into Manchuria was characterized by responsive decision-making at the highest levels and by the speed with which large numbers of personnel were transferred from other parts of China. In compared with the KMT, it was much more effective.⁶⁶ The redeployment continued on a large scale for the winter of 1945 and the total army redeployment reached a staggering 100,000 troops.⁶⁷ Besides military personnel, many political cadres were sent to start political and economic projects in the northeast. In the coming half a year, about a quarter of the members of the party's Seventh Central Committee were dispatched to the northeast.⁶⁸

Monopolizing Manchuria: Ambitious Goal, Weak Foundations

The situation that the CCP had to deal with in the northeast were complicated. In order to preserve the basic structure created by their earlier diplomatic maneuvers, Washington, Moscow, and Chongqing had incentives to maintain the compromises they had reached so far. However, the three governments also vigorously contended with one another in order to secure and promote their own interests in the region, which made them clashed inevitably with each other. This circumstance left the Chinese Communists great opportunities to exploit.

Documents issued in late September and early October revealed Yan'an's drastic adjustment on its troop deployment in Manchuria. ⁶⁹Their initial plan for Manchuria exemplified a strategy designed to exploit the rivalries between the three governments and the weakness of the KMT to monopolize the control of the region before the

Nationalists arrived. On September 19, for instance, the newly established Northeast Bureau hammered out its major tasks: to control the entire northeast and to shatter any attempts by the Nationalist forces to do the same.⁷⁰ On the operational level, at its very beginning, both Yan'an and the NEB preferred an active-defensive strategy, which means to fight selectively some decisive battles at the gate of Manchuria to block the KMT's influx into the region. For this purpose, the party sought to concentrate a force of about 50,000 to 100,000 soldiers in East Hebei and Rehe to engage the enemy on chosen terrain.⁷¹

To secure their northward march, the CCP troops also made some offensive movements outside the northeast. For instance, the CCP units took control of some important ports and blocked railway lines in Hebei and Shandong provinces. In the area between Beijing and Mongolia, the party occupied the strategically important city of Zhangjiakou. By taking over these strategic points in northern China, Yan'an aimed at preventing the Nationalists from entering and attacking the CCP in Manchuria.⁷²

This active-defensive approach was at least partially encouraged by the Soviets. By then, the calculation of the Soviets was rather clear. Before their withdrawal, neither the CCP or KMT troops could march into Manchuria in large numbers, but they would allow the CCP troops to control the gateway to the region. Thus, once the Red Army retreated, the CCP troops would get a great chance to occupy the entire region. Through this means, the Soviets would keep both Manchuria and Inner Mongolia under their de facto control while not violating their treaty with Chongqing. They thus encouraged the CCP's developments in the gate area of the Northeast.⁷³

However, a directive from Yan'an to the NEB on September 28 revealed that Liu Shaoqi was not so confident about waging major battles and occupying the whole region of Manchuria as the Soviets suggested. Instead, he was still hesitant and cautious.⁷⁴ The KMT troops' advancement was much quicker than expected. The CCP leaders had also a strong incentive to develop and spread its own strength into the hinterland of the northeast, not just to help the Soviets to defend the gate of Manchuria.⁷⁵ Thus, Liu Shaoqi on September 24 instructed the combat units that

arrived in Manchuria to be dispersed into the secure areas abutting the Soviet Union, Korea, Mongolia, and Rehe to establish long-term bases, and to avoid battle in the interim. In contrary to the Soviets' suggestion, the main force should not be deployed at the gateway of the northeast, Liu emphasized.⁷⁶

Liu's decentralization scheme was based on worse case assumptions: after the Communist armies entered the northeast, they would not have an opportunity to monopolize the region, and in the case that their field forces could not counter the more modernized KMT armies in the imminent battles, these troops could still revert to their traditional base-area strategy.⁷⁷ Liu clearly recognized the weakness of his troops. In practical terms, however, his redeployment schedule was challenged from the very beginning. On the one hand, the speed of troop transfer did not reach the expectation of the party leaders. Those units trying to land in Manchuria by sea were deployed far more slowly than had been scheduled. The original plan on September 29 to transfer 20,000 to 30,000 troops via Liaodong Gulf within a month simply could not be carried out. The challenge for the CCP leaders in north China was that they both needed to speed up the transfer of troops to the northeast while keeping sufficient forces to delay the KMT's northward penetration.⁷⁸

However, a clear disparity existed between Liu's plan to decentralize and the realities of the Northeast.⁷⁹ As troops from other regions were transferred to Manchuria, most of them stationed on urban areas and along the rail lines. This urban-oriented deployment in the fall of 1945 had much to do with logistical concern. Those troops and cadres were transferred into Manchuria suddenly. As Zeng Kelin and others had reported that plenty of confiscated Japanese weapons and supplies were available in the northeast, it was widely expected that those units would be able to equip themselves upon arrival in Manchuria. To accomplish the transfer as rapidly as possible and to make sure that those areas from which troops were being moved were not left completely undefended, units transferred to Manchuria were often ordered to leave their weapons and heavy clothing behind.⁸⁰

This plan of relying on resources in the northeast had several implications.⁸¹ First, it meant that the newly arrived troops would have to go to the major cities and

rail lines, the centers of Japanese occupation and supply now controlled by the Soviet Red Army, where logistic supports were available. Like it or not, the cities were the places where the Communist forces were most likely to get food, clothing, and recruits. Their urgent need to tap into these resources meant that, at least at the early stage, those newly arrived units had to concentrate in and around the cities. Meanwhile, most of the areas that Liu Shaoqi designed to be developed as rural bases were in the remote backcountry of Manchuria. The harsh conditions of these bandit-infested rural areas made it all but impossible for those tired soldiers to live off the country before establishing strong ties with the local population.⁸² Without any roots in the local communities, the resources of the rural areas were simply not available to those newly arrived CCP troops.⁸³

Thus, not surprisingly, the NEB ignored Liu's arrangements. Most of its main forces remained stationed near the cities. Both the NEB leaders' rhetoric and their troop deployment in the fall of 1945 reveal a desire to hold a large, contiguous base area, including the urban industrial areas and major rail line in Manchuria.⁸⁴ This strategy was also encouraged by the Soviets.⁸⁵ Liu once criticized the NEB for its lack of progress of dispersion and rural base construction, but Mao overruled Liu's decentralization policy soon after he returned from Chongqing in mid-October.⁸⁶ The Chairman's new ambition was to defeat the Nationalists in a swift and final showdown in the gateway area of Manchuria and to occupy the entire region.⁸⁷

This plan was raised against the backdrop of the KMT-Soviet dispute over Manchuria. Starting in mid-September, the Soviets began a policy of limited support for the CCP expansion in the northeast. This development was closely connected with the emerging Soviet-American struggle in the Far East and the Red Army's pragmatic needs in the northeast. After the London Conference of Foreign Ministers in late September 1945, the relations between Moscow and Washington deteriorated very quickly. The U.S. government rejected Soviet participation in the occupation of Japan and revealed its intention to constrain Soviet influence in Manchuria. The U.S. navy's transportation of Nationalist troops to the Northeast raised even greater anxious of the Soviets. In this atmosphere, the Soviets adopted a hard line in Manchuria against the

Nationalists. As Niu Jun suggested, the Soviets' various actions in the northeast that did not conform to the Sino-Soviet treaty were among the most significant measures Moscow undertook in the Far East to counter the United States.⁸⁸

Meanwhile, the Soviet position in Manchuria was far from secure. The brutal behavior of Soviet troops, including rapes, murders, and robberies during the initial period of their occupation provoked deep dissidence among people in Manchuria, which in turn created a severe trouble for themselves.⁸⁹ The Red Army had to find some local organization to help them to pacify social order. As Westad suggested, although many Soviet commanders once regarded the CCP troops as "uninvited guests", they conceded later that it was much easier to cooperate with the Communists than with any other group to implement their orders. Thus, they became more and more reliant upon the use of CCP cadres to realize their own interests, while the Red Army rewarded its Chinese comrades by recognizing their local governments in most cities. Besides, a lack of orders from Moscow, and a sympathy for their Chinese comrades among some Red Army officers also contributed to their support of the CCP in the northeast.⁹⁰

Most importantly, according to the Sino-Soviet treaty, the Red Army had to complete its withdrawal from Manchuria within three months after the end of the war. After it withdrew, and once the KMT officials joined forces with remnant bandit forces in the northeast, and with the United States adding fuel to the fire in the background, for Moscow, many of the problems that were still unresolved would become even knottier once the position of the Soviet forces weakened. Such a prospect left the Soviets no grounds for optimism.⁹¹

In order to strengthen their position in Manchuria while reaping more advantages from their occupation, the Soviets adopted two measures. The first one was to delay the date of the Nationalist government's takeover of the northeast and obstruct the entry of KMT troops into the region. The second was to create and assist forces that would impede the American-supported KMT from exercising unilateral control of Manchuria once the Soviets completed their withdrawal. As a result, the Soviets, in their own interest, had no other alternative than to support CCP development in

Manchuria. The Soviet leaders were also confident that they could control the actions of the Chinese Communists, while the CCP presence in Manchuria posed no immediate risk for their diplomacy.⁹²

Thus, while creating obstacles for the advance of Nationalist troops, the Red Army provided more and more support to the CCP troops in the northeast, using them to fend off the KMT's advance into Manchuria. In early October, Soviet officials urged Yan'an through NEB to concentrate 300,000 soldiers to the area between Shanhaiguan and Shenyang to guard Manchuria's front gate. The Soviets also promised that they were preparing to transfer large quantities of arms and equipment to the CCP forces.⁹³ In the last week of October, Soviet commanders in Manchuria even encouraged the NEB that it should act as the "master" of the northeast, and forge full steam ahead in guarding against the Nationalists. They also indicated to the NEB cadres that the Red Army would hand over to them factories and equipment that had not already been dismantled and shipped to their country. The NEB could send cadres to take over industries in the urban industrial centers, the Soviets suggested, and gradually assume administrative authority in these places. They also promised to help train CCP artillery forces, and if the Nationalists dared launch an offensive, the Red Army might fight alongside the CCP forces. Some Soviet commanders even proposed that the CCP should shift its command center from Yan'an to the northeast.⁹⁴

The Red Army's actions in completely frustrating Nationalist plans to grab the northeast, and its promise of active, all-out support for the party's control of the northeast, encouraged the CCP leaders toward an even more ambitious direction. On October 19, Mao Zedong ordered the NEB to revise its deployment, shifting the focus again to the southern part of Manchuria. He suggested the NEB to

*"concentrate its main forces along the Jinzhou, Yingkou, Shenyang line, ... resolutely resist the landing of Chiang Kai-she's army, and wipe out any and all of its advances. The prime task is to protect Liaodong and Andong, and then to gain control of the entire Northeast. The earlier dispersal plan should be abandoned."*⁹⁵

Later, in even clearer terms, Yan'an asked the NEB to consult at once with the Red Army for Soviets' postpone of its withdrawal by one to two and a half months,

which would leave the CCP troops more time for training and reorganization.

Dispatching these orders, the CCP leaders had keenly noticed their troops in the northeast had not achieved a stable foothold and were not ready to resist the Nationalists' offensive.⁹⁶

However, the Soviets were not ready to go so far. They quickly replied to the NEB that the Red Army would withdraw according to schedule, and they could not delay any longer. Nonetheless, before it withdrew, the Soviets promised, the Red Army would not permit Nationalist troops to be airlifted into Changchun. They also indicated again that they would supply Communist troops with arms, material, communication equipment, and even trains and small transport planes, while in areas where Nationalist troops had landed, the Communists would be allowed to operate freely.⁹⁷ Thus, when U.S. ships carrying Nationalist forces showed up at Yingkou and Huludao in early November, the CCP units already controlled these two ports, and the KMT troops were forced to sail back.⁹⁸

In front of growing Nationalist threats, and with their newly established closer cooperation with the Red Army, the CCP leaders went a step further in early November. They advocated the whole party to "seize the northeast, and consolidate north and central China." They tried to fetch a major military victory to compel the KMT to accept the party's "autonomous rule" in northern China and the control of northeast.⁹⁹

To fulfill such an ambitious goal, Yan'an decided to concentrate its main military effort on the southern part of Manchuria and fight a decisive battle there. In a telegram to front line commanders in north and northeast China, Yan'an estimated that, from November to mid-December, following the clashes in northern China, the next peak of the armed struggles would be in southern Liaoning, Jinzhou, Rehe, and eastern Hebei. The party must gather all possible forces to gain a decisive victory on this battleground, and establish a great, secure base area in Manchuria.¹⁰⁰

By then, the calculation of the CCP leaders was quite optimistic. With the assistance of the Soviets, they believed, if two Nationalist divisions could be annihilated at the gate of Manchuria in November, and after the reorganization and

training of Communist troops was completed in a short period, all the Nationalist divisions attacking the northeast could be resisted or even wiped out, then it might be possible for the CCP to control the entire northeast.¹⁰¹ Toward this end, the CCP troops in northern China must advance further north quickly and prepare a pincer attack on Nationalist forces around the gate of the northeast via Shanhaiguan. Meanwhile, those forces already in the northeast should concentrate in Jinzhou to prepare the battlefield for a possible decisive battle. Troops in the Northeast should also get ready to put the ports of Yingkou and Huludao out of commission, tightly control the Changchun airport, and strive to annihilate airborne KMT troops. In order to slow down the overland movement of Nationalist troops to the north, the CCP forces in northern China also expanded their traffic-blocking operations.¹⁰² In parallel with the military mobilizations, the CCP stance in the negotiations at Chongqing also turned tough.¹⁰³

The CCP's attempt to seize control of the northeast was decided against the growing tension in Soviet-American relations. Therefore, in implementing the strategy, it also inevitably clashed with U.S. policy in China. In late September, the U.S. Marines started their landing at a number of strategic points along northern China coast. As Niu Jun suggested, at its beginning, the CCP leaders reacted very cautiously, as they still were not quite sure of Washington's true idea upon the KMT-CCP conflict. However, as the situation in north China quickly deteriorated, Yan'an turned to a harsh attitude against the Americans. By early October, regiments from the U.S. Marines occupied a number of ports in Hebei and Shandong provinces, and American naval ships started patrolling in and around the Liaodong Gulf, which alarmed the CCP. The intention of the American forces, as the CCP leaders suspected, was to "prevent us from playing a role in the northeast" by occupying the ports and railway junctions next to the main eastern route to Manchuria. As the hostility of U.S. forces toward the Communists became evident, sporadic clashes between the CCP units and U.S. Marines broke out throughout late October and early November. Yan'an thus made a strong propaganda offensive against the United States, attacking its intervention in Chinese domestic affairs.¹⁰⁴

When October came, the KMT forces which the Americans had shipped and airlifted to eastern Hebei over the preceding two months were now ready to attack CCP-controlled Shanhaiguan. The battle for the northeast finally started. On October 16, Yan'an ordered Peng Zhen and Chen Yun to concentrate their troops to resist any KMT attempts to gain a foothold in Manchuria. For Mao, a decisive battle in the gate area of Manchuria seemed to be his optimal choice.¹⁰⁵ The Chairman just envisioned a victory that would be followed by a long-term, stalemate peace, as he told his comrades on October 20, and the present conflict “should not be misunderstood as the advent of full-scale civil war”.¹⁰⁶ The party “must urgently mobilize” all its strength “to smash the KMT’s current large-scale military offensive,” in northern China and the northeast to force Chongqing to recognize the CCP’s position. In sum, “the greater the current victory, the sooner will peace come”, the CCP leaders believed.¹⁰⁷

Thus, on October 28, Yan'an directed the NEB confidently:

*Our Party must resolutely mobilize all its forces, control the northeast, protect north China and central China, smash their offensive in the next six months, then force Chiang to the negotiating table and make him accept the autonomous status of northern China and the Northeast. Only then can there be a transition to peace: otherwise, peace is impossible.*¹⁰⁸

On the eve of the Nationalist advance, the CCP had fewer than three hundred thousand troops in the northeast. Stepping up preparations for war, these troops were reorganized on October 31 into the Northeast People’s Autonomous Army (NEPAA). Lin Biao was appointed as the chief commander of the army while Peng Zhen and Luo Ronghuan(罗荣桓) served as first and second commissars.¹⁰⁹

In past weeks, following orders from Yan'an, the NEB initiate an ambitious recruitment program, even former Manchukuo soldiers and police were rapidly incorporated into the Communist rank.¹¹⁰ Noticeably, the NEPAA even incorporated Japanese medical and technical personnel. For instance, some Japanese air force technicians, pilots, and a few rather old, beat-up airplanes gave the Communists the small beginnings of an air force.¹¹¹ Around this time, both Yan'an and the NEB were determined to control the entire northeast, including major urban areas, and to prevent

the KMT troops from entering Manchuria. As a result, the main force of the NEPAA was activated and put into positions that required it to fight defensive positional battles in southern Manchuria. ¹¹²

In the first week of November, the advance detachments the KMT's Thirteenth and Fifty-Second Armies started their assault on Shanhaiguan. Initially, they were repulsed by the Communists. In the eyes of CCP commanders, the skirmishes fully exposed the KMT's weakness—its troops were easily demoralized during engagements, and their lax defenses provided easy targets for nighttime raids. They believed that the Nationalists could only dispatch as many as two armies to the northeast.¹¹³ The CCP leaders also estimated the Soviets would give them more assistance while the intervention of the Americans would be very limited.¹¹⁴ With great confidence, Mao thus envisioned a decisive battle in Jinzhou, a geographically strategic city located in the “West Liaoning Corridor”(辽西走廊), which connects land transportation between north China and northeast China.¹¹⁵ Mao told the NEPAA to defend Shanhaiguan as the first line of defense for at least three weeks and to inflict great losses on the enemy. If the enemies procrastinated, the Chairman ordered, his elite divisions must occupy pivotal positions in the Jinzhou area and mount a preemptive attack when the KMT armies weakened by the Shanhaiguan defenders arrived, and wipe them out. In Mao's mind, the issue of Manchuria would be settled in this single, climactic decisive battle at or near Jinzhou.¹¹⁶

There were, however, some fundamental weaknesses to the CCP's military position. The optimism among the CCP top leaders did not fully take into consideration their armies' real capabilities, although they were not totally blind to it. The garrison in Shanhaiguan had no more than 13,000 men, a force substantially outnumbered by the approximately 70,000 KMT troops. ¹¹⁷Meanwhile, the elite troops that Mao designed to fight the decisive battle at Jinzhou were still on their way to Manchuria. Meanwhile, the NEPAA included many unreliable, newly incorporated units. In the past weeks, a large number of soldiers and even entire units from the puppet troops of Manchukuo were abruptly incorporated without much training or

indoctrination. When the test finally came, many of the new and poorly indoctrinated units quickly defected.¹¹⁸

What's more, newly arrived CCP forces in Manchuria were hampered by a lack of weapons, supplies, and mass support. These more experienced units that had recently been transferred from the south were still exhausted and disorganized after their harsh march into the northeast. The greatest challenge facing those soldiers was a lack of logistical supplies, especially food, winter clothing and bedding. On the basis of early reports from the first units to enter Manchuria, these troops expected that they would be able to equip themselves on arrival. However, from late September, the Red Army commanders tightened their control of Japanese armories. When they asked the Soviets to provide the promised weapons, the CCP cadres were told that due to "various international reasons," the Japanese guns could not be turned over.¹¹⁹

This trouble was due to changes in Moscow's tactics for securing its interests in the region. From late August through mid-September, the Soviets once welcomed a CCP presence in Manchuria. This was precisely when Zeng Kelin conveyed his optimistic impressions to Yan'an in mid-September. But by late September and early October, however, the Soviets turned anxious that open support of the Communists in Manchuria would give the Americans an excuse to get further involved in China. They thus emphasized their treaty obligations to Chiang Kai-shek's government, while reasserted control over Japanese arms dumps and factories. These shifts in Soviet policy meant that the CCP units had different experiences with the Red Army.
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Making things worse, the NEB's logistics work was in disarray, which simply could not keep up with the fast-moving troops.¹²¹ The coordination between various combating units was very poor too.¹²² The CCP cadres had only begun establishing political institutions in Manchuria and they had neither time nor resources to cultivate a strong basis of mass support. Many memorials of the CCP cadres revealed that, in this period, the people of the northeast were politically neutral at best, and that in many cases, they had been longing to return to the fold of the Nationalist central government.¹²³

As a result, in a famous telegraph message to Mao Zedong, Huang Kecheng complained that his troop's difficulties in Manchuria could be summarized as "seven no's—no party organization, no mass support, no political power, no grain, no money, no medicine, no shoes or clothing." The main combat troops were fatigued, poorly armed, and badly equipped. The party's current power position in Manchuria was very fragile indeed. ¹²⁴The ambitious plan of decisive battle was raised at a time when it had neither the organization nor the logistical capabilities to support such action. ¹²⁵

Mao, who was informed about the situation, showed little sympathy for those distressed divisions. Instead, he required his main forces to act as combat-capable regular armies. ¹²⁶ When the NEB hastened to transfer forty thousand troops to the Shenyang-Jinzhou rail line and to fortify the area between Yingkou and Shenyang, the party decided to rely on those units defending the strategically important point of Shanhaiguan to hold off the Nationalist advance as long as possible. The American-equipped Nationalist divisions were not so strong, Yan'an assured the NEPAA leaders. ¹²⁷

Nonetheless, the ambitious goals outlined by Yan'an quickly proved to be illusory. Mao's military ambition was severely challenged when the KMT armies launched their final assault against Shanhaiguan on November 15. After the KMT armies occupied some key positions on November 16, the Shanhaiguan garrison retreated without orders. ¹²⁸

The fall of Shanhaiguan did not bring an end to the CCP leaders' attempt to monopolize the entire northeast. Instead, it seems that Mao and his colleagues were reluctant to face the reality. The party center, emphasizing both the symbolic and the strategic importance of Shanhaiguan, was not willing to retreat. Even after most of the corridor area leading into the northeast had fallen to the Nationalists, Mao still insisted on capturing major cities and urged the NEB to prevent the KMT Army from entering Manchuria. "Fight out the problem in one battle," he exhorted his commanders vehemently on November 15. Two days later, Mao ordered Lin Biao and Huang Kecheng to attempt a mobile defense of the Jinzhou area. ¹²⁹

However, Lin Biao clearly informed the NEB and Yan'an that his forces could

neither recapture Shanhaiguan nor prevent the Nationalist units from advancement.¹³⁰ The KMT armies pushed forward swiftly along the Beiping-Shenyang railway and outpaced the demoralized Communists. The CCP troops managed to survive only by avoiding engagements. With merely token resistance, they allowed the KMT to achieve an astonishing conquest of Jinxi, and Huludao on November 22.¹³¹

In military terms, the KMT victory at Shanhaiguan had opened the road to its entry into Manchuria. In diplomatic terms, the same thing was accomplished by Chiang's use of his treaty relationship with Stalin, which bound Moscow to turn over its positions in Manchuria to the Nationalist government.¹³² In mid-November, Chongqing initiated a diplomatic offensive by withdrawing its delegation from Changchun in protest against Moscow's uncooperative tactics.¹³³ When its enemy launched this diplomatic offensive, the CCP's misfortunes were exacerbated. The Soviets clearly recognized the weakness of CCP military strength after the battle of Shanhaiguan and they finally lost confidence in their Chinese comrades. Caught in a barrage of diplomatic criticism after the retreat of the KMT headquarters from Changchun, the Soviets resorted to sacrificing their little brother. The level of assistance for the CCP dropped to a new low. On November 17, the Soviet commanders in Shenyang peremptorily informed Peng Zhen that the CCP would have to evacuate the city within a week. The Red Army would no longer allow the party to station its troops near the airfield and railroads in the area. Peng and others protested, but only to be warned that if they did not leave on schedule, the Soviet army would chase them out with tanks.¹³⁴

The Red Army commanders gave similar messages to the CCP cadres in other cities of the northeast. They also warned the CCP not to fight with the Nationalists in Manchuria on November 20.¹³⁵ The NEB was reluctant to accede to this decision, but it had no choice.¹³⁶ Open resistance to the Soviets was useless. As damage control, Yan'an immediately ordered its armies to evacuate big cities as soon as possible, and not openly oppose instructions from the Red Army.¹³⁷ Liu Shaoqi, who by mid-November had taken over the full day to day leadership of the Central Committee from an ill Mao, told Peng Zhen that the Red Army's unfriendly actions in Manchuria

revealed Moscow's fear of diplomatic pressure, therefore, the party could not expect assistance from the Soviets in the vital battles that had just started.¹³⁸

Meanwhile, the military situation went from bad to worse for the CCP. Within a week after the fall of Shanhaiguan, the Nationalist armies were only less than a hundred miles south of Shenyang, and had taken control of all the ports on West Liaoning Corridor. Besides the party's inferior military strength, the Soviets also pressured the CCP units to avoid battles with the Nationalist Army, and asked the CCP commanders not to attempt to obstruct the Nationalist Army's advance by rail. A combination of Nationalist diplomatic and military moves forced the Communists to abandon more and more stake their recently acquired in the northeast. The NEB was evacuated from Shenyang on November 25 under strong pressure from the Soviets. Despite its policy of subservience, the CCP's relations with the Soviets became very tense in some areas.¹³⁹

As an experienced military commander, Lin Biao quickly recognized that the change of situation. On November 21, He dispatched a telegram from the front line to both the party center and the NEB, suggesting to withdraw his forces and give up the plan of Jinzhou battle.¹⁴⁰ However, while acknowledging Lin's tactics, Yan'an still urged the armies to launch counterattacks against the KMT immediately.¹⁴¹ It seems that the political leaders were still reluctant to abandon their decisive battle formula. The strategic debate between Yan'an, the NEB, and the commanders of the NEPAA burst out. The heat of the argument was exemplified by Huang Kecheng's personal plea to Mao for a complete return to Mao's "protracted-war" strategy, which emphasized the building of base areas to secure the rear and primarily sought victory through attrition of the enemy in a long-term struggle.¹⁴²

However, the KMT armies did not give the CCP leaders time for further debates. Their forces moving swiftly from Shanhaiguan to Jinzhou and they met with virtually no opposition from the loosely organized, poorly armed, and physically exhausted units of the NEPAA. They seized Jinzhou on November 26. The fall of the city finally dashed Mao's hopes for a decisive battle and a short war. Huang's troops finally retreated from the city's outskirts upon after Lin Biao's permission.¹⁴³

Meanwhile, the KMT troops also had their own problem. Their next step was not to chase the NEPAA but to attack the CCP troops in Rehe province in order to secure its own logistical route. In their advance to Jinzhou, the Nationalist armies had already experienced supply problems. The attitude of the Soviets was still unclear. Chiang thus harbored reservations about the wisdom of getting drawn further into Manchuria.¹⁴⁴

Give up the main line, occupy the two flanks

Liu Shaoqi attributed the fall of Jinzhou to the fatigue of the main forces and to the new recruits' lack of training.¹⁴⁵ In fact, he was on a slow but steady move toward reinstating his policy of force decentralization and gradually adjusting Mao's short-war strategy. From late November onward, Liu dispatched a series of telegrams to both the NEB and the army pressing for the dispersal of forces.¹⁴⁶ He again emphasized the strengthening of rural base areas, mostly in the northern Manchuria. Liu also urged the troops in the northeast to avoid massive, direct confrontation with the KMT, and concentrate on holding the line outside the areas from which the Red Army was withdrawing. The cities would also have to be given up. Therefore, under the leadership of Liu, the military and diplomatic setbacks of late November and December 1945 forced the CCP center to revise its strategy and formulate a new arrangement for the northeast: "give up the main line, occupy the two flanks" (开大路, 占领两厢).¹⁴⁷

Nonetheless, the adjustment did not come without a struggle.¹⁴⁸ It was not easy for NEB to make the drastic transition from Mao's decisive-war blueprint to Liu's risk-averse guerrilla strategy. Even after they had withdrawn from Shenyang, Peng Zhen and some other NEB leaders still sought to maintain an urban/main railway line presence versus a rural-centered strategy.¹⁴⁹ In fact, in past weeks, as its initial plan was to control the urban areas for a longer period, the NEB had developed certain affiliates to serve their purpose and which could survive only in urban areas. Besides

sunk costs, the situation in the northeast differs significantly from the party's experience in other parts of China. Once they abandoned all they had already done, the NEB headquarters argued, they would find themselves holding only a few enclaves in the mountainous regions and would be reduced from a position of superiority to dire straits.¹⁵⁰ The NEB leaders thus continued to station their troops mostly in the environs of Shenyang city even after their retreat. With the bandit-plagued region at their back, they showed little interests for dispersing the troops more widely. Meanwhile, NEB headquarters started disseminating the idea that its forces were capable of defeating the incoming KMT armies and recovering control over Shenyang.¹⁵¹

Liu Shaoqi continued to push the NEB to disperse its units and pay more attention to rural base construction.¹⁵² Meanwhile, Lin Biao, Luo Ronghuang and Chen Yun who was then lead party works in northern Manchuria, also showed different opinions towards Pen Zhen's arrangement.¹⁵³ As views polarized, fierce debates erupted between Yan'an, the NEB, and its branch bureaus.¹⁵⁴ The debate got end only when Mao broke his silence and made the final ruling from his hospital bed. On December 28, the Chairman sent a lengthy telegram to the NEB to rehabilitate the "old" base-area strategy as his "new" plan. "Our party's present task in the northeast is to build base areas. . . . Where to build stable bases are the cities and vast rural areas comparatively remote from the centers of KMT occupation," Mao told his comrades.¹⁵⁵

The strategy of "giving up the main line, occupying the two flanks" was articulated in a number of directives from Yan'an to the NEB in late November and December. However, it must be noted that this new strategy did not represent a complete abandonment of positional and mobile warfare doctrine in favor of guerrilla warfare doctrine. Instead, as Harold M. Tanner suggested, what emerged at the end of 1945 could be best described as a hybrid doctrine in which both rural and urban base areas, both mobile and guerrilla warfare, played their parts. While retreating from the major urban areas and main rail lines of southern Manchuria, due to local needs, the CCP troops in Manchuria needed to maintain control over medium-sized and small

cities and branch railway lines. Even major urban areas were not entirely written off—a number of cadres were to remain in the major cities, including Shenyang, in order to maintain an underground network, preparing for the day when the party would reclaim these cities—a day which, the NEB assured its cadres, would not be too far off.¹⁵⁶

Thus, as the NEB leaders laid out their long-term plans at the end of 1945, they still estimated that the KMT could control only a few large cities of Manchuria, while their troops were able to hold onto the medium-sized and small cities and branch rail lines. More importantly, as they argued, if the party lost those urban areas with their human and industrial resources and were forced to rely solely on the countryside, then it would be in more difficult position.¹⁵⁷

The NEB's continued interest in holding medium-sized and small cities was accompanied by an ongoing commitment to mobile and positional warfare.¹⁵⁸ In late December, Lin Biao was instructed to organize a field army of 150,000 men to operate in the area around the Bei-Ning rail line, while Luo Ronghuan and Xiao Jinguang were to build another in East Manchuria.¹⁵⁹ As the NEB described it, mobile warfare still played the main role, while guerrilla war played a “necessary cooperative supporting role.”¹⁶⁰ While they prepared for war, the CCP leaders still held some hope that if they showed enough strength and courage, and if the Soviets and the Americans got more involved for mediation, they could force Chiang Kai-shek to agree to a deal that would acknowledge a CCP presence in Manchuria. The process and timing of the Communist retreat and the final results depended on logistical and political factors, as well as strategic consideration. While the party center's political concern played a particularly significant role, it was repeatedly constrained by the strategic realities of the CCP position in the northeast.¹⁶¹

“The Final Battle in this Historical New Stage”

As the year 1946 unfolded, the CCP's plan of building base areas in Manchuria was further delayed as the U.S. government became more active in mediating

KMT-CCP relations. Marshall, acting as arbiter, hammered out a cease-fire agreement that all hostilities, troop movements, and destruction of and interference with communications lines must stop. The “Order for Cessation of Hostilities,” announced on January 10, was the result of an inescapable trade-off between the two parties against the stalemate on the battlefield in Northern China.¹⁶² Nonetheless, the agreement also granted the KMT the right to undertake military movements in Manchuria “for the purpose of restoring Chinese sovereignty.” In return, the advance of KMT troops in Rehe and Chahar was halted, a success that the CCP could not have achieved by military means.¹⁶³

Since the cease-fire was designed to create a peaceful atmosphere for the inauguration of the PCC on January 10, the leaders of the two opposing sides tried to show that they were restraining their forces in northern China.¹⁶⁴ However, the situation in Manchuria remained in flux. Mistrust and hostility between the two sides put peace in jeopardy. On the one hand, the Nationalist armies continued their advance into the region on the ground. On the other hand, the CCP was determined to solidify and legitimize its presence in Manchuria and north China. Particularly, to ensure a solid advantage in the forthcoming bargain for Manchuria, it was in the interests of both Communist and Nationalist armies to control as much territory and as many strategic points as possible before the cease-fire came into effect. On the eve of the announcement of the cease-fire, both sides pushed ahead to secure a favorable position, especially at the gate area of Manchuria.¹⁶⁵

Thus, after receiving intelligence reports that the KMT would continue to advance in Rehe province, Yan’an decided to preempt the enemy’s attack and “use violence to stop violence” in the region to contain their enemies while winning a peace.¹⁶⁶ On January 4, the NEPA was restructured to the Northeast Democratic United Army (NEDUA), showing the CCP’s determination to achieve military control and political autonomy over Manchuria. To underline the importance of the defense of Rehe, Liu Shaoqi employed the same rhetoric that Mao used in November when Mao was seeking a decisive battle in Jingzhou: “The battle for the defense of Rehe is a decisive factor for the hopes for peace in China Proper. At the present stage, this may

be the last battle.” The party leaders also told Lin Biao, “If you can only hold on for a few weeks, it will be of tremendous significance for the talks at Chongqing, [so we] hope that you will exert your utmost strength to carry out the mission: this is absolutely worth the sacrifice of thousands of men’s lives.”¹⁶⁷

Lin Biao again showed hesitation to a massive offensive operation his superiors planned. He and many other generals doubted whether peace would come soon in Manchuria. If not, Lin argued, it was more appropriate for his troops to disperse and construct local bases. In reply, however, Liu Shaoqi ensured Lin that there was a great hope of nationwide peace and that the current struggle would be brief and decisive.¹⁶⁸ In his telegram on January 13, Liu emphasized that the enemy could be coerced to obey the cease-fire only after being heavily punished on the battlefield. “If we do not initiate a punitive attack and annihilate the greater number of them, the reactionaries in Rehe and Manchuria who are on the offensive will not obediently carry out the cease-fire order,” Liu asserted.¹⁶⁹

In particular, Liu Shaoqi asked Lin Biao to wage a one-week offensive, starting on January 13, and to reopen the communication line between Manchuria and Rehe.¹⁷⁰ Apparently, the directive was based on an expectation that conflict in Manchuria was inevitable while a negotiated peace would come soon afterward. Therefore, in the spirit of not giving up an inch of territory before the ceasefire, the option Liu set before Lin was “not between war and peace but between waiting for the attack and preempting it”.¹⁷¹ In accordance with Liu’s instruction, the NEDUA amassed five regiments to attack the isolated KMT troops at Yingkou and captured the city on the evening of January 13. Nonetheless, after the cease-fire agreement took effect, Yan’an suggest Lin and Peng respect it. When Lin Biao and his colleagues were eager to initiate some offensive operations to fetch back Jinzhou in mid-January to secure the party’s foothold in Manchuria, Yan’an refuted their plans.¹⁷²

However, the KMT troops did not stop their advance in Manchuria. At this time, the CCP’s primary concern was to solidify its presence in Manchuria. The party leaders expected that a peace settlement would soon materialize in Manchuria. Thus, the question was how big a slice of the pie the party could obtain in a coalition

government and it was in the party's interest to defend and expand their possessions. For the Communist Party, this meant continued attempts to defend urban areas and railway centers and to fight standard battles to deter the KMT. ¹⁷³

As a result, although the strategy had already proved to be unsuccessful in late 1945, political imperatives led the Party to redeploy its main armed forces again in mobile and defensive base warfare. Liu suggested that the troops in Manchuria should be concentrated near cities along the main railway, using these possessions as a bargaining chip in the coming negotiations with the KMT. If the Nationalists refused to open a dialogue on the Manchurian issue and attacked their positions, the CCP forces would strike back forcefully. Thus, Liu asked the forces in the northeast to fight a few carefully chosen major battles in order to inflict maximum casualties on the advancing KMT forces and to knock their enemies back to negotiation table. It would be, according to Liu Shaoqi for another time, "the final battle in this historical new stage".¹⁷⁴

While encouraging his commanders that they should exploit what he called the "last chance for war," Liu also suggested that the war in Manchuria would be a brief one, as once skirmishes broke out, Marshall would immediately plead for a truce. Thus, the confrontation would last no more than a couple of weeks. The peace settlement to follow would end their chance to fight. Liu thus advised his commanders not to stick inflexibly to the principle of "so-called numerical superiority", one of Mao's basic tenets. Instead, they should launch an offensive regardless of whether they achieved crushing superiority in numbers.¹⁷⁵

Based on political consideration, Liu Shaoqi strongly believed that a stalemate was better than the embarrassing retreat at Jinzhou in November. As he suggested, should his offensive plans fail to achieve their goals, the outcome would constitute successful deterrence because the adversary's losses would increase. Against strong domestic and international pressure for peace, the clash in Manchuria would last for ten days or half a month at maximum. Therefore, he encouraged his commanders on February 5, 1946: "You have lost the chance to fight in Jinzhou . . . this is your last chance for war. You must absolutely not miss this opportunity again".¹⁷⁶

This counter-offensive plan against the Nationalist's advance was expected to take an enormous toll on the enemy and thus played a decisive role in winning the peace in Manchuria. It would bring certain defeat and suffering in the short run but, but as Yan'an believed, it would help the party gain a long-term advantage in the struggle against the KMT. In this regard, Liu's strategy was almost identical with what Mao had previously advocated in the defense of the Shanhaiguan-Jinzhou area.¹⁷⁷

However. Boosted by the arrival of the elite New Sixth Army in early February, the Nationalists strengthened their offensive in Manchuria. Most of Lin Biao's divisions retreated after putting up only minimal resistance in engagements with the American-armed enemy.¹⁷⁸ Obviously, the CCP troops in Manchuria were not trained and equipped enough yet to carry out their party leaders' ambitious plans. Thus, Lin Biao chose to fight a small-scale, high-intensity war of insurgency and a hit-and-run tactic. As the KMT armies kept pushing forward, the CCP troops isolated and attacked a Nationalist regiment at Xiushuihezi (秀水河子) on February 13, which caused 1,500 Nationalist casualties.¹⁷⁹ Against this success, however, only a few days later, the KMT troops responded fiercely and inflicted heavy casualties on the CCP troops at Shalingzi (沙岭子).¹⁸⁰ Some NEB commanders also tried to extend the war to Rehe province, hoping to make it a difficult battleground for their adversaries.¹⁸¹ The NEB leaders also suggested that Yan'an dispatch more troops to Manchuria but was refuted.¹⁸²

At its closing session on January 31, the PCC finally adopted resolutions on issues of political, military, constitutional, and national reconstruction, fueling hopes for a permanent peace in China. After the conference, the CCP representatives at Chongqing made great efforts in advocating to implement the PCC scheme in Manchuria.¹⁸³ However, the trend towards reconciliation suffered a downturn very quickly. From March 1 to March 17, the Second Congress of the KMT's Sixth Central Committee (CEC) met in Chongqing for the purpose of endorsing the PCC resolutions.

As been discussed above, the congress was convened in an extremely anti-Communist atmosphere. Hostile speeches delivered by the hawks, including some negative comments from the Generalissimo on the PCC, destroyed any conciliatory feelings.¹⁸⁴ Just as the situation began to deteriorate, Marshall was recalled home to report to President Truman. Soon after his departure on March 11, the fragile peace in China quickly disintegrated.

The CCP's reaction to the new situation was to defend its political positions through military means. They chose to fight on the battleground to show their strength and resolve to drag the KMT back to the negotiating table.¹⁸⁵ Local cadres in Manchuria had already shown strong suspicions to a compromise with the KMT, and Yan'an agreed that as long as the Nationalists did not accept a truce in Manchuria, the party must be tougher.¹⁸⁶ The NEB therefore intensified its military activities in Manchuria.¹⁸⁷

At this point, the CCP leaders estimated that Chongqing could spare no more than five armies, approximately 150,000 men, for Manchuria as any augmentation of this number would weaken the KMT's nationwide deployment, especially in northern China.¹⁸⁸ Thus, if Lin Biao's troops could eliminate some of the existing KMT troops in Manchuria, they expected, the Nationalists would soon find themselves fighting a losing battle.¹⁸⁹ This active strategy in January quickly gained Mao's full support. In a speech on March 15, Mao insisted that military struggle was the only means left to defeat the "fascists" and thus to avoid the possibility of a third world war.¹⁹⁰

Nearly at the same time, Yan'an got encouragement once again from the deterioration of the KMT-Soviet relationship. As discussed above, although the KMT government had sent its delegation back to Changchun in December, the Sino-Soviet negotiations on economic cooperation reached no agreement. Diplomatic pressures from the Americans and strong opposition from the Chinese public had stymied Soviet plans to gain control of the Northeast's economy prior to their troops' withdrawal.¹⁹¹ Once the Red Army withdrew from Manchuria, the Soviets would lose their prominent means for forcing the Nationalist government to do its bidding. Therefore, following the withdrawal of its troops, Moscow tried by every means to

block the Nationalists from exercising exclusive control over Manchuria. Toward this end, in addition to using diplomatic means to thwart U.S. intervention in north China, the Soviets resumed their support the CCP to control Manchuria, especially the region north of Changchun. They encouraged the CCP to fight in areas where the Red Army recently retreated from, such as Shenyang and Sipingjie.¹⁹² They also suggested that only through some victorious battle could the party force the KMT to accept a political compromise.¹⁹³

When the Red Army suddenly accelerated its withdrawal from Manchuria in March, the NEB quickly grasped the opportunity to move into Soviet positions in a number of cities and rail junctions. Although the Nationalists managed to recover Shenyang in mid-March, most cities and prefectures situated north of the city fell into the hands of CCP.¹⁹⁴ Throughout this period, the NEB leaders received unprecedented encouragement and assistance from the Soviets. According to Peng Zhen, the Soviet soldiers once again gave the CCP troops access to military warehouses left by the Japanese. The Soviets also purposely gave the Nationalists little advance warning before their departure, while slowing the KMT advance by withholding train engines and rolling stock. The NEDUA moved in rapidly when Soviet troops pulled out of the strategically important railway junction city of Sipingjie (四平街, see next section). In April, as Soviet units left Changchun, Harbin, and Qiqihar, the CCP troops took over these cities as well.¹⁹⁵

Throughout this period, Zhou Enlai and his colleagues who engaged in the Marshall talks in Chongqing suggested that it was necessary to withdraw from some territory in Manchuria. However, most local leaders in the northeast showed strong opposition.¹⁹⁶ On March 18, as this study mentioned in chapter 3, Mao telegraphed Zhou Enlai, telling him to cancel the concessions that Zhou had already made to the KMT in the past week.¹⁹⁷ Yan'an also told Zhou that Soviet commanders in Manchuria adopted a tough stance against the Nationalists while the Soviet diplomats in Chongqing were too soft.¹⁹⁸

The CEC of the Nationalists ratified the PCC resolution at its session on March 16, but a five-point revision was imposed on the Resolution on the Draft Constitution

adopted by the PCC. Using this revision as a pretext, Zhou triggered a falling-out with the KMT at a press conference in Chongqing on March 19.¹⁹⁹ Thereafter, the CCP stopped using the phrase “new stage of democratic construction” and dropped policies couched in those terms.

Disputes after the Nationalist CEC, the subsequent reaction of the CCP, and the further KMT-Soviet confrontation/CCP-Soviet alignment in Manchuria all buried the short-lived hope of a negotiated peace irretrievably. The Nationalist forces accelerated their advance in the northeast. For Lin Biao’s NEDUA, this meant that more difficult battles were soon to come. The party leaders were determined to fight back against the Nationalists’ advance and to deter their enemy from further aggression. The defining battle of the spring of 1946 was to take place at Sipingjie, which would make the inevitability of a full-scale conflict apparent to all.

The Battle of Sipingjie, April-May 1946

Sipingjie, known as Siping(四平) after June 1947, is located in the central part of the Manchurian plain. A stop on the main railway line from Shenyang to Changchun, with branch lines running east and west, the city is a transportation hub and regional business center. As the KMT forces advanced northward in their bid to control Jilin and Heilongjiang (黑龙江) provinces, they would have to take the city.²⁰⁰

Noticing the ever-growing difficulties of recovering Manchuria, the KMT dispatched four more armies into the region in early 1946, including the battle-seasoned New First Army and New Six Army, which once constituted the main force of the Chinese Expeditionary Army trained and directed by Stilwell in the Burma Theater. In mid-March 1946, the Nationalists once re-exerted control over Sipingjie briefly.²⁰¹ However, while the CCP-KMT negotiations took a step closer to a total split, to the Nationalists’ chagrin, Huang Kecheng’s unit defeated the local forces and occupied Sipingjie on March 17.²⁰² To stop the KMT advance and defend Sipingjie, the NEB also amassed two columns for a strong defense at Benxi, a city located in the south of Shenyang. Meanwhile, Lin Biao arrived at Sipingjie with his

headquarters to shore up the defense of the city as the gate of Changchun.²⁰³

Through these deployments, Lin Biao and his colleagues tried to drag the Nationalists into a two-front battle. Nevertheless, the KMT troops advanced undeterred. The New First Army swiftly took control of the Shenyang-Sipingjie section of the main rail line. The NEDUA tried every possible measure to hold up the advancing enemy, but most of their counterattacks were both costly and futile.²⁰⁴

Toward the end of March, Mao Zedong, having recovered from his illness, gradually took charge again. Thenceforth, the Chairman paid even more attention to the situation in Manchuria and he almost single-handedly directed his armed forces in Manchuria. To demonstrate the party's resolve to control Manchuria, the Chairman ordered Lin Biao to defend the city at all costs and obstruct the KMT's advance to Changchun and Harbin.²⁰⁵ Mao suggested Lin Biao concentrate his troops to raise a mass operation to wipe out a division or two of KMT troops in some days.²⁰⁶ The CCP leadership even started discussing the possibility of designating Changchun as their capital.²⁰⁷

Both Lin Biao at Sipingjie and Zhou Enlai at Chongqing, however, were still skeptical of their troops' military capability for conducting trench warfare against the Nationalists. They reminded Mao of the dangers of attrition. Rather than focusing on territorial losses and gains, both Lin and Zhou suggested, it was more appropriate to impose casualties while reducing the physical strength of the enemy as much as possible and, over the long run, force a peace deal upon the KMT.²⁰⁸ Lin Biao raised a plan to attack the Nationalist besiegers from the rear.²⁰⁹ After hearing these suggestions, Mao amended his position to support Lin and Zhou's strategy.²¹⁰

Yet, quickly, inconsistency in the views of the leadership appeared again. It was Zhou Enlai, who usually adopted a moderate profile in past, who changed his mind firstly.²¹¹ Zhou believed that Marshall was determined to achieve a ceasefire and a political solution to the Manchurian problem, and if the American general was going to return from Washington, it was in the Communists' best interest to hold onto their current positions in the Northeast and to expand as the Soviets continued their withdrawal. He also estimated that Chiang would follow Marshall's advice.²¹²

Meanwhile, on April 11, General Chen Cheng, a close adviser of Chiang, suddenly announced that the KMT agreed to discuss a ceasefire in the northeast. Zhou took the KMT's this accommodation proposal as a sign of the enemy's weakness. It had long been his view that the party should militarily "teach the KMT a lesson" prior to any political settlement before Marshall's return from America.²¹³ Zhou immediately informed Mao of this new bargaining situation and suggested to Lin Biao that his forces should capture Changchun, which the NEDUA had held under siege since the Soviet withdrawal, within two days.²¹⁴

Zhou's suggestion was turned down by Lin Biao quickly for tactical reasons. His lack of faith in the Marshall Mission led Lin and his many colleagues to question the idea of fighting that one final battle to secure an advantageous deal in the peace negotiations.²¹⁵ However, Mao changed his stance after being informed that George Marshall was returning from Washington.²¹⁶ Like Zhou, the Chairman still believed that the American general would immediately step in to halt the fighting in Manchuria after he arrived in China. Mao thus pressed Lin Biao to seize Changchun and Harbin before Marshall intervened so that the party would ensure a favorable bargaining position.²¹⁷ Lin had no choice but followed his superiors' order. The NEDUA took Changchun on April 18, several days after the Red Army had withdrawn.²¹⁸ Although the response of local people was quite neutral, before and after the occupation of the city, the CCP troops received great supplements from the Soviets.²¹⁹

The capture of the former capital of Manchukuo symbolized the Communists' resolution to maintain a strong presence in Manchuria or even control the region, which seriously offend the Generalissimo and other KMT leaders.²²⁰ Nonetheless, the CCP leaders still believed that occupying Changchun would not make a political solution impossible. On the contrary, they expected this move, through signaling the party's resolve, would deter their enemies from further aggression while strengthening the party's bargaining position (as a bargaining chip) in the upcoming ceasefire negotiations for Manchuria. However, ironically, the occupation of Changchun also made those CCP leaders less amenable to compromise as Mao now considered the city to be the party's last line of defense in Manchuria.²²¹ The party

leaders even discussed the possibility of moving the NEB to Changchun.²²²

As a result, the defense of Sipingjie became more and more important. From the strategic point of view, defense of Communist positions in Changchun and in the northern part of Manchuria required firm control of the city. From the political perspective, CCP leaders saw the defense of Sipingjie as a vital part of the party's attempt to maintain a strong position in Manchuria before the peace negotiations would put a temporary stop to the clash.²²³ The logical conclusion was that Sipingjie would have to be defended. The CCP leaders again expected to fight some massive and decisive battles in this region to win a peace.²²⁴

Nonetheless, the CCP's occupation of Changchun only encouraged "the ultra-reactionary groups" in the Nationalists' regime, who were then in the position to say that the Communists had demonstrated that they never intended to carry out the PCC and the ceasefire agreements. Chiang thus ordered his troops to beat the CCP decisively in the area south of Sipingjie and fetched back Changchun.²²⁵ Then the focus of the CCP-KMT conflict shifted to the Sipingjie city, which is the gateway for Changchun.

In fact, both the CCP and KMT foresaw that the upcoming negotiations under Marshall would lead to a cessation of hostilities, at least temporary, in the northeast. Both sides were therefore determined to ensure a favorable battlefield position before a truce was signed. As Yan'an advocated,

*"The strategy of our party is to do the utmost to control the two cities of Changchun and Harbin and the Central-Eastern Line (中东线), to oppose at any cost the Chiang army's offensive against Changchun, Harbin, and the Central-Eastern railway, while taking southern and western Manchuria as subsidiary areas."*²²⁶

Although it made sense from a political point of view, in operational terms, the Party Center's directive placed the forces of Lin Biao in a disadvantageous position, as there was a significant disjuncture between Mao's strategic vision for the positional defense and the reality on the battleground. In fact, Lin and other CCP commanders in Manchuria preferred a mobile defense in which Communist units deployed in the

areas around the city would cut off, surround, and annihilate isolated Nationalist units as they attempted to force their way north. Thus, the NEDUA made great effort to carry out the orders of its highest decision-makers and they achieved some results.²²⁷ On April 16, the CCP troops successfully ambushed and paralyzed a division of the KMT's 71st Army on the outskirts of Sipingjie. At Benxi, the NEDUA used the tactic of "strike against an isolated force and delay its reinforcement" (dadian zuyuan, 打点阻援), entirely immobilizing two divisions of Nationalist troops after a massive offensive.²²⁸

To be successful, such a defensive tactic assumed that the Nationalist generals would continue to disperse their troop units.²²⁹ However, as these skirmishes pushed the stricken enemy to stay closer to the main body of its forces, the NEDUA was deprived of further opportunities to launch mobile attacks. Experiences taught the KMT troops a lesson. The KMT commanders gradually learned that such dispersal was dangerous and they ordered their units accordingly to close ranks and attack Sipingjie in force, which rendered the Communist mobile defense strategy disadvantaged.²³⁰ However, the CCP leaders got a false impression that their enemies were not so strong and they resolved to defend Sipingjie at all costs. As a result, their troops were forced to fight a static defense of the city.²³¹

The Nationalist attacks against Sipingjie began on April 6. The KMT General Sun Liren advanced with the 71st Army (minus the 88th Division) and the New First Army, a total of about forty thousand best-trained soldiers in China.²³² A directive telegraphed sent from Yan'an to Lin Biao and Peng Zhen on that day indicated that the party leader had noticed that the defense of Sipingjie was controversial. However, Yan'an still emphasized that any feelings of irresolution within the Party, no matter how slight, must be firmly overcome and that Peng and Lin should prepare for a tens of thousands of casualties, which Mao suggested it is acceptable.²³³

This decision was strongly questioned by commanders on the ground. In his memoirs, Huang Kecheng recalls that he repeatedly telegraphed Lin Biao arguing that his forces could not make a stand at Sipingjie. Instead, Huang suggested a minimal

defense and rapid retreat to the rural areas. When it seemed that Lin ignored his advice, Huang went over his commander's head, telegraphing Yan'an directly, but also in no effect.²³⁴ In reply, Mao only assured his generals that situation would turn better in ten days as Marshall would possibly return to China soon. He thus asked them to endure the difficulties and persist.²³⁵ As he needed further military successes to support his political plan, Mao even ordered his commanders to eliminate the New First Army.²³⁶

Unfortunately, the enemy was not a paper tiger. After a successful three-pronged operation, the KMT armies captured many crucial positions on the outskirts of Sipingjie, and the city fell into the range of direct Nationalist fire. By April 18, the Nationalist troops had put the city under a siege. On April 20, the New First Army began to storm the city, whereupon the CCP troops put up a staunch resistance.²³⁷ However, Yan'an still urged them to wipe the New First Army.²³⁸ Those troops thus joined in a series of short, violent engagements from set positions, a method of battle that their generals recall as "really stupid."²³⁹

General Marshall finally returned to China on April 18. He intervened soon after his arrival and suggested that both the Nationalists and the Communists cease fighting in Manchuria and not send any more troops into that region. He criticized that the CCP violated the truce agreement and prevented Nationalist troops from entering Manchuria, but admitted that the central government also made some mistakes.²⁴⁰

However, Marshall found he was unable to persuade Chiang Kai-shek to withdraw from the attack. At this stage, the Generalissimo had committed himself to a major battle to reclaim Changchun, as the CCP's continuing occupation of Changchun, the former capital of Manchukuo, was an intolerable humiliation to his claim of national leadership.²⁴¹ He thus firmly turned down a proposal by Marshall, one accepted by the CCP, to send monitors to Manchuria to investigate incidents there. Chiang believed that the investigative teams would restrict his party much more severely than the CCP. He then preferred to smashing the communists on the battleground at the first and then imposing his political will upon them.²⁴²

Meanwhile, Zhou Enlai proposed to Marshall in Chongqing that the United

States stop transporting Nationalist troops to the northeast. Marshall, however, criticized that the CCP's occupation of Changchun was the main reason why the situation in the northeast had deteriorated. In fact, Marshall did not push his plan against Chiang simply because his government welcomed the takeover of the KMT in Manchuria and encouraged the latter to achieve a dominant position in the northeast. He thus rejected the CCP's proposal. Instead, he announced his temporary withdrawal from mediation.²⁴³

Once the Generalissimo noticed that his government would receive the supplies it needed even if he did not follow Marshall's cease-fire suggestion, he was determined to initiate a strong offensive in Manchuria in an attempt to compel the Communists to withdraw their forces and surrender.²⁴⁴ Mao's offensive-accommodation formula was thus effectively thwarted: on the one hand, hopes for a peace agreement in the foreseeable future were dashed; on the other hand, the difficult situation in Sipingjie had made it unwise to continue a war of attrition against the enemy's elite units. His deterrence strategy in the end only provoked his enemy's further aggression.²⁴⁵

The military picture turned grim on the NEDUA's southern front at first. On April 22, local commanders reported from Benxi that it looked unlikely that they could defend their positions if the enemy launched a second-phase assault.²⁴⁶ Mao was unmoved, however. He ordered the commanders in Benxi to fight tenaciously to at least delay the enemy until there was finally a peace agreement.²⁴⁷ The party leadership's plan was still to engage in a major battle to show their fighting resolve, which they believed could deter their enemies and forced a cease-fire upon the KMT. On April 27, Mao asked Lin Biao to augment the numbers of the defense forces in Sipingjie. "For peace and democracy...turn Sipingjie into China's Madrid", the Chairman wrote, demanding that his officers conjure up a military miracle. Ironically, the CCP's last line of defense was then shifted from Changchun to the besieged city.²⁴⁸

For this purpose, some troops at Benxi were dispatched to Sipingjie.²⁴⁹ However, from April 29 to May 2, bolstered by their air force and artillery fire, the KMT armies

achieved a series of breakthroughs on the outskirts of Benxi. The KMT's victorious offensive on May 3 finally forced the CCP troops to retreat from Benxi.²⁵⁰ Allowing the Nationalist units a freer hand to strike Sipingjie, the fall of Benxi made the NEDUA's strategic position deteriorated even further. It made it all but impossible for the CCP troops to maintain numerical superiority at Sipingjie.²⁵¹ Once the Communist defenders had lost this advantage, their combat risks increased drastically.²⁵²

Mao was well informed about the change in the force-to-force ratio, however, the Chairman still insisted that Lin Biao conduct one more strike before seeking to terminate the defense. He expected that his Sipingjie defenders were able to prevail against the attackers and turn the tide.²⁵³ Lin send only a simple and direct reply to Mao: it was not possible to stop or defeat the battle-seasoned enemy within such a short time.²⁵⁴

Lin's warning again fell on deaf ears, as Mao decided to stake his armed forces on maintaining the status quo in the major cities of northern Manchuria.²⁵⁵ Hopes for immediate cease-fire vanished on April 29. Chiang Kai-shek bluntly refused a proposal to settle the Manchurian problem that was endorsed by both Marshall and Zhou Enlai.²⁵⁶ Yet, hearing the news, the Chairman still assured Lin Biao on the next day that a ceasefire agreement would possibly be signed by "tomorrow or the day after tomorrow".²⁵⁷

At its beginning, the defense of Sipingjie was clearly undertaken in order to achieve the political-strategic objective of holding territory in anticipation of the cessation of hostilities being negotiated under American auspices. However, the purpose of the battle changed in late April as the result of the breakdown of Marshall's cease-fire efforts. Marshall insisted that to achieve a ceasefire, the CCP must evacuate from Changchun, which Yan'an was not ready to accept.²⁵⁸ Mao finally conceded on May 1 that the slim hope for a peaceful settlement had evaporated completely, but he remained adamant on the unyielding defense of Sipingjie, as he still tried to deter the KMT through showing his party's resolve. He asked Lin to avert enemy breakthroughs and defend the city for the longest possible time.²⁵⁹

A directive of the Party center thus instructed the forces defending Sipingjie to “strike the resisting armies in both places until they are exhausted; bleed their troop strength, break their morale, and make them consume as much as possible of the troops, the weapons, and the ammunition that they’ve built up over the course of six months so that they won’t have time to reinforce . . . at that time, it may then become possible to gain peace on terms beneficial to us.”²⁶⁰ Thus, while peace was almost unimaginable, Mao still urged Lin to defend the city for the longest possible time and avert the enemy to show the party’s moral superiority. His decision in effect shifted the strategy of defense accommodation into a plan of deterring the enemy through gradually diluting the enemy’s strength and breaking their fighting spirit.²⁶¹

Meanwhile, the defenders at Sipingjie came under greater threat when the KMT’s New Sixth Army arrived, fresh from its victory in Benxi. The enemy’s reinforcements robbed Lin’s numerical superiority.²⁶² The CCP combat units at Sipingjie were left with only two options: either to heed Mao—that is, continue their courageous positional battle—or to disengage in a planned retreat at a moment of their choosing.²⁶³

The CCP commanders in the field were divided as to the proper course of action. The majority felt that it was necessary to break the enemy’s spirit and slow down its advance, but they also believed that a protracted defense of Sipingjie was not the right way to do so. Instead, they favored a retreat from the city and pursuit of mobile defensive operations from rural base areas.²⁶⁴ In particular, as the attrition rate of his troops reached more than a half, the out-spoken Huang Kecheng sent Mao a message from the battlefield again, and urged the Chairman to pull the forces out. He warned the Chairman that if his troop continued to defend the city, they would inevitably lose it to the enemy, and their own troops were to be immobilized by excessive losses. If they avoided further engagement, Huang also suggested, these combat units could be shifted to pacify the bandit-infested regions and construct base areas, before launching a decisive campaign in the future.²⁶⁵

However, Mao refuted Huang’s suggestion in an open telegram to all regional bureaus on May 15. The Chairman still asserted that the longer the defense was

maintained, the greater the chance of averting their enemies from launching a full-scale civil war and achieving a peace settlement.²⁶⁶ While he urged his commanders to avoid intense engagements and concentrate on their base-area programs, he also scrupulously consulted with Lin Biao, in a personal telegram that day, on whether it was still worthwhile to prolong the war or better to cede Changchun in exchange for a political settlement.²⁶⁷ Apparently, Mao still hoped for Lin to retain Sipingjie as long as possible, to ensure that the party had enough bargaining chip in hand when, in due course, it would play the trump card Changchun to revitalize the negotiations.²⁶⁸

Mao's contingency plan was soon shattered by the New Sixth Army and the New First Army, which launched a strong multipronged assault against the city in mid-May.²⁶⁹ The CCP troops were still ordered to hold the city until the evening of May 18. However, a total collapse of their defense seemed imminent. Finally, with the agreement of the Party center, Lin Biao suddenly and quietly withdrew all his forces from Sipingjie. The last of them leaving at 1:30 A.M. on May 19.²⁷⁰ Six hours later, the Nationalists realized that the city had been abandoned.²⁷¹

At the end, the CCP troops had defended Sipingjie against Nationalist attack for thirty-one days, fighting off ten Nationalist assaults on the city and incurring heavy casualties. They are believed to have suffered 8,000 casualties and wounded out of the 110,000 defenders. Casualties of the Nationalists were estimated at 10,000 of 70,000 troops.²⁷² The protracted and costly defense of the CCP achieved little in the end. After the abandonment of Sipingjie, the NEDUA was in full retreat and in disarray, with the KMT forces at their heels. The KMT armies severely punished the routed Communists. On May 23, Yan'an confided to the members of the minor parties that it was willing to cede Changchun.²⁷³ Nonetheless, after his troops evacuated Sipingjie, Lin Biao withdrew from Changchun without a fight, although Peng Zhen remained reluctant to give up the city.²⁷⁴

Against logistical problems and pressure from Marshall, together with the danger of possible Soviets military intervention, at its beginning, the Nationalist leaders were hesitant to march further north and take Changchun.²⁷⁵ However, after

the CCP forces retreated from Sipingjie and Changchun, tensions within their ranks came to a head. Over 40,000 former Manchukuo soldiers, policemen, and other personnel recently incorporated into Lin's NEDUA defected to the Nationalist side.²⁷⁶ Making things even worse, Wang Jifang(王继芳, later name changed as Wang Shoufang, 王瘦芳), an operations staff of Lin Biao also defected to the KMT, who confessed to the Nationalist leaders the real strength of Lin's troops and the plan to abandon Changchun. Encouraged by this information, KMT troops advanced forward and regained control over Changchun on May 23.²⁷⁷ The CCP troops suffered their greatest loss after the end of the anti-Japanese war.²⁷⁸

Ultimately, Lin's remaining forces in northern Manchuria were pulled back to positions north of the Songhua River in Heilongjiang Province. Lin and other leaders once prepared to withdraw even farther. They were discussing on giving up the city of Harbin and falling back on small and medium-sized cities and rural areas. However, by the time, Chiang Kai-shek, under pressure from Marshall, offered a fifteen-day truce in Manchuria on June 6.²⁷⁹ The Communists quickly accepted this offer. The cease-fire thus prevented the Nationalist forces from further aggression, which made it unnecessary for Lin's NEDUA to choose between mounting a defense of Harbin and withdrawing further.²⁸⁰

As it turned out, this truce would be extended incrementally for four months without leading to any agreement. By and large, the attacking KMT troops stopped their chase on the southern branch of the Sungari River (松花江). Lin Biao's troops managed to escape what had looked like a certain catastrophe. After these setbacks, the CCP adjusted its strategy in Manchuria. In the second half of 1946, about 12,000 cadres would be dispatched to mobilize the rural population of Manchuria to carry out the party's bid for a more aggressive land reform program, bolstered by military operations that eradicated the bandits.²⁸¹ Most importantly, during and after the battle of Sipingjie, the CCP troops in northern China and southern Manchuria also intensified their activities in order to disrupt their enemies' movement to ease the pressure their comrades faced in Manchuria. Military clashes quickly spread to northern China.²⁸²

On the other hand, after the battle of Sipingjie, the Nationalist politicians and generals, with few exceptions, believed that they would prevail in the military conflict with the CCP. In their eyes, their party had proved its capability of withstanding significant military pressure in a long war against domestic as well as international pressure without political concessions. Some KMT leaders recognized the strength and the resolution of the CCP, but, as a result, they placed an even heavier emphasis on the importance of military superiority as the basis for a political solution. The hope for peace finally diminished and a full-scale civil war became imminent.

The immediate aftermath of the Communist defeat at Sipingjie is clear, but the significance of the battle was debated both at the time and for decades afterward.²⁸³ On the one hand, the battle of Sipingjie remained a topic of debate within the CCP leaderships even after the success of their revolution.²⁸⁴ On the other hand, ever since the KMT's military failure in mainland China, a lot of sympathizers of the Nationalist regime regret that Chiang's forces were prevented from attacking the exhausted CCP troops in northern Manchuria by the truce negotiated by Marshall.²⁸⁵ However, as Yang Kuisong argued, just in terms of the military struggle, any further commitment of Nationalist forces to North Manchuria would have led to Nationalist weakness in South Manchuria and North China.²⁸⁶ Ironically, some KMT leaders and sympathizers blamed Marshall for another reason. They contended that the government should have concentrated its best-armed forces to control north China. The involvement in Manchuria encouraged by Marshall, they believed, resulted in a serious over-extension of Nationalist forces.²⁸⁷

Conclusion

As been shown above, the CCP leaders' original plan for the defense of Manchuria in general and Sipingjie in particular was designed to achieve a clear objective: to destroy the KMT's crack troops in mobile warfare and ensure a peace deal that would be made on Communist terms. However, as the conditions on the battlefield made this policy all but impossible to implement. Mao and his colleagues

still committed their forces to a positional defensive war in the belief that the Nationalists would halt the fighting and reopen negotiations as soon as Marshall returned. This approach miscalculated the enemy's determination to reclaim Changchun and therefore was shelved too.

Like many leaders before and since, during the Sipingjie battle, Mao and his colleagues all indulged in wishful thinking. On the one hand, as Lin Biao complained later, the widespread wishful expectation for peace brought by Marshall was "the most harmful thing" for the party's work in Manchuria.²⁸⁸ On the other hand, while the CCP leaders regarded the defense of Sipingjie as highly necessary, they expected their adversaries would acquiesce. Once committed to the deployment, Mao became insensitive to warnings from Lin Biao, Huang Kecheng and other local military commanders that it was unlikely to defend the city.

Wishful thinking, overconfidence, and insensitivity to threatening information help explain why Mao and his comrades committed prematurely to the defense of Sipingjie. However, there was a root cause that led the CCP leaders to dismiss or discount the technical and political obstacles. Based on a firm belief that war was the only means to achieve a cease-fire and political advantage while the war would also be short due to domestic and international oppositions, the CCP leaders formulated a strategy of offensive deterrence which emphasized preemptive attacks and final battles. Throughout this period, Mao and his associates never gave up the search for a decisive battle. This tendency was evident first in Liu Shaoqi's plan for a major battle in East Hebei, then in Mao's ill-fated plan in the Shanhaiguan-Jinzhou area, and later in his strategy for the defense of Sipingjie. These plans for a decisive battle were all based on the expectation of a short war. Mao and his colleagues sought a swift victory that would deter the KMT and put his party in a favorable bargaining position. In fact, Mao was never able to get over his suspicions and distrust of both the United States and Chiang. He thus preferred an offensive preemptive strategy. Meanwhile, Mao's offensive deterrence doctrine emphasized the use of a preemptive strategy not so much to defeat the adversary militarily as to deal him a psychological blow to cause him to desist.²⁸⁹ Mao's idea was also shared by most of his generals, including

Huang Kecheng, who is the most direct criticizer of his strategy for the defense of Sipingjie. After his troops retreated from Sipingjie, in late May, Huang sent another suggestion to Mao, arguing that the party should prepare a decisive battle at Harbin.²⁹⁰

Deciding to fight a decisive battle, Mao and other CCP leaders also overestimated Marshall's willingness and capacity to control the Nationalists. However, Marshall expected that the advance of the Nationalists was an opportunity to exclude the Soviet Union from its diplomatic aftermath. As a result, the American general became reluctant to exercise his constraints upon the Nationalists. Not to mention, the Generalissimo was determined to take over Changchun, as the CCP's occupation of the former capital of the Manchukuo was an intolerable humiliation to his regime.

Thus, the CCP's preference for an offensive profile in its propaganda and military activities in facing the KMT did not achieve its designed goal of deterrence. Instead, it provoked at least as much as it restrained the party's enemies. The CCP's military buildups and deployments, claims of strategic superiority and political autonomy, and threatening rhetoric, aroused its adversary's fear and anxiety, which left generally harmful consequences for the development of Chinese politics. A spiraling process of threat and counter threat fueled distrust, fear, and mutual expectations of an impending confrontation. The CCP leaders' notion of the decisive battle, their beliefs regarding a short war, and their emphasis on moving preemptively to secure an advantage shaped their choice of strategies. They thus pushed their local commanders to gamble their troops in an unwanted escalation of the conflict. At the end, Mao and his followers provoked their enemies' full-scale offensive, which they had intended to prevent.

¹ Besides prominent work presented by Westad and Chinese historians such as Niu Jun, Shen Zhihua and Yang Kuisong, see also, Steven I. Levine, *Anvil of Victory: The Communist Revolution in Manchuria, 1945–1948* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987). Donald G. Gillin and Ramon H. Myers, "Introduction," in Gillin and Myers, eds., *Last Chance in Manchuria: The Diary of Chang Kiangau* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1989), pp.1–58. Arthur Waldron, "China without Tears: If Chiang Kai-shek hadn't Gambled in 1946," in Robert Cowley, ed., *What If? The World's Foremost Military Historians Imagine What Might Have Been* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1999), pp.377–392. See also, Jiang Yongjing and Liu Weikai, *Jiang Jieshi yu Guogong hezhang*

- (蒋介石与国共和战, Chiang Kaishek and the War and Peace between KMT-CCP), Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe (山西人民出版社, Shanxi People's Press), pp.82-101.
- ² Harold M. Tanner, "Guerrilla, mobile, and base warfare in Communist military operations in Manchuria, 1945-1947," *Journal of Military History*, Vol. 67 (Oct.2003), pp.1179-1180.
- ³ There were, of course, two sides to this battle, and the KMT's strategy naturally affected the CCP's decisions. However, this chapter covers only the strategic calculation of the CCP leadership and its influence on the conflict escalation.
- ⁴ Harold M. Tanner, "Guerrilla, mobile, and base warfare in Communist military operations in Manchuria, 1945-1947".
- ⁵ The city is known as Siping after June 1947. For the battle of Sipingjie, see Victor Shiu Chiang Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria: The Communist Military Strategy at the Onset of the Chinese Civil War, 1945-1946," *Modern China*, 2005, No.1, pp. 31-72. Deng Ye, "Dongbei wenti yu Siping juezhuan" (The question of Northeast China and the decisive battle at Siping, 东北问题与四平决战), *Lishi yanjiu*, 2001, No.4, pp.57-71. Harold M. Tanner, *Battle for Manchuria and the Fate of China: Siping 1946*, Bloomington, IN, USA: Indiana University Press, 2012.
- ⁶ Harold M. Tanner, "Guerrilla, mobile, and base warfare," p.1181; Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria", p.32.
- ⁷ A recent exception, see Harold M. Tanner, *Battle for Manchuria and the Fate of China : Siping 1946*. Bloomington, IN, USA: Indiana University Press, 2012
- ⁸ Michael M. Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism: Mao, Stalin, and the United States* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press 1997); Yang Kuisong, *Zhongjian didai de geming*, pp.473-484 and Yang Kuisong, *Mao Zedong yu Mosike de enen yuanyuan*, pp.190-205.
- ⁹ See Victor Shiu Chiang Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria". Some scholars, Deng Ye for instance, had noticed that the battle of Sipingjie was fought under "unique" conditions but failed to recognize the continuity of the CCP strategy.
- ¹⁰ CCP center to Guangdong, 16 June 1945, ZZWX, Vol.15, pp.145-147; Deng Ye (2011), Chapter 1; see also, Chen, Yung-fa, and *Making Revolution: The Communist Movement in Eastern and Central China, 1937-1945*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1986.
- ¹¹ Harold M. Tanner, "Guerrilla, mobile, and base warfare", p.1182
- ¹² The CCP seventh congress resolutions on military works, 11 July 1945, ZZWX, Vol. 15, pp.112-114. See Harold M. Tanner, "Guerrilla, mobile, and base warfare in Communist military operations in Manchuria, 1945-1947", pp.1181-1184.
- ¹³ Mao Wenji, Vol.3, pp.454-456; CCP center to local bureaus, 11 August 1945, ZZWX, Vol.15, p.227; 12 August 1945, MMW, Vol.3, pp.6-7. Deng Ye (2011), p.224.
- ¹⁴ Mao Nianpu. Vol.2 p.2; Deng Ye (2011), p.224.
- ¹⁵ CCP center to CCB, 12 August 1945, MMW, Vol.3, p.4.
- ¹⁶ The CCP Military Center to Jinjiryu, Jinchaji and Jinsui, 26 August 1945, in *PLAD*, pp.97-98, p.100. *Mao Xuanji*, Vol.4, pp.1152-1155. Zhou Enlai later further expounded this theme as "idealist realism", *Zhou Enlai Tanpan*, pp. 535-540.
- ¹⁷ CCP center to sub bureaus, 12 October 1945, ZZWX, Vol. 15, pp.324-325.
- ¹⁸ Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, pp.200-201; pp.205-206.
- ¹⁹ Tang Yilu, ed., *Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun quanguo jiefang zhanzhengshi di yi Juan* (History of the People's Liberation Army in the National War of Liberation 中国人民解放军解放战争史), Vol. 1, Beijing: Junshi kexue chubanshe (军事科学出版社, Military Science Press), 1993, p. 60.
- ²⁰ *Mao Wenji*, Vol.3, pp. 410-411, p.426. Jin Chongji, *Jiaoliang*, p.3.
- ²¹ Mao to Nie Rongzhen, 18 December 1944, MMW, Vol.2, pp.749-750.
- ²² Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, p.201.
- ²³ Mao qida, p.233; Mao Wenji, Vol.3, pp.233-234.
- ²⁴ Mao Xuanji, Vol.4, pp.1123-1136. Sheng Zhihua, *Stalin and Origins of Chinese Civil War*, p.117.
- ²⁵ Jiefangribao, 12 August. *Zhu De Nianpu*, 12 August 1945, p.1196.
- ²⁶ Materials for the Study of the CCP history (中共党史资料), Vol.15, p.194. Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism*, p.101, Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, p.206.
- ²⁷ CCP military center to Shandong and Jinjiyu, 20 August 1945, CCP center to Shandong, 22 August 1945, *PLAD*, p.286.p.287; "Zhongyang guanyu dao Sulian hongjun zhanglingqu jianli difang zhengquan he wuzhuang gei jinchaji fenju de zhishi(中央关于到苏联红军占领区建立地方政权和武装给晋察冀分区的指示)" 22 August 1945. Quoted from Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, pp.206-207. See also, Jin Chongji, "Jiaoliang", p.4.
- ²⁸ CCP center to local organizations, 22 August 1945, ZZWX Vol.15, pp.243-244.
- ²⁹ Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, p.207.
- ³⁰ Directive from the CCP CC to all bureaus and local CCP committees. 26 August, *Jiefang tongyi* (中共中央解放战争时期统一战线文件选编), pp.7-9
- ³¹ Cheng, *Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria*, p.78
- ³² The CCP center to JCJB, 29 August 1945, *PLAD*, pp.288-299. Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, p.209.
- ³³ Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World*, pp.209-210.
- ³⁴ CCP center to Jinchaji and Shandong, 29 August 1945, ZZWX, Vol.15, pp.257-258. See also Deng Ye, 2011,

pp.225-226.

³⁵ Jin Chongji, “Jiaoliang”, p.9.

³⁶ Li Yunchang, “Yi ji-re-liao budui tingjin dongbei” (Remembering the Hebei-Rehe-Liaoning forces’ advance into the Northeast, 忆冀热辽部队挺进东北), *Zhonggong dangshi ziliao*, Vol.15, pp. 57–58. See also Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria,” p.78.

³⁷ Li Yunchang, “Yi ji-re-liao budui tingjin dongbei,” p.12

³⁸ Li Yunchang, “Yi ji-re-liao budui tingjin dongbei,” pp.60–63. Zeng Kelin, *Zeng Kelin jiangjun zishu*(Memorial of General Zeng Keling, 曾克林将军自述), Liaoning renmin chubanshe, , pp.131-133. See also Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria,” pp.78-79.

³⁹ Zeng Kelin, *Zeng Kelin jiangjun zishu* ; Liu nianpu, Vol.1.p.490

⁴⁰ Zeng Kelin, *Rongma shenya de huiyi*(Remembering the military age, 戎马生涯的回忆), Jiefangjun chubanshe,1992,pp.209-225. Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism*,p.107; Yang Kuisong, *Zhonggong yu Mosike de guanxi* (中共与莫斯科的关系, The Chinese Communist Party’s relations with Moscow). Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi.1997, p. 533; Tanner, “Guerrilla, mobile, and base warfare in Communist military operations in Manchuria, 1945-1947”, pp.1189-1190.

⁴¹ Ibid, Yang Kuisong, *Zhongjian didai de geming*, p.472.Jin Chongji, “Jiaoliang”, p.5.

⁴² Niu Jun, *From Yan’an to the World*, p.210.

⁴³ CCP center to Shandong, 11 September 1945, ZZWX, Vol.15, pp.274-275. CCP center to Shandong, 11 September 1945, PLAD, p, 291.

⁴⁴ *Liu nianpu*, Vol.1, p.491.

⁴⁵ “Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu dongbei qingkuang ji yu sujun daibiao tanpan wenti de tongbao” (The statement of the CCP central on the Northeastern situation and the negotiation with the Soviet military representatives), 14 September 1945. Quoted from Niu Jun, *From Yan’an to the World*, p.211.

⁴⁶ *Zhu De Nianpu*, Vol.2, pp.1208-1209; Li Yunchang, “Yi ji-re-liao budui tingjin dongbei”, p.71; Liu Nianpu, p.491; Niu Jun, *From Yan’an to the World*, p.210,pp.211-p.212. See also, Yang Kuisong, *Zhongjian didai de geming*, pp.470-471; *Mao Zedong yu mosike de enen yuanyuan*, pp.189-192.

⁴⁷ CCP center to Shandong, 11 September 1945, ZZWX, Vol.15, pp.274-275.

⁴⁸ *Liu nianpu*, Vol.pp.491-492; *Liu Shaoqi zhuan*, p.523.

⁴⁹ *Liu nianpu*, Vol.p.494.

⁵⁰ CCP center to Chongqing, 17 September 1945, Chongqing to CCP center, 19 September 1945, ZZWX, Vol.15, pp.278-280, p.280; *Liu nianpu*, Vol.1, p.495.

⁵¹ The CCP center on the situation of the Northeast, 15 September 1945, PLAD, pp.293-294.

⁵² The CCP center to Chongqing, 18 September 1945, PLAD, p.297.Liaoshenzhanyi jinianguan eds., *Listen juezhuan* (The Decisive Battle of Listen, 辽沈决战), Vol.1, Renmin Press, 1992, p.207. Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria”, p.80. Liu Shaoqi zhuan, p.526.

⁵³ The Minutes of the Seventh Session of the Chongqing negotiations, 19 September 1945, ZZSC, Vol.7 (2), pp.86-88.

⁵⁴ *CCP center to its local organizations*, 15 September 1945, PLAD, p.292.

⁵⁵ Peng Zhen Nianpu, Vol.1, pp.298-299.

⁵⁶ Levine, *Anvil of Victory*, pp.107-121.

⁵⁷ CCP center to Chongqing, 17 September 1945, ZZWX, Vol.15, pp.278-280. Cheng, *Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria*, p.80.

⁵⁸ Tanner, “Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare in Communist Military Operations in Manchuria, 1945-1947”, pp.1191-1192. Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria,” p.80.

⁵⁹ Huang to the CCP center, 14 August 1945, PLAD, pp.299-301. Tanner, “Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare in Communist Military Operations in Manchuria, 1945-1947”, pp.1191-1192.

⁶⁰ *Mao Nianpu*, Vol.3, p.24.

⁶¹ CCP center to its Central China Bureau, 20 September 1945, PLAD, pp.814-815, see also, CCP center to its sub bureaus, 19 September 1945, PLAD, p.111.

⁶² Deng Ye.2003, p.312.

⁶³ Niu Jun, *From Yan’an to the World*, pp.220-222.

⁶⁴ *Liu Shaoqi nianpu*, Vol.1, pp.498-505. Jin Chongji, *Jiaoliang*, p.10; Tanner, “Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare”, p.1192. Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria,” p.80. Deng Ye,pp.229-231

⁶⁵ CCP center to sub-bureaus, 18 December 1945, PLAD, p.142. Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria,” p.80. Tanner, “Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare”, p.1193.

⁶⁶ Huang Kecheng, *Huang Kecheng huiyilu*(The Memorial of Huang Kecheng, 黄克诚回忆录), Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1989, p. 328. Tanner, “Guerrilla, mobile, and base warfare in Communist military operations in Manchuria, 1945-1947”, p.1192. Jin Chongji, *Jiaoliang*, p.7.

⁶⁷ Zhang Zhengrong, *Xuebai xuehong* , p.24. Levine, *Anvil of Victory*, p.103; Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria”, p.80.

⁶⁸ Tanner, “Guerrilla, mobile, and base warfare in Communist military operations in Manchuria, 1945-1947”, p.1192.

⁶⁹ See Deng Ye, 2011, pp.25-240; Tanner, “Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare”, pp.1192-1194. Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria”, p.80.

⁷⁰ *Peng Zhen Nianpu*, p.299

- ⁷¹ The CCP Center to Shandong Bureau, 20 September 1945, *PLAD*, p.298
- ⁷² *Liu Nianpu*. Vol.1, p.509-510, p.514; CCP center to Jinchaji and Jinsui sub bureaus, 16 October 1945, CCP center to Luochen and CCB, 19 October 1945, *MMW*, Vol.3, p.57, p.65;
- ⁷³ Peng Zhen zhuan, p.137.
- ⁷⁴ Tanner, “Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare,” pp.1192-1193.
- ⁷⁵ *Liu Nianpu*, Vol.1, p.510. *Pen Zhen Nianpu*, p.285.
- ⁷⁶ *Liu Nianpu*, Vol.1, pp.506-509; *Peng Zhen Nianpu*, pp. 303-304; CCP center to NEB, *ZZWX*, Vol.15, pp.229-230, 299-301, 309-310. Tanner, “Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare”, pp.1192-1103. Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid”, p.81
- ⁷⁷ CCP center to NEB, 28 September 1945, *ZZWX*, Vol.15, pp. 299-301. *Liu Nianpu*, Vol.1, pp.507-508; *Peng Zhen Nianpu*, p.307
- ⁷⁸ *Liu nianpu*, Vol, pp.504-5, Zhang Zhenglong, *Xuebai xuehong: Guo Gong dongbei da juezhan lishi zhenxiang* (雪白血红. Snow white, blood red: the true history of the Communists’ and Nationalists’ decisive struggle for the Northeast). Hong Kong: Dadi, 1991, pp.133–34., pp.32-39. Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria”, p.80.
- ⁷⁹ Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria”, p.81. Tanner, “Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare”, pp.1193-1195.
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- ⁸³ CCP center to NEB, 28 September 1945, *ZZWX*, Vol.15, pp.299-301. See also, Tanner, “Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare”, pp.1194-1195. and Zhang, *Xuebai xuehong*.
- ⁸⁴ *Peng Zhen Nianpu*, pp.304-308.
- ⁸⁵ *Peng Zhen Nianpu*, pp.308-310. Yang Kuisong, *Mao Zedong yu mosike de enenyuan*, pp.192-196.
- ⁸⁶ *Liu nianpu*, Vol.1 p.505.p.510; *Peng Zhen Nianpu*, p.294, p.310. Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria”, p.82.
- ⁸⁷ *Mao nianpu*, pp. 37-39, pp. 42-44; CCP center to NEB, 19 October 1945, 28 October, CCP center to local organizations, 20 October 1945, 1 November 1945, *ZZWX*, Vol. 15, pp.364-366, pp.370-372, pp. 388-389, pp. 394-396.
- ⁸⁸ Niu Jun, *From Yan’an to the World*, pp.215-216.
- ⁸⁹ Zhang, *Xuebai xuehong*, pp.89-90.
- ⁹⁰ Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, pp.86-88.
- ⁹¹ Niu Jun, *From Yan’an to the World*, p.216.
- ⁹² Yang Kuisong, *Zhongjian didai de geming*, pp.476-478; Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, pp.86-88.
- ⁹³ NEB to the CCP center, 3 October 1945 and 8 October; Liu Shaoqi to NEB, 4 October 1945, c.f., Yang, *Mao and Moscow*, pp.233-234; *Peng Zhen Nianpu*, pp.300-302; Yang Kuisong, *Zhongjian didai de geming*, pp. 475-479, *Mao Zedong yu mosike de enenyuan*, pp.193-195; Niu Jun, *From Yan’an to the World*, p.217.
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- ⁹⁵ CCP center to NEB, 19 October 1945, *ZZWX*, Vol.15, pp.364-366.
- ⁹⁶ Retransmission of Jiayi to Bing Ding regarding the report on continued talks with Zhang Shao, 22 October, 1945, CCA, cited from, Niu Jun, *From Yan’an to the World*, p.218. *Peng Zhen Nianpu*, pp.321-322.
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- ⁹⁸ Mao to Peng Zhen, 31 October 1945, *PLAD*, p.319.
- ⁹⁹ *Mao wenji*, Vol.4, pp. 54-58.
- ¹⁰⁰ CCP military center’s arrangement for December, 1 December 1945, *ZZWX*, Vol.15, pp.394-395.
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- ¹⁰⁴ Niu Jun, *From Yan’an to the World*, pp.221-222.
- ¹⁰⁵ CCP center’s Arrangement for November, 1 November 1945, *MMW*, Vol.3, pp. 107-10
- ¹⁰⁶ CCP center to its local organizations, 20 October 1945, *ZZWX*, Vol.15, pp.370-372; Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria,” p. 83.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*; *Peng Zhen nianpu*, pp.324-325.
- ¹⁰⁸ CCP center to the Northeast Bureau, 28 October 1945, in *ZZWX*, Vol.15, pp.388–89; Cheng, “Imagining China’s Madrid in Manchuria,” p. 84.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Mao nianpu*, Vol.3.p.43. Tanner, “Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare,” p, p.1198.
- ¹¹⁰ Harold M. Tanner, *Battle for Manchuria and the Fate of China: Siping 1946*, Bloomington, IN, USA: Indiana University Press, 2012. p 57.
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- Tanner, "Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare", pp.1196-1197.
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- ¹¹³ Zhang, Xuebai xuehong, p. 101; Liu Tong, *Juezhhan dongbei*, p.28; Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria,"p. 82.CCP military center to Huang Kecheng, 11 November 1945, *MMW*,Vol.3,p. 136. PLAD, p.332.
- ¹¹⁴ *Peng Nianpu*, pp.328-329. Liu Nianpu, Vol.1, p.524.
- ¹¹⁵ CCP center to Chongqing, 7 and 8 November 1945, *ZZWX*, Vol.15, pp.413-414; *Mao nianpu*, Vol.3.pp.46-47; Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria,"p. 83.
- ¹¹⁶ CCP center to Li Yunchang, 1 November 1945, CCP center to Huang Kecheng and Li Fuchun, 7 November 1945, CCP center to Li Sha, 14 November 1945, *MMW*, pp. 113-114, pp. 126-127, pp.139-41. Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria,"p. 83. Tanner, "Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare," p, 1196, p.1198. Zhang Zhenglong, *Xuebai xuehong*, p.103.
- ¹¹⁷ Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria,"p. 83.
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- ¹²¹ Huang Kecheng, *Huang Kecheng huiyilu*, pp.328-334. Tanner, "Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare," pp.1194-1195.
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- ¹²³ Zhang, *Xuebai xuehong*, p.106.Yang Guoqing and Bai Ren, *Luo Ronghuan zai dongbei jiefang zhanzheng zhong* (Luo Ronghuan in the War for the Liberation of the Northeast, 罗荣桓在东北解放战争中), Beijing: *Jiefangjun chubanshe*, 1986, p. 38; Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria,"pp.83-84. Tanner, "Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare", pp.1195-1196.
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- ¹²⁵ Huang Kecheng, "Cong subei dao dongbei," pp.63-64.
- ¹²⁶ CCP military center to Huang, 11 November 1945, *MMW*, Vol.3, pp.136-137; Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria,"pp. 83-84.
- ¹²⁷ CCP center to NEB, 10 November 1945, *ZZWX*, Vol.15, pp. 419-420.
- ¹²⁸ Liu Tong, *Juezhhan dongbei*, p.29.
- ¹²⁹ Mao to Lin and Peng, 15 November 1945, *MMW*, Vol.3, pp. 143-144. CCP military center to Huang Kecheng, 17 November 1945, PLAD, p.339; Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria,"p.84.
- ¹³⁰ Tanner, "Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare", p.1199; Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria,"p.84. Zhang, Xuebai xuehong, pp.112-114.
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- ²⁷¹ Cheng, *Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria*, p.98.
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- ²⁷³ *Zhou tanpan*, pp.348-349; pp.351-352; Mao nianpu, Vol.2, p.85; The New York Times, May 25, 1946, page10
- ²⁷⁴ Deng Ye 2011, pp.454-455.
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- ²⁷⁷ Liu Tong, *Juezhhan dongbei*, pp.75-76; Deng Ye 2011, pp.455-456. Zhongyang ribao, 25 May 1946.
- ²⁷⁸ Liu Tong, *Juezhhan dongbei*, pp.77-78. Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria,"p.95.
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- ²⁸⁰ Zhou tanpan, p.1996. Deng Ye, 2001, p.457; Cheng, "Imagining China's Madrid in Manchuria,"p.97.
- ²⁸¹ Tanner, "Guerrilla, Mobile, and Base Warfare", pp.1214-1218. See also, Levine, *Anvil of Victory*.
- ²⁸² Mao to Zhou, 19 May 1946, MMW, Vol.3, 228-232; Liu nianpu, Vol.2, pp.46-7. Liu Tong, *Juezhhan dongbei*, p.83, Yang Kuisong, *Guomindang de liangong yu fangong*, pp.642-643.
- ²⁸³ Liu Xinjun. "Three Important Issues in Research on the War of Liberation in Northeast China" *Lishi yanjiu*. No.12, 2011, pp.90-109
- ²⁸⁴ Tanner, *The Battle of Manchuria and the Fate of China, 1945-1946*, pp.207-214.
- ²⁸⁵ For instance, see Donald G. Gillin and Ramon H. Myers, "Introduction," in Gillin and Myers, eds., *Last Chance in Manchuria: The Diary of Chang Kiangau*(Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1989), pp.1-58.
- ²⁸⁶ Yang Kuisong, "1946 nian guogong siping zhizhang ji muhou", pp.132-152.
- ²⁸⁷ See Arthur Waldron, "China Without Tears: If Chiang Kai-shek Hadn't Gambled in 1946," pp.377-392. See also, Jiang Yongjing and Liu Weikai, *Jiang Jieshi yu Guogong hezhang*, pp.82-101.
- ²⁸⁸ *Liaosheng juezhhan*, Vol.1, p.228.
- ²⁸⁹ As Kissinger argued in his new book *On China*, Chinese leaders' actions in the Taiwan Strait Crises of 1954-58, the Sino-Indian border clash of 1962, the conflict with the Soviets along the Ussuri River in 1969-71, and the Sino-Vietnam War of 1979 all had the same feature. Henry Kissinger, *On China*, Penguin Press, 2011.
- ²⁹⁰ Huang Kecheng to Mao, 28 May 1946, *PLAD*, pp.476-477.

Conclusion

Broken only by a brief truce, the clash in Manchuria gradually spread to the north and central China, as Mao determined to divert the KMT armies from their offensives in the northeast while the Nationalists tried to besiege and eliminate Li Xiannian and Wang Zheng's troops in the Central Plain that posed direct threat to the heartland of their control areas. After ten months of off-and-on negotiations, a full-scale civil war finally broke out in June 1946.¹

At the initial stage of the clash between the two parties, the KMT showed its military superiority in most battles while the CCP suffered setbacks repeatedly. In the autumn of 1946, the Nationalists seemed to be winning. Against such a background, the Nationalists had the National Congress convened in November 1946, while the CCP and the Democratic League refused to participate. The congress finally passed a constitution and the Nationalists claimed the end of tutelage rule. Nonetheless, the CCP refused to recognize it. Thus, although achieving some military success, the KMT failed to impose its political settlement upon the CCP as Chiang once expected.² George Marshall stayed in China until January 1947, but the American general failed to mediate any more agreements as he had succeeded in the first two months of 1946. The CCP delegation finally left Nanjing in March 1947 and the negotiations between the two parties totally broke down. The Nationalist government finally declared "the Counter-insurgency(戡乱) War" against the Communists in July 1947.³

In mid-1947, after months of base area construction, Lin Biao's troops raised their counterattacks in Manchuria, and the military situation slowly improved for the CCP in north China. Through a series of massive campaigns in the fall and winter of 1948, the Communists broke the back of the Nationalist Army.⁴ Mao and his colleagues were just as determined as the KMT to continue their military contest to unite China. They refused to consider a separate peace proposed by Soviet officials in early 1949 that would leave China divided between the KMT and CCP. The People's

Liberation Army crossed the Yangtze River and conquered Nanjing in April 1949. At the end of the year, the Communists finally unified the country's mainland part while the Nationalists retreated to Taiwan. ⁵

With the Communists having gained control of most of the mainland China, they organized a “new” Political Consultative Conference in September 1949, inviting delegates from various parties to attend and discuss the establishment of a new state. In effect, the conference served as a constitutional convention. It finally approved the Common Program, which served as the de facto Constitution of the new state for the next five years and it elected the first government of the People's Republic of China.

After its foundation in October 1949, the new regime decided to “lean to one side” and allied with the Soviets. The Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance was signed on February 14, 1950, which marked the formal birth of the Sino-Soviet alliance. Meanwhile, in his negotiations with Mao and Zhou, Stalin imposed a “supplementary agreement” upon the new leaders of China that prohibited other countries from entering Manchuria and Xinjiang. Months later, the PRC was dragged into a three-year military contest against the United States in the Korean War. During and after the war, the Soviet Union supplied economic, financial, and military assistance to the PRC on a grand scale, including assisting the CCP to build Manchuria into the vital industrial base of the new state. These developments confirmed the spread of the Cold War to East Asia and determined the long-term pattern of confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union in the region.⁶

The Legacy of Anti-Japanese War

The end of the Second World War thoroughly reshaped the global geopolitical balance and changed the political conditions of many countries. For the Chinese case, it presented the unprecedented opportunity for the CCP's rapid ascendance. The demise of the Japanese Empire left a huge political vacuum in China while the Soviets occupied Manchuria in August 1945. The significance of all these events should not

be overlooked. On the other hand, acknowledging the contribution of the CCP to the victory over the Japanese and trying to forestall a civil war in China, the U.S. government made serious efforts to negotiate a resolution of China's domestic conflicts. These efforts helped to improve the political and military positions of the CCP, legitimizing it as a major player in Chinese politics.

The most important change that Sino-Japanese war brought, however, was the fact that it thoroughly reset the domestic power balance in China. As in many other countries, Communist seizure of state power became possible only after the total state breakdown and societal disorganization caused by the disastrous total war. After the eight years of Anti-Japanese war, the CCP became a major national force with large, effective, and battle-hardened armies. Meanwhile, massive Japanese offensives such as the Ichigo operation destroyed the strength and morale of the Nationalist troops. Despite the fact that the KMT remained a dominant political force (and its nominal military force even increased), it suffered a great loss of public confidence and political legitimacy. Most importantly, Chiang's regime lost most of its influence at the local level, particularly in the countryside.⁷ This power shift made the radical agrarian reform advocated by the Communists possible on a much larger scale. Meanwhile, the urban population, distressed by the KMT's dictatorship and disastrous economic policies, refused to support the government and sided with the CCP's efforts to dismantle its opponent's one-party rule.⁸

The Politics of Foreign-Domestic Linkage

As this study revealed above, the diplomatic history of the Chinese Civil War was not an ideological clash along Cold War lines but rather a tale of the two Chinese parties, on the one hand, striving to preserve and expand their own power base through manipulating foreign intervention, while the foreign powers, on the other hand, sought to promote their own interests and ideology in China.

The Nationalist government was neither victim of an American "loss of China" conspiracy, nor was it a sincerely pro-American Cold War ally that the China Lobby

advertised. As Brian Murray revealed, from 1944 to 1949, the KMT repeatedly refused to accept various pieces of advice on military and economic reforms proposed by the Americans. Meanwhile, it maintained cordial relations with the Soviets up until the final Communist victory in China. The KMT refused to accept the Communists as partners in a coalition government and then moved most of its elite troops into Manchuria against the warning of Marshall and Wedemeyer. Even after the breakdown of the economic cooperation negotiations in 1946, the Nationalist leaders continued their secret negotiations with the Soviets for possible assistance. They never gave up their efforts to win Soviet good-will to defeat the CCP. In fact, the KMT's foreign policy during the Civil War was based on Chiang Kai-shek's China's Destiny thesis rather than a pro-American stance in the Sino-American Cold War. At the end, the KMT leaders succeeded in maintaining their independence of action while kept the Chinese Communists diplomatically isolated.⁹

Given Chiang's record of diplomatic success, an obvious paradox emerges. If Chiang was substantially successful in achieving domestic accomplishments, why did his regime collapse so rapidly? This dissertation suggests that the rising tide of Chinese nationalism and the conservative character of Chiang's regime made the Generalissimo fail to find a way to translate his diplomatic successes into an organized mass base.

Once countries like China gained independence after a long-term struggle, its people cherished newly gained sovereignty, and nationalism became the key component of regime legitimacy. The history of foreign intervention in China since the Opium War in general and the decade of resistance against Japan in particular created a political atmosphere wherein the unity of "all under heaven" under Chinese sovereignty was of even to the general public. Nationalism had become so powerful a force in wartime and immediate post-war China that, when they were dealing with their foreign partners, both the KMT and the CCP had to respect this public mood, which simply would no longer tolerate any perceived violations of China's national sovereignty.¹⁰

Nonetheless, the advancement of the partisan interests of the two parties was

not necessarily secondary. For instance, both parties had been using the Soviet presence in Manchuria to facilitate their own military advance into the northeast. Both parties made some concessions to win their foreign counterparts' good will. Neither party wanted to endorse the nationwide anti-Soviet demonstrations in February 1946. The KMT censored news of anti-Soviet demonstrations and the CCP distanced itself from the anti-foreign character of the protests.

However, compared with the CCP, the KMT faced even more constraints. For the Nationalist government, to contain the expansion of the CCP it needed the assistance of the Soviets. To win the good-will of the Soviets they had to make some concessions that the Chinese public would find difficult to tolerate. Chiang faced a serious dilemma. On the one hand, as Westad suggested, keeping Stalin at bay would require strong American support, but inviting U.S involvement in discouraging Soviet intervention would make it difficult for Chiang to convince Stalin that he was pursuing a friendly, increasingly neutral foreign policy toward the U.S.S.R. To that extent, the Generalissimo's mission impossible was to make a balance of these considerations.¹¹ On the other hand, his regime still enjoyed the status of the sole legal representatives of the Chinese nation on the international stage, thus it naturally had to shoulder an increasing burden of public dissent for diplomatic "failure". However, by granting both the Soviets and Americans some special installations and rights, the station of troops in Manchuria and in China proper for instance, that was in the vital interests of his regime, Chiang would put himself in the position of accepting new "national humiliation" after years of supreme national effort. From a realistic standpoint, facing the pressure both from the international and domestic arena, it is hard to see how Chiang could have done better. Yet the nationalist expectations of the Chinese people were too great, thus Chiang was severely constrained and condemned by outraged nationalist sentiment, and his regime lost both moral and diplomatic advantage against the Communists.¹²

Moreover, the KMT was not a genuinely revolutionary party as its leaders claimed that could initiate necessary reform. Chiang's style of control rested not on mass mobilization and mass participation, but on maneuvering and bargaining with

various elites and he was really a master in this field. However, aside from some of his armies, the Generalissimo had never developed organizational forms to harness and direct the popular support generated by his diplomatic achievements during the Second World War. While the CCP built numerous mass associations designed to mobilize public participation and channel the people's nationalistic enthusiasm, Chiang and followers either feared or did not understand such populist mechanisms.

This trend was reinforced by the decay of the Nationalist party. After monopolizing national power for years, the KMT turned out to be a party without solid social foundation, representing neither working classes nor merchants and capitalists, nor even the bureaucratic group as a whole, but rather only the interests of a few top elites. The party was without belief and doctrine, while lacked organization and coherency. As the ruling party, the Nationalists failed to restore order and solve people's everyday concerns after the end of the anti-Japanese war, and thus lost their sympathy and support. The political ineffectiveness of the Nationalist regime was something neither military assistance nor diplomatic support could change. ¹³

The fierce struggle inside the party made things even worse. At the end of the Anti-Japanese war, the Nationalist government was a shifting collection of military commanders, bureaucratic factions, and economic groupings, some closely allied with Chiang, some working to thwart him, others moving in between, and all taking his time to balance, mollify, or intimidate. The Generalissimo was not a dictator in name only, however his power was also limited because he had to recognize all factions with the KMT, and some outside, with the result that he served as a balance wheel and had to resort to compromise to keep a semblance of unity. Chiang could not leave from his old supporters to initiate reform, even though he knew very well that many were both unscrupulous and incompetent.

Chiang's private consideration only made things worse. Chiang met the serious challenge of the postwar takeover with a policy of extending the control of his close followers while preventing other KMT elites (some of whom were more capable) from gaining a "fair" share of power and influence. He also took drastic measures to undercut the power of provincial leaders. Strong resentment was thus aroused against

Chiang's discriminatory policies among the provincial factions and even among some factions that were formerly loyal to him.

All of these factors prevented Chiang from making necessary diplomatic and domestic adjustments that might prevent a civil war and his party's fatal demise.¹⁴ Influential intellectuals and political activists for a long time advocated, while the American officials once tried to promote, political reforms such as a coalition government in China to put an end to the KMT's one-party rule and solve the CCP problem. The corruption and incompetence of their party, however, made the Nationalist leaders fear that they were destined to lose power after the establishment of a genuinely democratic institution. Addicted to their power and privileges, the KMT leaders were determined to maintain the one-party rule and obstructed political reforms promised by the Political Consultative Conference, which dashed the hope of a political settlement of its conflict with the Communists. The Nationalist leaders apparently expected that once they broke the CCP's military power, they would bring Yan'an to their knees. Chiang and his followers thus refused to consider the possibility of a political settlement but placed their hopes exclusively on a successful military campaign that would impose their political conditions upon the CCP.

Thus, domestic factors played a more important role in the formulation of the KMT's postwar political and military strategy. The fundamental problem of the paradigm of Westad is its exaggeration of the Cold War's influence on Chinese politics. The start of the Cold War in Europe did not change the fact that both the Soviets and the Americans did not want to be entangled in a civil war in China, which set limits on their involvement in China. Both countries tried to induce the CCP and the KMT to work toward a political settlement. However, their mediation efforts were also disturbed by their own private ideas, interests, and strategies in China. Confronted by Chiang and Mao, whose strategies comprised deliberate foreign-linkage maneuvering, neither Soviet nor American leaders faced up to the complicated reality. At the end, their intervention and mediation did not bring an end to the KMT-CCP conflict as they wished, but made it more difficult for the two

Chinese parties to reach an agreement through political bargaining.

Marshall's mediation failed because the KMT leaders' paramount concern was the survival of their regime and the preservation of their own privileges. Nonetheless, the presence of Marshall helped to promote some political and military agreements that the KMT conservatives would never accept, while the backlash of the right-wing Nationalist severely poisoned the political atmosphere. Meanwhile, its growing tension with Moscow also gave Washington a strong impetus to encourage the KMT to resist Soviets demands in Manchuria. As often pointed out, the U.S. decision to continue military aid to Chiang and help him transport troops into Manchuria, in spite of his resistance to political reform, significantly reduced Marshall's political leverage against Chongqing.¹⁵ For the Generalissimo, granting political reform that Marshall helped to promote was not in his party's interests while his troops' advance in Manchuria would not offend the Americans. They thus saw no military or diplomatic imperative for accommodation.

In retrospect, as Tang Tsou suggested, preventing a civil war in China, the Americans should have given aid to Chongqing only piece by piece. It should have been accompanied by clear indications that the United States expected genuine reform and a settlement of internal differences as a prerequisite for the extension of assistance.¹⁶ However, the actual U.S policy, instead of strengthening the position of liberal elements in China by pushing for reforms and agreement, merely strengthened the control of reactionary elements of the KMT. The great policy inconsistency of the U.S. government made Chiang Kai-shek ignore Marshall's mediation and instead embark upon a military campaign to wipe out his domestic opponents, which his decayed regime turned out to be too weak to sustain.

The Soviet leaders were much less interested than Washington in resolving China's internal political problems. Instead, when the Soviets intervened, they paid more attention to promoting their strategic interests in China, especially in Manchuria and Xinjiang. In contrary to the account of Westad, this study suggests that Stalin had a consistent strategy in China, the goal of which was to restore Tsarist privileges and ensure his country's security. Thus, Stalin viewed the landing of U.S. troops in

northern China and the American's transportation of the Nationalist troops to the northeast as direct challenges to the Soviet presence in Manchuria and insisted on full American withdrawal as the price for the retreat of the Soviet Red Army.¹⁷

Stalin did not expect the CCP to be a serious contender for national power in China. Instead, he wanted to use the Chinese Communists as a tool to protect and expand Soviet interests in China. By mid-September 1945, only after the CCP troops advanced into the northeast without Soviet permission, Stalin recognized that he could use the CCP presence in the northeast as a bargaining chip to increase the price that Chongqing should pay for Soviet withdrawal and ensure a favorable arrangement in Manchuria. In other words, the Soviet acceptance of and assistance to the CCP presence in Manchuria signaled that Stalin expected further concessions from Chiang beyond August agreements in Moscow. However, the "slow" deployment and poor performance of the CCP troops frustrated him. Against diplomatic pressure from Washington and Chongqing, the Soviets retreated and the Red Army threw the CCP administration out of the cities in Manchuria.

Meanwhile, in order to maintain and expand their privileges in Manchuria, the Soviets tried to impose an economic cooperation agreement upon Chongqing. Moscow also advised Mao again to seek political compromise with Chiang. Against strong opposition from the Chinese public and KMT conservatives, however, it was impossible for Chiang Kai-shek to make further concessions to the Soviets. Stalin's blackmail failed, and he recognized that his continued occupation of the northeast would only increase American and Chinese suspicions of Soviet motives. When the Red Army withdrew, however, to preserve as much of their interest in the northeast as possible, the Soviets resumed and expanded their assistance to the CCP. Besides providing materials, they helped the CCP to occupy many cities, which in fact left their Chinese comrades in control of northern Manchuria. All of these actions encouraged an aggressive military strategy by the CCP in Manchuria, which resulted in the final showdown between the two Chinese parties in the northeast.

For many years, the grassroots revolution was the dominant theme of CCP

history.¹⁸ However, several other elements need to be included to construct a full interpretative framework for the success of the CCP. As more and more recent contributions to CCP history have pointed out, the party's great flexibility and strong ability to manipulate political affairs, both at the national and at the local level, was crucial to its success against the KMT.¹⁹ The CCP leaders were ardent believers in Marxism-Leninism that offered them an intellectual framework for interpreting various social and political phenomena both at home and abroad. However, the party's traumatic experience in the 1920s and the 1930s also made its leaders wise enough to be pragmatic. The CCP's new ideology of Maoism itself was a product of pragmatism created to conduct the Chinese revolution according to China's particular "situation". Under Mao's leadership, the party learned how to balance short-term objectives and long-range goals. It was realistic and flexible in altering its short-term policy, while always maintaining its ideological direction. The CCP never gave up its ultimate revolutionary commitment and the goal of seizing national power. However, the party was also capable of being flexible and realistic in meeting its current needs, to take advantages of the contradictions and conflicts among different social forces in China, which enabled the party to survive and develop even in the toughest circumstances. In a word, the revolutionary strategy of the CCP was dualistic in nature, which allowed it to be very flexible as well as radical.²⁰

Similarly, the Chinese Communists developed a balanced foreign policy, which combined short-term strategies within the framework of the united front and long-range pursuits determined by the party's ideological orientation. The CCP's revolutionary diplomacy thus had its own rationale, which cannot be explained simply by its ideological affiliation or the limits and opportunities of specific situations. For instance, in the diplomatic arena, Mao repeatedly called for self-reliance. However, this did not mean a renunciation of external assistance. Mao repeatedly highlighted the party's close relations with the Soviets, but he never refused to deal with the Americans. Mao recognized that the power of the U.S. and the Soviet Union was too great to permit a policy of blind autarky. The Chairman was pragmatic, but also aggressive, intent upon overthrowing the KMT, but careful in challenging the big

powers.²¹

The Yan'an-Moscow relations were not foreign relations per se, at least in the eyes of the Chinese Communists. Instead, the Soviets were their tutors and comrades, and it was a natural alignment between them.²² Certainly, Mao had less to offer Stalin than did Chiang. However, to promote its interests in China, Moscow needed the CCP to accommodate them, especially when Chiang's willingness to offer compromise was severely constrained by domestic opposition and American intervention. Making use of Moscow's growing suspicions against the Nationalists and the Americans, the CCP actively expanded its own power. With the Red Army's covert encouragement and support, which was based on the Soviets' self-interest, the CCP took Manchuria as its most important strategic base after the autumn of 1945. The significance of this development is difficult to be over-evaluated.

Meanwhile, the CCP extended its united front strategy to deal with the Americans. It tried to manipulate the U.S.-Chiang discrepancies in order to "neutralize" the U.S. in the KMT-CCP struggle, and take advantage of the political pressures of the Americans upon the Nationalists. The CCP's united front techniques, namely, dividing the KMT and the U.S., and differentiating between groups within the U.S. ruling class, in order to neutralize the Americans as well as possible, continued even throughout the latter half of the 1940s, although the Communists' deep-seated suspicion of U.S. intentions never eased.²³

Thus, the Chinese Communists fluctuated between two options in 1944-1946. On the one hand, Yan'an showed its acceptance of peaceful cooperation with the KMT and with this framework attempted to drive a wedge between Washington and Chongqing. On the other hand, the CCP tried to secure Soviet support against United States' support of the KMT regime. The success of the first strategy depended to a considerable degree on the manipulation of American fears of Soviet expansion in China while the success of the second depended on the manipulation of Soviet fears of the United States. Twists and turns in between, the Communists shifted this way and that, sometimes trying to placate both powers and win their support while sometimes trying to divide Moscow and Washington along the line of the conflict in

China. In latter half of 1946, when a full-scale civil war became reality, Mao devised a new theory of an intermediate zone(中间地带), which suggests that in between the two giant powers existed a vast “intermediate zone” mainly composed of “oppressed” non-Western countries, including China, which were pictured as struggling for freedom from American imperialism. It was this struggle in the intermediate zone, in the Communist conception, rather than the Cold War, that provided the immediate setting for the Chinese civil war and justified the strategy of an all-out offensive against the forces of Chiang Kai-shek.²⁴

The Domestic Bargaining Failure

Unlike former studies, to explore the origins of the Chinese Civil War, we suggest that it is better to understand the CCP-KMT clash as a bargaining process. In Republican China, substantial political changes, in most cases, were based on the balance of military power. Both the KMT and CCP leaders believed that only the fighting capability of their parties would secure their power position. The relative military balance was not the only, but certainly the most important, component in their broader strategic calculation.

Like Chiang, Mao never saw the war with Japan as a simple matter of national defense. Instead, the CCP leader envisioned a war within which the revolutionary forces would grow substantially, while the old order would inevitably decay. A revolutionary victory would be pursued after the victory in the war of national resistance. In the last phase of the Pacific War, the decline of the Nationalists, the collapse of the Japanese, and the entry of the Soviets into China all created opportunities for military expansion which would bring quick and hard gains for Yan'an, mostly at the expense of its rivals. The CCP leaders even once expected that a power transition would come soon. Therefore, it was natural for the CCP, with its enhanced power, to change its policy to a more assertive direction. Whereas the CCP

negotiated and fought for a new status in the postwar political system with redefined interests, the KMT and the foreign powers needed to adjust their old political practices.

However, during their negotiations with the Communists, the KMT leaders stubbornly insisted upon the CCP's recognition of their regime as the sovereign power and tried by every means to maintain its one-party rule. They consistently demanded subordination of Communist administrative and military organizations to the order of the Nationalist government. Rejecting these demands as incompatible with their aspiration for survival and power, however, the Communists had countered with proposals for the abolition of the KMT one-party government, the establishment in its stead of a "democratic coalition government", the creation of a "united high command", and the formation of an "inter-party conference". In short, the Communists justified their refusal to relinquish their armed forces before the establishment of a genuine coalition government.

The conflict between the two sides during their various rounds of negotiations was difficult to settle. On the one hand, to the CCP, the revolution in China took the form of armed struggle, in which the party-controlled armed forces and rural base areas were the two vital instruments for achieving its ultimate goal. Therefore, the preservation and the development of the armed forces and the base areas determined the direction of the CCP's policy, while the practice of united front and foreign policy often directly served the purpose of expansion of the troops and the base areas.

On the other hand, the KMT did not want the CCP as a junior partner any more than the CCP was willing to recognize the KMT's political tutelage. In fact, neither party would allow the other to assume the role of "parent of the people". Both agreed that only their party could assume the role of national leader. Thus, neither was willing to, nor supposed it was even possible to, share power with the other. It was a zero-sum game, which left no space for further bargaining. Each side saw the other's gain as its loss and its gain as the other's loss. Although difficulties the two parties confronted were substantially different, components of their strategies were strikingly similar. Their attempt to achieve a unilateral advantage through military victory was

among the most important causes of the failure to prevent the crisis or to manage it before it escalated to a confrontation.

Thus, years of bargaining and negotiations achieved no tangible results. Leaders of both parties saw little reason to make concessions. Mao and his comrades strongly believed that to secure peace and the party's power position, one needed military strength, and the resolution to use it. The CCP could not give up its forces to get a compromise with the Generalissimo. Instead, the party had to continue to strengthen its armed forces and increase its controlled territory. Negotiations with the KMT for political reforms, which might give the party a greater saying in national political affairs, promised no comparable rewards for them. The CCP leaders had concluded that only by showing their resolve and strength through a few decisive battles could they deter the KMT from further aggression. Crisis creation and preemptive attacks were thus given great credit. The CCP's preference for an aggressive propaganda profile and offensive military strategy thus played an important role in the escalation of the conflict between the two parties.

Concluding Remarks

In sum, this dissertation suggests that the intervention of the Great Powers played a complicated role in the escalation process of the Chinese Civil War. They finally prolonged the process but failed to put an end to it. What determined the general direction of historical development was the two Chinese parties' strong commitment to the struggle for sovereign power in China. Drawing on new evidence, the dissertation advances an interpretation of the impact of foreign interventions on domestic bargaining, which is more comprehensive than the conventional wisdom.

In struggling for control of China, both the KMT and the CCP realized that external influence could be very important in determining the course, if not the outcome, of the Civil War, as it had been during the war against Japan. Both the CCP and the KMT hoped that Great Power intervention would further their own political

goals. They also believed that the influence of foreign powers and pressure from the domestic public would prevent a general civil war in China. However, none of these shifted their commitment to the struggle for the monopoly of power in China and the preference of military means and offensive strategy.

The United States and the Soviet Union significantly underestimated the intensity of the Chinese leaders' motivation to preserve their own political interests while resolving political problems through military means. In many occasions, Soviet and American leaders did not think through the consequences of their decisions. Washington did not consider carefully just how much military aid would permit the KMT to finish its takeover but would not provoke the CCP and the Soviets. Moscow failed to think through how much aid was necessary to permit the CCP to win a limited victory in Manchuria without pushing it into an uncompromising position. To a certain extent, Soviet and American leaders were naive as well in their expectation that aids to their allies would enhance their control. Moreover, the emerging rivalry between the two made it impossible for them to send consistent and powerful signal to Chinese politicians thus changed the latter's strategic calculation.

Meanwhile, both Nationalists and Communists were right in assuming that the Cold War was not of immediate relevance to China. American-Soviet rivalries and antagonism were most evident in other countries as Iran, Greece, and Turkey, where the United States was steadily replacing Britain as the main power in contention with Russia, but not China. Both powers refrained from involving themselves too deeply in Chinese affairs. After 1947, moreover, Western Europe became the major concern of American policy, whereas the Soviets responded by consolidating their control over Eastern Europe. In such a situation, East Asia and China remained mostly in the background.

The two Great Powers had also come to appreciate the limits of their ability to control events in China. In the first place, both of them recognized that China was too big to control after witnessing the Japanese quagmire in China and, more importantly, their own experiences in China. Unlike small states, like Greece or Korea, the costs involved in trying to occupy, divide, or control China were simply too high for either

the Soviet Union or the United States to contemplate. On the other hand, the resistance of the Chinese sides, both from the KMT and CCP, to Soviet-American pressure played an important role in the superpowers' cost-benefits analysis. China had its own normative tradition of unity rather than division. The assumption that there should be one emperor on earth as one father in a family and only one sun in heaven is deeply embedded in Chinese language and Chinese political thought. This deeply embedded hierarchy assumption leads to a belief that hegemony over the entire Chinese world is a necessary aim of any Chinese political forces, regardless of ideology or ethnicity. While the superpowers preferred to settle the KMT-CCP conflict by a political division of power, the Chinese preferred a military contest for the "mandate of heaven" that would unite China under one political order.

All in all, this dissertation agrees that foreign powers held great influence while the foreign policies of the KMT and the CCP did play a crucial role in the two parties' strategies before and after the end of the Sino-Japanese War. However, the fact that escalation of the conflict was influenced by the global Cold War does not mean that the civil war in China should be seen through a Cold War lens. To evaluate adequately the influence of foreign powers imposed in Chinese political development properly, we must have a good understanding of the Chinese domestic political dynamics first.

Thus, a uniquely Cold War lens might distort rather than explain the patterns of conflict in the third world. As SteinTønnesson suggested recently, it would make more sense to explore how Asia, Africa, and Latin America were affected by the Cold War than to redefine these conflicts as the local reflection of the global competition between the Soviets and Americans. More attention should be paid to the agency of local forces. The post-World War II conflict in Asia and Africa followed from a long period of warfare that had as much to do with the contradictions inherent in Asia and Africa as with the struggle between the global superpowers. Neither capitalism nor socialism was imposed on Asia, Africa, or Latin America. They were embraced by rival local forces. The history of the conflicts among these groups involved many different actors and a range of problems. For Asians and Africans, it might be preferable to document their struggles not primarily as "Cold War," but rather as

rivals, sometimes even complementary, attempted to meet the challenges of modernity and state-building. There were several reasons why these struggles turned out to be so bloody, of which the Cold War was just one.²⁵

Meanwhile, the origins of civil wars and the possible role of foreign actors' intervention in them have become a more and more intriguing topic for political scientists. The analysis here is historical but has important implications for contemporary world politics. Although the Chinese Civil War is over, its "lessons" survive. Through investigating the escalation process of the civil war in China, we might learn some lessons that will be applicable to the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict beyond the Cold War.

¹ Wang Chaoguang, *Zhongguo minyun de juezhan*, pp.93-96.

² Ibid, pp.115-116.

³ ZZSC, Vol.7 (2), pp.922-927.

⁴ Liu Tong, *Dongbei jiefan zhanzheng jishi*. Zhang Zhengrong, *Xuebai xuehong*.

⁵ See Westad, *Decisive Encounters*.

⁶ Odd Arne Westad eds, *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963*, Stanford University Press, 1999. Chen Jian, *China's road to the Korean War : the making of the Sino-American confrontation*, Columbia University Press, 2004.

⁷ Chi Hsi-sheng, *Nationalist China at War*.

⁸ Eastman, *Seeds of Destructions*. Susan Pepper, *Chinese Civil War*.

⁹ See, Brian Joseph Murray, *Western versus Chinese realism: Soviet-American diplomacy and the Chinese Civil War, 1945-1950*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1995.

¹⁰ Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations*, Hunt, *Genesis of Chinese Communists Foreign Policy*.

¹¹ Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*.

¹² Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937-1945*, p 272.

¹³ Wang Qisheng, *Dangyuan, dangquan yu dangzheng*, *Zhongguo shehuikexue chubanshe*, 2006. Tang Tsou, *American Failure in China*, pp.324-325.

¹⁴ See, Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!* , pp.373-374.

¹⁵ Tang Tsou, *American's Failure in China*; Niu Jun, *From Hurley to Marshall*.

¹⁶ Tang Tsou, *American's Failure in China*.

¹⁷ Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*; Zhang Zhengjiang, *Lenzhan yu neizhan*.

¹⁸ See, Odoric Y.K. Wou., *Mobilizing the Masses : Building Revolution in Henan* (Stanford, Calif. : Stanford University Press, 1994); Gregor Benton, *Mountain Fires : The Red Army's Three-Year War in South China, 1934-1938* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1992) Steven I. Levine, *Anvil of Victory : the Communist Revolution in Manchuria, 1945-1948* (New York : Columbia University Press, 1987) ;Yung-fa Chen, *Making revolution : The Communist Movement in Eastern and Central China, 1937-1945* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1986) .

¹⁹ See Yang Kuisong, Wang Qisheng and others' work mentioned above.

²⁰ Michael Sheng, *Maoist Dualism and Chinese Communist Foreign Relations, 1935-1949*. Ph.D. dissertation. York University. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Services, 1994.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Yang Kuisong, *Zhongjian didai*; Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism*.

²³ Niu Jun, *From Yan 'an to the World*.

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