MAO'S
ROAD TO POWER
Revolutionary Writings
1912-1949

Stuart R. Schram, Editor
Nancy J. Hodes, Associate Editor
Volume III
From the Jinggangshan to the
Establishment of the Jiangxi Soviets
July 1927-December 1930

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Contents

Acknowledgments xiii
General Introduction: Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution, 1912–1949 xv
Introduction: The Writings of Mao Zedong, 1927–1930 xx
Note on Sources and Conventions lxxvii
About the Maps lxxiv
Maps lxxv–lxxvi

1927
The Hunan Problem (July 4) 5
The Overall Tactics of the Peasant Movement at Present (July 20) 13
Declaration of Members of the Central Committee (August 1) 20
General Guidelines of the Hunan Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on the Movement in Southern Hunan (August 1) 27
Remarks on the Report of the Representative of the International at the August 7 Emergency Conference (August 7) 29
Mao Zedong’s Statement Regarding the Resolution on the Struggles of the Peasants (August 7) 32
Hunan Is Important (August 9) 33
Views Expressed at the First Meeting of the Hunan Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (August 18) 35
Report of the Hunan Provincial Committee to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (August 19) 37
A Letter from Hunan to the Central Committee (August 20) 39
Letter from the Hunan Provincial Party Committee (August 30) 41
Autumn Harvest Uprising (n.d.) 43
Report on Arrival at Anyuan (September) 44

1928
Report to the Jiangxi Provincial Party Committee and to the Party Central Committee (May 2) 49
A Report on the Current Status of the Red Army (June 16) 53
Report to the Hunan Provincial Committee by the Special Committee of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area and the Army Committee of the Fourth Red Army of the Chinese Communist Party (July 4) 55
Letter of the Special Committee of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area to the Hunan Provincial Committee (August) 59
Jinggangshan (Autumn) 61
Draft Resolution of the Second Congress of Xian Party Organizations in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area (October 5) 62
Report of the Jinggangshan Front Committee to the Central Committee (November 25) 80
Resolutions of the Sixth Congress of Party Representatives from the Fourth Red Army (December 6) 122
Jinggangshan Land Law (December) 128

1929
Manifesto of the Communist Party (January) 133
Notice Issued by the Fourth Army Headquarters of the Red Army (January) 136
An Official Fund-Raising Letter (February 13) 139
Notice to Merchants and Intellectuals (March 16) 140
A Letter to Our Brother Soldiers Throughout the Country (March 16) 143
Letter from the Fourth Red Army Front Committee to the Central Committee (March 20) 147
A Letter from the Front Committee to the Central Committee (April 5) 153
Order of the Military Department of the Fourth Army (April 10) 162
[Xingguo Xian] Land Law (April) 163
Report of Mao Zedong, Secretary of the Front Committee of the Fourth Red Army, to the Central Committee (June 1) 166
Proclamation of the Fourth Red Army Headquarters and Political Department (June) 175
Letter to Lin Biao (June 14) 177
The War between Chiang Kaishek and the Guangxi Warlords (Autumn) 190
Double Ninth Festival (October) 191
Letter to Li Lisan (November 28) 192

To the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (November 28) 194
Draft Resolution of the Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in the Fourth Red Army (December) 195

1930
New Year’s Day (January) 233
Letter to Comrade Lin Biao (January 5) 234
Letter from the Fourth Army of the Chinese Red Army (the Red Army of Zhu and Mao) to the Soldiers of the Guomindang Army (January) 247
Land Law (February 7) 256
On Occupying Ji’an and Establishing a Jiangxi Soviet Government (February 14) 261
Conclusion of the Joint Conference and Announcement of the Establishment of the Front Committee (February 16) 268
The Road to Guangchang (February) 272
The Significance of Dividing the Troops to Win over the Popular Masses, and Our Line (March 18) 273
Directive on Lessons to Be Derived from the First Attack on Ganzhou (March 19) 280
Order on Rectifying Military Bearing and Discipline (March 21) 283
Order on the Testing of Officers and Soldiers (March 29) 285
Directive on Enlisting and Educating New Recruits (March 29) 289
Directive on Building up Physical Strength and Improving Shooting Skills (April) 291
Guidelines for the Work of Propaganda Personnel (April 26) 293
Xunwu Investigation (May) 296
Oppose Bookism (May) 419
Guidelines of the Fourth Red Army for Political Work at All Levels (June 5) 427
On the Problem of the Rich Peasants (June) 433
The Problem of Vagabonds (June) 450
Order to the First Route Army of the Red Army to Set Out from Western Fujian and Regroup at Guangchang (June 22) 455
Telegram of the Chinese Revolutionary Military Commission on Attacking Nanchang and Regrouping at Wuhan (June 25) 457
From Tingzhou to Changsha (July) 460
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Change Its Route and Advance on Chongren (July 20) 461
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Set Out from Yongfeng (July 20) 464
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Attack Zhanqiu (July 22) 466
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army About All Stipulated Arrangements for Crossing the River (July 25) 468
Order to Seize the Niuhang Railway Station (July 29) 471
Order to Withdraw to Anyi and Fengxin for Rest and Reconsolidation (August 1) 474
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Advance from Fengxin to Yifeng (August 6) 476
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Leave Yifeng and Concentrate Its Forces in Wanzai (August 10) 478
Order to Attack Wenjiashi (August 18) 480
Letter to the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, for Transmission to the Central Committee, on the General Situation with Regard to All New Military Operations of Our Army in Western Jiangxi (August 19) 482
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Advance on Xiaohu and to Continue to Attack Zhangjiangfang (August 20) 485
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Leave the Town of Yonghe and Concentrate Its Forces in Guangzhuang (August 24) 487
Letter to the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, for Transmission to the Central Committee (August 24) 488
Order to Advance Toward Changsha (August 24) 490
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Attack Changsha (August 28) 493
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Occupy the Line from Fengshupu and Xinqiao to Luoxiapeng (August 28) 495
Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Exterminate the Enemy at Yijiawan and Take Advantage of the Victory to Occupy Changsha (August 29) 496
Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army Regarding Extermination of the Attacking Enemy (August 30) 498
Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army About Mobilizing the Masses to Force the Enemy in the Area Northeast of Changsha to Submit (August 30) 500
Order to Lure the Enemy out of Their Fortifications, Eliminate Them, and March into Changsha on the Heels of Victory (August 31) 501
Land Law (August) 503
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Launch a General Offensive (September 1) 508
Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Surround and Attack Changsha and to Launch a General Offensive (September 1) 510
Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army About Luring the Enemy to Come Out and Attack, and Preparing to Encircle and Destroy Him (September 4) 512
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Concentrate Their Troops and Await the Opportunity to Come Out and Attack the Enemy (September 4) 514
Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army About Luring and Destroying the Enemy Who Is Coming Out by Two Routes to Attack (September 5) 515
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Advance on Tianxinqiao and Exterminate the Enemy in Datoupu and Yijiawan When Opportunity Offers (September 5) 517
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Launch a Forceful Attack on Changsha City (September 10) 519
Instruction on Methods for Capturing the Enemy's Weapons (September 12) 522
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Occupy Places Such as Pingxiang, Youxi, Liuling, and Zhuzhou, and to Await Opportunities (September 12) 524
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Attack and Take Ji'nan (September 13) 526
Report to the Central Committee (September 17) 529
Order for the First Army Group of the Red Army to Leave Pingxiang and Advance Toward Ji'an (September 23) 533
Statutes of the Red Army Soldiers' Association (September 25) 536
Order of the First Army Group of the Red Army to Leave Yichun, Go to Futian, and Concentrate Its Forces There (September 29) 542
Order for the First Army Group to Attack Ji'an (October 2) 544
Order for the First Army Group of the Red Army to Launch a General Assault on Ji'an (October 3) 546
A Secret Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Carry Out Household by Household Inspections (October 12) 548
Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Move Its Forces to the North and Concentrate Them in Qingjiang (October 13) 550
Letter to the Central Committee (October 14) 552
Letter to the Eastern Hunan Special Committee (October 19) 557
Resolution on the Land Problem of the Joint Conference of the General Front Committee and the Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee (October 19) 559
Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Attack Gaoan (October 19) 570
Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Work between the Yuan River and the Ruizhou River and to Await Opportunities (October 24) 572
The Present Political Situation and the Tasks of the First Front Army and of the Party in Jiangxi (October 26) 574
Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Extend Its Work for Three Days in the Original Location (October 29) 590
The Problem of the Rich Peasants after Land Redistribution (The Situation in Yongxin and Beilu) (October) 592
Xingguo Investigation (October) 594
Order to Lure the Enemy Deep into the Red Area, Wait until They Are Exhausted, and Annihilate Them (November 1) 656
Investigations in Dongtang and Other Places (November 8) 658
Circular of the Front Committee of the First Front Army of the Red Army and of the Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee (November 11) 667
The Situation Regarding Land Redistribution in Western Jiangxi (November 12 and 15) 673
The Mistakes in the Land Struggle in Jiangxi (November 14) 680
The Problem of Dividing up Green Crops and Renting Land (November 15) 684
Investigation in Mukou Village (November 21) 691
Letter to the Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee (November 24) 694
Order of the First Front Army of the Red Army About Concentrating Our Forces at Donggu, Nanlong, and Longgang, and Preparing to Attack the Enemy (November 25) 697
Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army About Going to Huangpi and Xiaobu to Concentrate Our Forces (November 27) 699
Red Letter Order No. 7 of the First Front Army of the Chinese Red Army to Move the Troops Toward Pingtian, Anfu, and Kanchaiguang, so as to Facilitate the Purchase of Provisions (December 14) 702
A Letter of Reply by the General Front Committee (December) 704
Eight Great Conditions for Victory (December 22) 714
An Order to Ambush the Enemy Forces That Are Invading Xiaobu (December 25) 722
Red Letter Order No. 10 of the First Front Army of the Red Army (December 26) 724
Red Letter Order No. 11 of the First Front Army of the Red Army Regarding the Decision to Sweep Away the Enemy of the Left Wing, Zhang Huizhan, and the Various Divisions of Xu, Gong, and Luo (December 28) 726
Red Letter Order No. 12 of the First Front Army of the Red Army to Attack the Forces of Zhang Huizhan at Longgang (December 29) 729
News of the Victory of the Red Army (Extracts) (December 30) 731
Bibliography 733
Index 737
About the Editors 772
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Nancy Hodes, Research Assistant since mid-1991, and associate editor of the series, has been involved in all aspects of the work on the present volume. She has played a major role in the revision and annotation of the translations, and in checking the final versions against the Chinese originals. She has also drafted some translations, as has Stuart Schram. In particular, she has prepared the initial drafts of all Mao's poems, which were then revised in collaboration with Stuart Schram. Final responsibility for the accuracy and literary quality of the work as a whole rests with him as editor.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Mao Zedong and the Chinese Revolution, 1912-1949

Mao Zedong stands out as one of the dominant figures of the twentieth century. Guerrilla leader, strategist, conqueror, ruler, poet, and philosopher, he placed his imprint on China, and on the world. This edition of Mao’s writings provides abundant documentation in his own words regarding both his life and his thought. Because of the central role of Mao’s ideas and actions in the turbulent course of the Chinese revolution, it thus offers a rich body of historical data about China in the first half of the twentieth century.

The process of change and upheaval in China which Mao sought to master had been going on for roughly a century by the time he was born in 1893. Its origins lay in the incapacity of the old order to cope with the population explosion at the end of the eighteenth century, and with other economic and social problems, as well as in the shock administered by the Opium War of 1840 and further European aggression and expansion thereafter.

Mao’s native Hunan Province was crucially involved both in the struggles of the Qing dynasty to maintain its authority, and in the radical ferment which led to successive challenges to the imperial system. Thus on the one hand, the Hunan Army of the great conservative viceroy Zeng Guofan was the main instrument for putting down the Taiping Rebellion and saving the dynasty in the middle of the nineteenth century. But on the other hand, the most radical of the late nineteenth-century reformers, and the only one to lay down his life in 1898, Tan Sitong, was also a Hunanese, as was Huang Xing, whose contribution to the Revolution of 1911 was arguably as great as that of Sun Yat-sen.1 In his youth, Mao profoundly admired all three of these men, though they stood for very different things: Zeng for the empire and the Confucian values which sustained it, Tan for defying tradition and seeking inspiration in the West, Huang for Western-style constitutional democracy.

1. Abundant references to all three of these figures are to be found in Mao’s writings, especially those of the early period contained in Volume 1 of this series. See, regarding Zeng, pp. 10, 72, and 131. On Tan, see “Zhang Kundi’s Record of Two Talks with Mao Zedong,” September 1917, p. 139. On Huang, see “Letter to Miyazaki Tōten,” March 1917, pp. 111–12.
Apart from Mao’s strong Hunanese patriotism, which inclined him to admire eminent figures from his own province, he undoubtedly saw these three as forceful and effective leaders who, each in his own way, fought to assure the future of China. Any sense that they were contradictory symbols would have been diminished by the fact that from an early age Mao never advocated exclusive reliance on either Chinese or Western values, but repeatedly sought a synthesis of the two. In August 1917, Mao Zedong expressed the view that despite the “antiquated” and otherwise undesirable traits of the Chinese mentality, “Western thought is not necessarily all correct either; very many parts of it should be transformed at the same time as Oriental thought.”

In a sense, this sentence sums up the problem he sought to resolve throughout his whole career: How could China develop an advanced civilization, and become rich and powerful, while remaining Chinese?

As shown by the texts contained in Volume I, Mao’s early exposure to “Westernizing” influences was not limited to Marxism. Other currents of European thought played a significant role in his development. Whether he was dealing with liberalism or Leninism, however, Mao tenaciously sought to adapt and transform these ideologies, even as he espoused them and learned from them.

Mao Zedong played an active and significant role in the movement for political and intellectual renewal which developed in the aftermath of the patriotic student demonstrations of May 4, 1919, against the transfer of German concessions in China to Japan. This “new thought tide,” which had begun to manifest itself at least as early as 1915, dominated the scene from 1919 onward, and prepared the ground for the triumph of radicalism and the foundation of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921. But though Mao enthusiastically supported the call of Chen Duxiu, who later became the Party’s first leader, for the Western values incarnated by “Mr. Science” and “Mr. Democracy,” he never wholly endorsed the total negation of Chinese culture advocated by many people during the May Fourth period. His condemnations of the old thought as backward and slavish are nearly always balanced by a call to learn from both Eastern and Western thought and to develop something new out of these twin sources.

In 1919 and 1920, Mao leaned toward anarchism rather than socialism. Only in January 1921 did he at last draw the explicit conclusion that anarchism would not work, and that Russia’s proletarian dictatorship represented the model which must be followed. Half the remaining fifty-five years of his life were devoted to creating such a dictatorship, and the other half to deciding what to do with it, and how to overcome the defects which he perceived in it. From beginning to end of this process, Mao drew upon Chinese experience and Chinese civilization in revising and reforming this Western import.

To the extent that, from the 1920s onward, Mao was a committed Leninist, his understanding of the doctrine shaped his vision of the world. But to the extent that, although he was a communist revolutionary, he always “planted his backside on the body of China,” ideology alone did not exhaustively determine his outlook. One of Mao Zedong’s most remarkable attributes was the extent to which he linked theory and practice. He was in some respects not a very good Marxist, but few men have ever applied so well Marx’s dictum that the vocation of the philosopher is not merely to understand the world, but to change it.

It is reliably reported that Mao’s close collaborators tried in vain, during the Yan’an period, to interest him in writings by Marx such as The 18 Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. To such detailed historical analyses based on economic and social facts, he preferred The Communist Manifesto, of which he saw the message as “jiejie douzheng, jiejie douzheng, jiejie douzheng!” (Class struggle, class struggle, class struggle!) In other words, for Mao the essence of Marxism resided in the fundamental idea of the struggle between oppressor and oppressed as the motive force of history.

Such a perspective offered many advantages. It opened the door to the immediate pursuit of revolutionary goals, since even though China did not have a very large urban proletariat, there was no lack of oppressed people to be found there. It thus eliminated the need for the Chinese to feel inferior, or to await salvation from without, just because their country was still stuck in some precapitalist stage of development (whether “Asiatic” or “feudal”). And, by placing the polarity “oppressor/oppressed” at the heart of the revolutionary ideology itself, this approach pointed toward a conception in which landlord oppression, and the oppression of China by the imperialists, were perceived as the two key targets of the struggle.

Mao displayed, in any case, a remarkably acute perception of the realities of Chinese society, and consistently adapted his ideas to those realities, at least during the struggle for power. In the early years after its foundation in 1921, the Chinese Communist Party sought support primarily from the working class in the cities and adopted a strategy based on a “united front” or alliance with Sun Yat-sen’s Guomindang. Mao threw himself into this enterprise with enthusiasm, serving first as a labor union organizer in Hunan in 1922-1923, and then as a high official within the Guomindang organization in 1923-1924. Soon, however, he moved away from this perspective, and even before urban-based revolution was put down in blood by Chiang Kai-shek in 1927, he asserted that the real center of gravity of Chinese society was to be found in the countryside. From this fact, he drew the conclusion that the decisive blows against the existing reactionary order must be struck in the countryside by the peasants.

By August 1927, Mao had concluded that mobilizing the peasant masses was not enough. A red army was also necessary to serve as the spearhead of revolu-

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2. Letter of August 1917 to Li Jinhui, Volume I, p. 132.
tion, and so he put forward the slogan: "Political power comes out of the barrel of a gun." In the mountain fastness of the Jinggangshan base area in Jiangxi Province, to which he retreated at the end of 1927 with the remnants of his forces, he began to elaborate a comprehensive strategy for rural revolution, combining land reform with the tactics of guerrilla warfare. In this he was aided by Zhu De, a professional soldier who had joined the Chinese Communist Party, and soon became known as the "commander-in-chief." These tactics rapidly achieved a considerable measure of success. The "Chinese Soviet Republic," established in 1931 in a larger and more populous area of Jiangxi, survived for several years, though when Chiang Kaishek finally devised the right strategy and mobilized his crack troops against it, the Communists were defeated and forced to embark in 1934 on the Long March.

By this time, Mao Zedong had been reduced virtually to the position of a figurehead by the Moscow-trained members of the so-called "Internationalist" faction, which dominated the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. At a conference held at Zunyi in January 1935, in the course of the Long March, Mao began his comeback. Soon he was once again in effective charge of military operations, though he became chairman of the Party only in 1943.

Mao’s vision of the Chinese people as a whole as the victim of oppression now came decisively into play. Japanese aggression led in 1936 to the Xi’an Incident, in which Chiang Kaishek was kidnapped in order to force him to oppose the invader. This event was the catalyst which produced a second “united front” between the Communists and the Guomindang. Without it, Mao Zedong and the forces he led might well have remained a side current in the remote and backward region of Shaanxi, or even been exterminated altogether. As it was, the collaboration of 1937-1945, however perfunctory and opportunistic on both sides, gave Mao the occasion to establish himself as a patriotic national leader. Above all, the resulting context of guerrilla warfare behind the Japanese lines allowed the Communists to build a foundation of political and military power throughout wide areas of Northern and Central China.

During the years in Yan’an, from 1937 to 1946, Mao Zedong also finally consolidated his own dominant position in the Chinese Communist Party, and in particular his role as the ideological mentor of the Party. Beginning in November 1936, he seized the opportunity to read a number of writings by Chinese Marxists, and Soviet works in Chinese translation, which had been published while he was struggling for survival a few years earlier. These provided the stimulus for the elaboration of his own interpretation of Marxism-Leninism, and in particular for his theory of contradictions. Another of the main features of his thought, the emphasis on practice as the source of knowledge, had long been in evidence and had found expression in the sociological surveys in the countryside which he himself carried out beginning as early as 1926.

5. See below, the texts of August 7 and August 18, 1927, pp. 31 and 36 of this volume.

In 1938, Mao called for the “Sinification of Marxism,” that is, the modification not only of its language but of its substance in order to adapt it to Chinese culture and Chinese realities. By 1941, he had begun to suggest that he himself had carried out this enterprise, and to attack those in the Party who preferred to translate ready-made formulas from the Soviet Union. The “Rectification Campaign” of 1942-43 was designed in large measure to change the thinking of such “internationalists,” or to eliminate them from positions of influence.

When Mao was elected chairman of the Politburo and of the Secretariat in March 1943, the terms of his appointment to this second post contained a curious provision: Mao alone, as chairman, could out-vote the other two members of the Secretariat in case of disagreement. This was the first step toward setting Mao above and apart from all other Party members and thereby opening the way to the subsequent cult. At the Seventh Party Congress in April 1945 came apotheosis: Mao Zedong’s thought was written into the Party statutes as the guide to all work, and Mao was hailed as the greatest theoretical genius in China’s history for his achievement in creating such a remarkable doctrine.

In 1939-40, Mao had put forward the slogan of “New Democracy” and defined it as a regime in which proletariat (read Communist Party) and bourgeoisie (read Guomindang) would jointly exercise dictatorship over reactionary and pro-Japanese elements in Chinese society. Moreover, as late as 1945, when the Communists were still in a weaker position than the Guomindang, Mao indicated that this form of rule would be based on free elections with universal suffrage. Later, when the Communist Party had military victory within its grasp and was in a position to do things entirely in its own way, Mao would state forthrightly, in “On People’s Democratic Dictatorship,” that such a dictatorship could in fact just as well be called a “People’s Democratic Autocracy.” In other words, it was to be democratic only in the sense that it served the people’s interests; in form, it was to exercise its authority through a “powerful state apparatus.”

In 1946, when the failure of General George Marshall’s attempts at mediation led to renewed civil war, Mao and his comrades revived the policy of land reform, which had been suspended during the alliance with the Guomindang, and thereby recreated a climate of agrarian revolution. Thus national and social revolution were interwoven in the strategy which ultimately brought final victory in 1949.

In March 1949, Mao declared that though the Chinese revolution had previously taken the path of surrounding the cities from the countryside, henceforth the building of socialism would take place in the orthodox way, with leadership and enlightenment radiating outward from the cities to the countryside. Looking at the twenty-seven years under Mao’s leadership after 1949, however, the two most striking developments—the chiliastic hopes of instant plenty which characterized the Great Leap Forward of the late 1950s, and the anxiety about the corrupting effects of material progress, coupled with a nostalgia for “military communism,” which underlay the Cultural Revolution—both bore the mark of
rural utopianism. Thus Mao’s road to power, though it led to total victory over the Nationalists, also cultivated in Mao himself, and in the Party, attitudes which would subsequently engender great problems.

Revolution in its Leninist guise has loomed large in the world for most of the twentieth century, and the Chinese revolution has been, with the Russian revolution, one of its two most important manifestations. The Bolshevik revolution set a pattern long regarded as the only standard of communist orthodoxy, but the revolutionary process in China was in some respects even more remarkable. Although communism now appears bankrupt throughout much of the world, the impact of Mao is still a living reality in China two decades after his death. Particularly since the Tiananmen events of June 1989, the continuing relevance of Mao’s political and ideological heritage has been stressed ever more heavily by the Chinese leadership. Interest in Mao Zedong has been rekindled in some sectors of the population, and elements of a new Mao cult have even emerged.

Though the ultimate impact of these recent trends remains uncertain, the problem of how to come to terms with the modern world, while retaining China’s own identity, still represents perhaps the greatest challenge facing the Chinese. Mao did not solve it, but he boldly grappled with the political and intellectual challenge of the West as no Chinese ruler before him had done. If Lenin had suffered the ultimate insult of being replaced by Peter the Great as the symbol of Russian national identity, it could be argued that Mao cannot, like Lenin, be supplanted by a figure analogous to Peter because he himself played the role of China’s first modernizing and Westernizing autocrat. However misguided many of Mao’s ideas, and however flawed his performance, his efforts in this direction will remain a benchmark to a people still struggling to define their place in the community of nations.

INTRODUCTION

The Writings of Mao Zedong, 1927–1930

The texts from 1912 to November 1920 contained in Volume I of this edition shed light primarily on the life and intellectual development of the young Mao. Though several of the more important documents emanate from organizations, such as the New People’s Study Society or the Cultural Book Society, Mao’s imprint on these bodies was so profound that the views expressed there can legitimately be taken as corresponding in substantial measure to his own thinking. Volume II, which covered the period December 1920—June 1927, introduced a new dimension: Mao’s activity as a member of two parties, the Chinese Communist Party and the Guomindang, neither of which he led or controlled. As a result, the constraints of party orthodoxy shaped what he wrote to some degree, and to the biographical perspective of the first volume was added a new domain: that of “party history.”

In Volume III, Mao’s life and thought, as well as the history both of the Chinese Communist Party and of the Guomindang, continue to be important topics. At the same time, however, another theme makes its appearance: that of military tactics and military history. This concern with military affairs manifests itself in several different ways. First, in line with Mao’s statement, in August 1927,¹ that “political power is obtained from the barrel of a gun,” the central role of armed force in the Chinese revolution is a basic postulate in virtually everything he wrote during these three years, and indeed during the ensuing two decades. Second, Mao took an increasing interest in military tactics for its own sake and began, during the period covered here, to develop his own distinctive ideas in this domain. He did so of necessity, because fighting had become a large part of his life. Finally, the form which should be taken by armed struggle, and its place in the overall strategy of the Chinese Communist Party, became in 1928—1930 a key issue in the interaction between Mao Zedong and his supporters, on the one hand, and the central Party leadership, on the other. In other words, military history and Party history are intricately intertwined during the period covered by this volume.

Another important qualitative change in the context within which Mao operated from mid-1927 onwards, as compared to the period covered by Volume II, concerns the locus of his actions. During the First United Front, he had been close to the center of things, serving for a time as secretary of the Communist Party’s Central Bureau, and as acting head of the Guomindang Propaganda Department. Even when his role was less prominent, he was in direct contact with the

¹. See below, his remarks at the August 7 Emergency Conference.
leaders of both parties. Now he would find himself geographically isolated, and excluded from the major decision-making bodies of the Chinese Communist Party.

In this situation, he was perpetually engaged in a struggle on two fronts, seeking on the one hand to persuade the Central Committee to accept his point of view regarding the strategy which should be followed, and on the other hand to impose his authority over the various military and political entities claiming allegiance to the Chinese Communist Party scattered about the countryside.  
A primary function of the introductions to the volumes in this series is to present and analyze the documents they contain. Unfortunately, there are few texts in the present volume addressed even by implication to lower levels of the Party. Many documents do, however, deal very concretely with the problems confronting Mao at various times. This is particularly true of the many military orders signed by Mao Zedong and Zhu De for the latter half of 1930. As a result, this introduction focuses in the first instance on Mao’s interaction with those in authority over him, but also seeks to provide some background regarding the situation in which he and his forces found themselves.

**From the United Front to Armed Struggle in the Countryside**

Volume II of this edition ended in June 1927, when the Guomindang “center,” represented by Chiang Kaishek, had already broken with the Communists, and the “united front” between the Chinese Communist Party and the “Left Guomindang” in Wuhan was under extreme strain. On July 15, Wang Jingwei and the Wuhan Left effectively put an end to the “bloc within” by expelling Communists from the Guomindang. Already, in the context of a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, called to discuss the situation in Hunan, Mao had argued that if the Communists did not possess their own army, they would be helpless in case of such an emergency. Foreshadowing the course he was to follow three months later, he declared that, by “going up the mountains,” the foundation for a real military force could be laid.²

On July 20, 1927, Mao participated in drafting a circular of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee regarding the tactics of the peasant movement which reiterated the same point about “going up the mountains.” All the “present so-called revolutionary armies,” asserted the circular, were in fact led by “reactionary officers who represent the landlord class.” It therefore called for the peasants to “arm themselves,” while recognizing that for the time being, it was “not possible for peasant armed forces to exist openly,” except in the mountains.³

AT about the same time, a group of Communist leaders, with the support of Soviet emissaries, were planning a military insurrection in the city of Nanchang in northern Jiangxi, if possible with the support or tacit acceptance of General Zhang Fakui and his Second Front Army. This uprising, which took place on August 1, was initially successful, but the insurgents soon found themselves under attack by greatly superior Guomindang forces, and retreated toward Guangdong, under the leadership of He Long, the commander of the Twentieth Army, and Ye Ting, who commanded the Twenty-fourth Division of the Eleventh Army.

On the very day when the Nanchang Uprising was launched, Mao Zedong signed for the last time, in his capacity as an alternate member of the Guomindang Central Executive Committee, a document emanating from that party. In this declaration of August 1, on which his name appeared alongside that of Sun Yat-sen’s widow, Song Qingling, he called for “loyal commanders and soldiers . . . to summon up the unflinching courage of the Director General and thus make it impossible for those who have usurped the name of the Party to make use of even one soldier.” To suggest that the magic name of Sun Yat-sen would suffice to wrest control of the Guomindang armies from Chiang Kaishek and Tang Shengzhi was, however, scarcely a viable policy.⁴

 Barely a week later, the so-called August 7 Emergency Conference met in Hankou, to discuss the strategy which should be adopted after the break with the Guomindang, and to install a more radical Party leadership. On this occasion, Mao began to sketch out a solution to the dilemma in which the Communists found themselves caught:

>[We] used to censure Sun Yat-sen for engaging only in a military movement, and we did just the opposite, not undertaking a military movement, but exclusively a mass movement. Both Chiang Kaishek and Tang Shengzhi rose by grasping the gun; we alone did not concern ourselves with this. At present, although we have paid some attention to it, we still have no firm concept about it. The Autumn Harvest Uprising⁵ . . . is simply impossible without military force. . . . From now on, we should pay the greatest attention to military affairs. We must know that political power is obtained from the barrel of the gun.⁶

Ten days later, at a meeting of the Hunan Provincial Committee, Mao elaborated on the same theme:

>"If we wish to create and unleash [the Autumn Harvest] Uprising, it will not do to rely on the power of the peasants alone. There must be military support. With the help of one or two regiments, the uprising can take place; otherwise it will fail in the end."

³ See below, "The Overall Tactics of the Peasant Movement at Present," July 20, 1927.
⁴ See below, "Declaration of Members of the [Guomindang] Central Committee," August 1, 1927.
⁵ The uprising in Hunan, scheduled to take place in September, in which Mao was to play a leading role as special commissioner sent to the province in mid-August with a mandate to reorganize the Provincial Party Committee. See below, the text of August 9, 1927, and the notes thereto.
⁶ See below, Mao’s “Remarks on the Report of the Representative of the International at the August 7 Emergency Conference.”
The development of the uprising must lead to the seizure of political power. If you want to seize political power, to try to do it without the support of military forces would be sheer self-deception. Our Party’s mistake in the past has been that it neglected military affairs. Now we should concentrate 60 percent of our energies on the military movement. We must carry out the principle of seizing and establishing political power on the barrel of a gun.  

At the end of August, replying to criticism from the Central Committee directed against his plan to use the two regiments at his disposal to “shield the development” of the worker-peasant uprising he was organizing, Mao declared bluntly: “When you say that we here are engaging in military adventurism, . . . this truly . . . constitutes a contradictory policy which pays no attention to military affairs, while at the same time calling for an armed uprising of the popular masses.” In other words, it is irresponsible to ask the ill-armed and unorganized masses to rise up against disciplined armies and be shot down.  

In his August exchanges with the Central Committee, Mao also seized enthusiastically on what proved to be a distorted rumor to the effect that the International had decided to break once and for all with the Guomindang and call for the establishment of soviets in China. The Guomindang banner, he said, had already become “nothing but a black flag,” and Communists should raise high the red banner of their own Party. In fact, at that time Moscow was still insisting on the maintenance of nominal collaboration with the ultraliberals in the Guomindang, but within a month Stalin finally came to realize that this was an illusion and changed his policy. The difference regarding the role of organized armed forces in the next phase of the revolution did not similarly evaporate.  

The Struggle on the Jinggangshan  

In a Politburo discussion on August 9, Mao had stated that the military force of one division which he proposed to establish in southern Hunan should be able to occupy five to six xian, but if it were defeated, this force could “go up the mountains.” At the end of October 1927, Mao Zedong effectively led the remnants of the forces that had carried out the Autumn Harvest Uprising to what was to become the Jinggangshan base, a remote mountainous area astride the Hunan-Jiangxi border.

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7. See below, the record of the meeting of August 18, 1927.
8. See below, “Letter from the Hunan Provincial Party Committee,” August 30, 1927. It appears from the November 14, 1927, resolution of the Central Committee, discussed below, that this letter was signed by the secretary of the Hunan Provincial Committee, Peng Gongda, but since Mao was said to have constituted the “heart” or “core” (zhongxin) of the Provincial Committee, he may well have written, and certainly endorsed, this text.
9. In his August 20, 1927 letter, Mao refers to the Communist International simply as “the International,” and that is the usage commonly followed in this volume, though to avoid monotonous repetition the contraction “Comintern” is also used on occasion.
10. See below, “A Letter from Hunan to the Central Committee,” August 20, 1927.

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13. Regarding the reports sent in January and March 1928, see the chronology in Gui Yulin, Jinggangshan geming douzheng shi (History of the Revolutionary Struggles on the Jinggangshan) (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1986), pp. 269, 271 (hereafter, Gui Yulin, Jinggangshan). A recent and detailed study of Mao’s career down to 1935 by Ma Yuqing and Zhang Wanlu, Mao Zedong gemingde daolu (Mao Zedong’s Revolutionary Way) (Xi’an: Shaanxi Renmin chubanshe, 1991) (hereafter, Ma and Zhang, Mao’s Way), states categorically (p. 192) that the document of May 2, 1928, translated below, was “the first report received directly by the Central Committee from the Jinggangshan base.”
14. Qu Qiubai (1899–1935), a native of Jiangxi, studied Russian at Beijing University and went to Moscow as correspondent for the Beijing Morning News in October 1920. While in Soviet Russia, he joined the Chinese Communist Party and attended the Third and Fourth Comintern congresses. Returning to China, he occupied important posts both in the Guomindang and in the Communist Party. During the summer of 1926, he lectured at the Peasant Movement Training Institute in Guangzhou while Mao was the principal. Elected to the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party at its Fifth Congress, in May 1927, he became the dominant figure in the Party following the August 7 Emergency Conference. He left for Moscow in April 1928 to attend the Sixth Congress of the Chinese
Gongda, was severely criticized, “the most serious responsibility” for this disobedience was attributed to Mao Zedong, who, as special commissioner in charge of the Autumn Harvest Uprising, had “in fact been the heart of the Hunan Provincial Committee.” Both Mao and Peng were dismissed from their positions as alternate members of the Politburo and as members of the Hunan Provincial Committee.15 Mao learned explicitly of this demotion only in March 1928, though he must have been sufficiently aware of the line currently being pursued by the new Party leadership to realize that he was not acting in accordance with it.

Throughout most of the period covered by this volume, Mao Zedong confronted serious problems in his relations with the Central Committee, but during the first half of 1928, when he was dealing with Qu Qiubai, these problems were different in character from those he faced subsequently in the case of the next strongman in the Party, Li Liang. In Li’s case, personal rivalry would play a major role in his attitude toward Mao. There is, in contrast, no indication that Qu Qiubai was in any way hostile to Mao, who had been one of his strongest supporters before and during the August 7 Emergency Conference. The differences between him and Mao appear to have been essentially ideological, though they ran very deep.

These divergences regarding ideology and tactics are clearly evident from a comparison of Mao’s own statements, translated below, with the available documentation regarding the position of the Central Committee. One crucial issue was that, already emphasized, of the role of military force in the revolutionary struggle. Thus the Central Committee’s Circular No. 28 of January 12, 1928, regarding the tactics of armed uprisings, began its list of “erroneous attitudes” common among local Party organizations with the following item:

1) Not trusting in the strength of the masses—for the reason that they do not trust in the strength of the masses, but lean toward military opportunism,16 they draft their plans in terms of military forces, planning how to move this or that army unit, this or that peasant army, this or that workers’ and peasants’ rebel-suppressing army, how to link up with the forces of this or that bandit chieftain, how to organize this or that guerrilla detachment, and in this way to unleash an “armed uprising” by a plot calling itself a plan. Such a so-called armed uprising has no relation whatsoever to the masses. For example, last year’s Autumn Harvest Uprising in Hunan ... saw the mobilization of military force alone.17

This passage manifestly echoes the criticism of Mao two months earlier, in the resolution of the November 1927 plenum. On the one hand, it is rooted in the Communist Party, which met in the Soviet capital in June 1928. The Congress removed him from his leading position, but re-elected him to the Politburo.

15. For the text of this resolution, see Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji (Selected Documents of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party), Vol. 3 (1927) (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1989), pp. 478–84 (hereafter, Central Committee Documents).

16. These words are emphasized in the original by the use of dots under the characters.


view that guerrilla warfare is “one form of the armed uprising of the peasant masses in its initial stage,” and that the peasants themselves can create military forces capable of fighting the landlord militias and other “counterrevolutionary armies.”18 But at the same time, the reference to “linking up with bandit chieftains” (as Mao had effectively done on the Jinggangshan) raises the issue of the class purity of the revolutionary forces. In a striking formulation, the circular attacks the view that “guerrilla warfare constitutes the whole of the peasants’ armed uprising” and argues that war waged by “guerrilla units” (in quotation marks), in isolation from the masses, represents “not the proletarian party showing itself capable of leading the peasants and the declassed poor, but the proletarian party being led by vagrant-style dep proletarianized ‘tactics,’ ”19

The fact that such ideological differences between Mao and the Central Committee existed does not mean that the local Party leaders in Hunan, with whom Mao had to deal directly, were not actuated rather by considerations of personal prestige. Personal rancor, or personal ambition, was in fact blatantly in evidence in the behavior of the representative of the Southern Hunan Special Committee, Zhou Lu, who showed up on the Jinggangshan in early March 1928 to announce Mao’s disgrace. Not content with telling Mao Zedong that he had been removed from the Politburo and the Hunan Provincial Committee, Zhou falsely claimed that Mao had been deprived of his Party membership. Only when he saw the text of the resolution in April did Mao learn that this was not true. Meanwhile, Zhou Lu had abolished Mao’s Front Committee and replaced it by a Divisional Committee headed by He Tingying.20

18. Ibid., p. 61.
19. Ibid., p. 65. The terms translated “declasse poor” and “de proletarianized vagrant-style” are, respectively, feijiejiuhua pinmin and feiwuchenjiejihuoshai youminshi.
20. When he came to the base area, Zhou Lu was head of the Military Department of the Southern Hunan Special Committee. For Mao’s own brief account of this episode, and of the defeats which resulted when he and his men were led away by Southern Hunan representatives of the Southern Hunan Special Committee, see below, section II of the “Report of the Jinggangshan Front Committee” of November 25, 1928. Zhou Lu was, in the end, the victim of his own initiative; he was captured and executed following the failure of the expedition to southern Hunan which he had promoted. The channels of communication at this time between the Central Committee in Shanghai and Mao in the border area remain somewhat obscure. Probably, in the chaotic situation then obtaining, the Central Committee sought to use all possible avenues for conveying its instructions to the grass roots. This “Letter to the Three Provinces of Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi,” March 10, 1928 (Central Committee Documents [1928], pp. 159–67), states: “As for the disposition of Mao Zedong’s army, this should be agreed between the two special committees [of Eastern Hunan and Southwest Jiangxi].” References to the Southern Hunan Special Committee in a letter of January 20, 1928, to Li Weihan are extremely uncompromising; comrades on the committee are said to have “incorrect and unproletarian political tendencies.” (See Central Committee Documents [1928], pp. 71–75). Li Weihan (1896–1984), also called Li Hesheng, pseudonym Luo Mai, had been a friend of Mao’s during his student days, active in the New People’s Study Society. At the August 7 Conference he had been elected to the Politburo and
Apart from the fact that Mao was no longer even a member of this committee, the scope of its activity was limited strictly to military matters, and it had no power over political work in the base area. Mao was thus reduced to the status of an army commander. The first text of 1928 translated here, Mao’s letter of May 2, 1928, was written in this essentially military capacity, but it urged very strongly the establishment of a special committee to take overall charge of Party affairs in the border area. The report was forwarded by the Jiangxi Provincial Committee to the Central Committee on May 19, 1928, and presumably reached Shanghai fairly promptly. Meanwhile, the Jiangxi Provincial Committee, dissatisfied at the contradictory information it was receiving, decided to send someone to Ji’an to find out what was actually happening.

On or about April 20, 1928, Mao Zedong and Zhu De met for the first time in Lingxian, in the aftermath of the failed uprising in southern Hunan ordered by Zhou Lu. A few days later, they combined their forces on the Jinggangshan. On May 20, Mao Zedong convened a conference at Maoping in Ninggang xian, at which a Special Committee was set up, with Mao as temporary secretary, and Zhu De as a member. Shortly afterward, Mao and his comrades learned that the actions taken at the Maoping conference had been approved retrospectively by the Jiangxi Provincial Committee.

The next message emanating from higher authority reached Mao at the end of May, when an emissary from the Hunan Provincial Committee, Du Xiuji, arrived in the border area. In addition to presenting an oral report, Du read out a letter from the Hunan Provincial Committee stressing that it was “completely wrong to burn whole cities.”

A month later, on June 30, 1928, two representatives of the Hunan Provincial Committee arrived on the Jinggangshan almost simultaneously. Mao’s account, in his report of July 4, 1928, translated below, says they arrived “at the same time,” but in fact they did not travel together. Mao found the letters they brought him blatantly contradictory. Yuan Desheng had left first, with letters dated June 19, 1928, indicating that Mao could continue to build his base on the Jinggangshan. Du Xiuji, for his part, brought a letter and directive dated June 26, 1928, containing substantially different instructions. These documents would have made plain to Mao that the unpalatable orders thus presented to him were largely the work of Du himself. After his visit to Ninggang at the end of May, Du had submitted a rather critical report to the Hunan Provincial Committee. Mao, Du wrote, was doing his best, but was trying to cope with too many things at once. The Provincial Committee in turn acknowledged its debt to “Elder Brother Du” in the second letter of June 19, and the letter of June 26 clearly reflected the opinions expressed in his report. Yuan and/or Du also brought Mao a resolution from the Central Committee regarding work in Hunan.

The letter dated June 26 ordered Mao to “leave with the army” for southern Hunan. The Divisional Committee created in March was to be abolished and

25. Du Xiuji (1907–77) was a Hunanese, who had joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1925. In March 1928, he was secretary of the Anyuan City Party Committee, and a member of the Eastern Hunan Special Committee. He lost contact with the Hunan Provincial Committee in 1929, and abandoned the Chinese Communist Party, but rejoined the Party in 1985.

26. For a summary of the report and the letter, see Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 243. For Du’s own account of his first meeting with Mao in late May, after two earlier attempts to reach the Jinggangshan had failed, see Du Xiuji, “Si shang Jinggangshan” (Four trips up the Jinggangshan), in The Jinggangshan Revolutionary Base, Vol. 1, pp. 419–25.

27. Yuan Desheng (1894–1934), a native of Hunan, worked as a coal miner at Anyuan, where he joined the Communist Party in 1923. After participating in the Nanchang Uprising of August 1, 1927, he was sent back to Anyuan. For the texts of the letters he brought, see The Jinggangshan Régime, pp. 131–39.

28. The version of Du Xiuji’s report which appears in The Jinggangshan Régime, pp. 124–30, is dated June 15, 1928. The Hunan Provincial Committee’s second letter of June 19 suggests that the report was delivered orally.

29. For these two letters, see The Jinggangshan Régime, pp. 135–42.

30. See below, Mao’s “Report to the Hunan Provincial Committee,” July 4, 1928. The document from the Central Committee cannot have been that dated June 4, which reached Mao, according to his November 25 report, only on November 2, 1928. It may have been the letter of March 10, addressed to the Provincial Committees of Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi, which contained a section on Hunan stressing the need to move in the direction of Wuhan. See Central Committee Documents (1928), pp. 159–67.
replaced by a Front Committee, of which Mao was appointed secretary. Du Xiujing was, however, to remain as "inspector" (xunshiyuan) of the Provincial Committee, "to help the Front Committee in its work." Yang Kaiming (who had accompanied Du to the Jinggangshan) was appointed secretary of the more powerful Special Committee.\textsuperscript{31} Thus both the newcomers were set over Mao. Ironically, in view of the repeated criticisms of Mao Zedong for his intimacy with bandits and lumpenproletarians, the former bandit chieftain Yuan Wencai was also to be appointed to the Special Committee and was to be in charge of the Jinggangshan base during the absence of the main force. Yang and Du, the letter concluded, would explain everything face to face; the "former emissary," Yuan Desheng, was to return to the Provincial Committee.

Mao immediately called a meeting, on the evening of June 30, at which Du and Yuan were present, together with Zhu De, Chen Yi, and the other principal leaders of the Jinggangshan base area. There the decision was taken to reject the "erroneous" ideas of the Hunan Provincial Committee. Mao then proceeded to draft the report of July 4, translated below, to justify this action. Yes, he argued, we will go to southern Hunan, but not just now. We must first consolidate our position here and wait until a new war between the warlords breaks out.

Not surprisingly, Mao was unable to maintain this position. Apart from the opposition of Du and Yang, who outranked him in the Party, he had to contend with the attitude of the Twenty-ninth Regiment, composed of peasants from southern Hunan, who found the Jinggangshan a very poor and lonely place, and wanted to return home. In fact, after the arrival of Zhu De and his forces in April, there were no longer one or two thousand troops, but over ten thousand in the base area, and the economy of the Jinggangshan really could not support them. Mao had agreed, therefore, that some of the units from Hunan could return there, but in mid-July, the peasants of the Twenty-ninth Regiment insisted on going there too, without adequate preparation. Zhu De was opposed to their action, but went along with them because he was afraid that without him, things would be even worse. Thus in the end, the bulk of the Red Army participated in this expedition, and suffered a disastrous defeat. Du Xiujing, who had supported this action in mid-July, argued in a report written subsequently that the fault lay entirely with the Hunan Provincial Committee, and not with the Border Area Special Committee, which had opposed this adventure.\textsuperscript{32}

31. Yang Kaiming (1905–1930), a native of Hunan, joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1926, after working at the Peasant Movement Training Institute in Guangzhou. In 1928 he was secretary of the Hunan Provincial Party Committee. He was arrested at the end of 1929, and executed in Changsha in February 1930.

32. For Du’s July letter, see Jinggangshan Historical Materials, pp. 42–46. In memoirs written half a century later, Du accepted that, applying the "wrong decisions" of the Hunan Provincial Committee, he had borne a large measure of responsibility for the disaster. See Du Xiujing, "Bayue shibai" (The August defeat), The Jinggangshan Revolutionary Base, Vol. 2, pp. 521–29.

In mid-August, Yuan Desheng turned up again, armed with a copy of the Hunan Provincial Committee’s letter of July 20, asserting that the strategy of advancing on eastern Hunan, in order to link up with the workers at Anyuan, was "absolutely correct."\textsuperscript{33} Mao immediately called an emergency meeting of the Special Committee, at which Yuan read out the letter, and Mao criticized the erroneous views of the Provincial Committee. News of the disastrous defeat just suffered by Zhu De and the Red Army in southern Hunan arrived during the meeting and tipped the balance against going to eastern Hunan. On August 23, at a meeting in Guidong, the Front Committee organized in July on the orders of the Hunan Provincial Committee was dissolved and replaced by an Action Committee with Mao as secretary. It was decided to leave Du Xiujing behind in southern Hunan as the secretary of the Southern Hunan Special Committee and to return to the base on the Jinggangshan.\textsuperscript{34}

The letter which Mao proceeded to write at the end of August to the Hunan Provincial Committee explaining the situation was a masterpiece of diplomacy. He referred to the meeting on May 30, addressed by Du Xiujing, and declared that the Provincial Committee’s letter read out on that occasion was accepted "without reservation." Thus Mao glossed over the fact that he and his allies had accepted neither the letter of June 26 nor that of July 20, emphasizing rather how much they agreed with the earlier directive. "We will," he wrote, "make great efforts to transform the army and cleanse it of the lumpenproletariat." He promised faithfully never again to commit the mistake of burning cities, though in doing so his forces, and those of Zhu De, had merely been responding to the urgings of the Qu Qiubai leadership.\textsuperscript{35}

The main forces of the Fourth Red Army, led by Mao, Zhu De, and Chen Yi, finally arrived back at the main base on September 26, 1928. Mao proceeded to carry out a purge in the base area. The ostensible end was the elimination of unreliable elements who had been admitted to the Party during a period of excessively rapid and indiscriminate recruitment in the summer of 1928, though Mao undoubtedly took advantage of this occasion to get rid of some of his adversaries. Yang Kaiming, who disappeared from the scene at this time, did suffer from illness, but Mao must have been pleased at the opportunity to replace him.\textsuperscript{36} At the Second Congress of xian Party organizations in the border area in October 1928, Mao was re-elected to the Special Committee, but only as the

33. In many sources this letter is dated July 30, but the text in both the documentary volumes cited here bears the date of July 20, 1928. See The Jinggangshan Régime, pp. 148–50, and Jinggangshan Historical Materials, pp. 56–58.

34. See Gui Yuling, Jinggangshan, p. 280; The Jinggangshan Régime, p. 311; and Mao’s own account in section II of the November 25, 1928, report.

35. See below, "Letter of the Special Committee of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area to the Hunan Provincial Committee," August 1928.

36. See below, the discussion of this change in the Jinggangshan Report of November 25, 1928. Tan Zhenlin (1902–1983), who took his place as secretary of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area Special Committee, was a native of Youxian, Hunan, who had joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1926.
fifteenth in a list of nineteen members. Finally, the Central Committee letter of June 4 reached the Jinggangshan on November 2, 1928, and Mao was able to re-establish the Front Committee, with himself in charge.

Meanwhile, the political context to which Mao had been striving to adapt throughout the summer and autumn had changed significantly. Qu Qiubai had left for Moscow in April 1928 to attend the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, and while there had been removed from his post as secretary general of the Party because of his ultraleftist errors. Xiang Zhongfa, who had been appointed in his place, was essentially a figurehead, and most of the other members of the Standing Committee of the Politburo had little influence. Real power was in the hands of Li Lisan and Zhou Enlai.37 Li and Zhou were still in Moscow when the June 4 letter, which restored Mao to control of the border area, was written, and it is not clear exactly who in Shanghai drafted it. Within half a year, however, Mao found himself confronted, not with the diffuse and contradictory signals from higher levels which had marked the period we have just been discussing, but with a much more sharply focused position regarding the theory and strategy of revolution.

Mao’s dialogue with and struggle against his old friend Li Lisan looms large in this volume.38 Before we turn to the unfolding of this relationship in 1929 and 1930, however, more needs to be said about the texts of the autumn of 1928. To the extent that these deal with political and military history, Mao tells his own story vividly, though not always with perfect clarity, and the brief summary of events provided above, together with the notes, should suffice to make these documents intelligible. Some points of political doctrine and practice ought to be noted, however, both for the sake of their own inherent interest and because they provide the background for Mao’s confrontation with the “Li Lisan line.”

The two most important texts are the resolution of October 5, 1928, and the report of November 25, 1928. Both of these are well known because they are included, in revised form, in the Selected Works, though more than half of the October resolution is omitted from that edition. As in the case of the “Analysis of All the Classes in Chinese Society” and the “Report on the Peasant Movement in Hunan” in Volume II, significant variants between the current official versions and the texts as Mao originally wrote them are shown in the notes and through the use of italics. (For details regarding the way this is done, see the “Note on Sources and Conventions,” which follows this Introduction.)

Both of these documents endorse the view of the International according to which the Chinese revolution is still in the “bourgeois-democratic stage,” without indicating precisely when this formulation was laid down. The reference (which Mao did give in the briefer text of December 16, 1928, also translated below) is in fact to the resolution on the Chinese revolution adopted by the Ninth Plenum of the Executive Committee in February 1928. This document had been distributed by the Central Committee on April 30, 1928, and probably reached the Jinggangshan in the late summer or early autumn. It contained a stern condemnation of the view put forward by the Qu Qiubai leadership in November 1927 regarding “permanent revolution” in China, and was accompanied by a circular of the Central Committee explaining rather lamely that this term really meant only that the bourgeois-democratic revolution was steadily moving forward.39

Discussing this issue in section IA, the resolution of October 5, 1928, likens the defeat of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in China to “that of the Russian Revolution in 1905.” This, like many other parallels to Soviet experience throughout Mao’s works, has been eliminated in the Selected Works version.

The October 5 resolution has been given the title, in the Selected Works, of “Why Is It That Red Political Power Can Exist in China?” Mao’s answer is well known, from this and other texts: because China is a “semicolonony,” in which the various imperialist powers can be played off against one another, and because it has a “localized agricultural economy,” not a unified capitalist economy. Consequently, small areas of soviet power can emerge in China, but their long-term survival will be impossible unless the revolution continues to move forward in the country as a whole. A “fairly long period” of stagnation, “as in the case of Russia from 1905 to 1917,” would be fatal to them. Mao concluded that this would not happen, because the revolution in China was continuing to develop, thanks to “the continuous splits and wars within the ranks of the domestic bourgeoisie.”

Independent régimes under Red political power could therefore be created and maintained, but only if there were “a regular Red Army of adequate strength.” Moreover, Red Army units must be concentrated so they could deal with enemy threats, and not scattered, in an attempt to take the offensive in several directions at once. Consequently, the Central Committee’s recommenda-

37. For a biographical sketch of Zhou Enlai, and a discussion of the role he played from the Sixth Congress until the end of 1930, see below the section of this Introduction entitled: “Toward the Li Lisan Line.”
38. Li Lisan (1899–1967), original name Li Longzhi, was a native of Liling, Hunan Province, also known under the aliases of Bai Shan and Li Minnan. Li Lisan had met Mao Zedong during his student days, but Mao remarked later to Edgar Snow that their friendship “never developed.” After studying at the Chiangui Middle School in Changsha, Li went to France in 1919 on the work-study program. There he was an active sponsor of the Socialist Youth League and was deported by the French government in 1921 for related activities. In 1922, Mao Zedong, then in charge of the labor unions in Hunan (see his writings in this capacity in Volume II), sent Li Lisan to Anyuan to organize the workers there. Li played a major role in the May Thirteenth movement of 1925 in Shanghai. In 1926, he lectured on the workers’ movement at the Peasant Movement Training Institute while Mao was principal there. He was elected to the Politburo at the Fifth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1927 and was one of the principal organizers of the Nanchang Uprising in August 1927. After a period as Party secretary in Guangdong, he returned to Shanghai at the end of 1928 to work on the Central Committee. For further details, see below, the note to Mao’s letter to him, November 28, 1929.
tion, in the June letter, that “guerrilla warfare should be extended to an excessively wide area” was casually brushed aside, as one of two minor points in the letter reflecting a lack of understanding of “concrete circumstances” in the base area.

The long second section of this resolution, which has only recently become available, surveyed the achievements of the Party in the Border Area since the foundation of the Special Committee four months earlier, and put forward recommendations for improvement. The organizational defects there stigmatized, such as reliance on the army rather than the masses, failure to stress class backgrounds in the appointment of cadres, and overconcentration of authority, amounted in many respects to a criticism of Mao himself. It cannot, however, be assumed simply for this reason that Mao did not take responsibility for the second half of the resolution. The document summed up the conclusions reached at the meeting, and Mao was obliged to accept these points, whether or not he actually wrote every word. This portion of the resolution also included an eloquent section on struggle in the rural areas, calling for the massacre of landlords and despotic gentry in the context of a pitiless Red terror. Only thus could political power be seized in the countryside.

The links between the fate of the base areas and the progress of the revolution in China as a whole would remain a major topic of controversy in Mao’s dealings with the new Central Committee elected by the Sixth Congress, as would the role of the Red Army. Two other important issues, which likewise carried over from one period to the next, were agrarian policy and the role of the vagrants or vagabonds in the countryside.

On the land problem, Mao adopted at this time a very radical policy, which is spelled out in section IVB of the November report. Lumping together all the owner-peasants (not just the “rich peasants” as in the Selected Works text) with the small landlords as the “intermediate class” (zhongjian jieji), he treats this whole category as an even more troublesome enemy than the big landlords. Such an approach was understandable in an area such as the Jinggangshan, which was so poor that there were hardly any real landlords, and land had to be taken from less privileged strata if there was to be any reform at all. Not only was all land confiscated without exception, but it was distributed in a totally egalitarian manner on the basis of the number of people in each household. Following receipt of the Central Committee letter on November 2, this principle was combined to a limited extent with distribution on the basis of labor power, which favored the richer peasants. Mao, as indicated in section IVB7 of the November report, had reservations about such a policy and asked the Central Committee and the two provincial committees of Hunan and Jiangxi to instruct him regarding the methods used in Soviet Russia in dealing with the rich peasants. Meanwhile, the Land Law of December 1928, translated below, reflected this provisional compromise. Mao, in a note of 1941, declared that it contained “mistakes of principle,” meaning leftist mistakes.

Logically, hostility toward even moderately privileged social strata went together with a tolerant attitude toward those at the bottom of the social scale. Consequently, while disputing the claim of the Hunan Provincial Committee that the whole of his army was made up of vagrants, Mao declared that it was entirely appropriate to have a great many of them, since they were “after all particularly good fighters.” The solution, he added, lay in intensifying political training, “so as to effect a qualitative change in these elements.”

Before turning, now, to the development of Mao Zedong’s policies and ideas in the course of 1929, it is appropriate to summarize the changes in the Soviet line at this time and the relation between Stalin’s views and those of the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. As already noted, Qu Qiubai’s apocalyptic visions of “permanent revolution” had been repudiated by the Ninth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the International in February 1928. The Comintern’s message on that occasion was, however, somewhat convoluted. It was necessary to discourage further “putschist” uprisings, while expressing qualified approval for the “Guangzhou (Canton) Commune” of December 1927, which Stalin had personally encouraged. The activities of Mao Zedong and others in the countryside could not be condemned, for they at least had the merit of existing, but at the same time it was stressed that such “spontaneous demonstrations by peasant partisans” could become the starting point for a victorious national uprising “only on condition that they are linked with the new upsurge of the tide of revolution in the proletarian centers.”

The new orientation was spelled out in greater detail, and in some respects modified, at the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party and the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, both of which took place in Moscow in the summer of 1928. It has often been assumed that these two congresses were contemporaneous, or in any case convergent. In fact, the first was held in June and July, and the second in August and September. In the rapidly evolving situation within the Soviet leadership, the passage of a few weeks meant that the line adopted on these two occasions was in fact significantly different. Stalin had allied himself with Bukharin at the end of 1927 in order to defeat the “Left opposition” of Trotsky and Zinoviev. Now, in the summer of 1928, as he prepared to move toward a policy of forced industrialization and rapid collectivization, he was ready to break with the supporters of a more lenient policy toward the Russian peasantry.

Thus, while Bukharin had played the central role at the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, his standing had been greatly weakened by the time the Comintern congress met two months later. He still gave the opening report, but exercised little real influence over the proceedings. Stalin’s shift to the left

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40. See below, section IVA3 of the November 1928 report. In the Selected Works version, both the praise of the youmin as "particularly good fighters" and the idea of effecting a "qualitative change" in them have disappeared.
was symbolized by the fact that Qu Qiubai, though he had been removed as secretary general of the Chinese Party, was extremely influential in the discussion of the resolution on the national and colonial question. At the end of the congress, while acknowledging that the previous “adventurist” moods had led to disastrous defeats, it was proclaimed that the present period in China must be “a phase of preparation of mass forces for an upsurge of revolution.” And though “permanent revolution” had been repudiated, Lenin’s formula of the “growing over” (pererastanie) of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution was adopted, and this process was said to be “inevitable.” In other words, the guidelines thus laid down for the new leadership of the Chinese Communist Party encouraged a further drift toward the left, though not necessarily in the way Li Lisan and Zhou Enlai actually went about it.  

Toward the Li Lisan Line

The long delays in communication between Moscow and Shanghai, and especially between the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in Shanghai and Mao Zedong in the hinterland, have led to considerable confusion in the literature about which directives from whom Mao was responding to at various times. As already indicated, the November 25, 1928, Report of the Jinggangshan Front Committee, though written after Li Lisan had begun to place his stamp on the Chinese Communist Party, was in no sense a response to Li Lisan’s policies, about which Mao had as yet no knowledge. The same applies to the texts, translated below, for the first three months of 1929.

On December 10, 1928, Peng Dehuai led his Fifth Red Army to Jinggang to join forces with the Fourth Red Army.42 The resolutions of the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party reached the Jinggangshan at the beginning of January 1929, and on January 4, Mao called a meeting at which they were explained and discussed. At the same time, it was decided that the main force of the Fourth Red Army, led by Mao Zedong and Zhu De, would seek to establish a new base in southwestern Jiangxi, while the two regiments making up the Fifth Army remained on the Jinggangshan under the command of Peng Dehuai. The Bahu Conference of January 4, 1929, marked an important turning point in Mao’s rural revolution. As Mao stated frankly in his report of March 20, 1929, his main reason for leaving the Jinggangshan was that he and his comrades “had no way out economically.” In other words, the Jinggangshan area was so poor, backward, and isolated that it could not serve as a viable base for further expansion and development of the Red forces. The decision to leave the Jinggangshan was, however, also the result of the blockade imposed by Guomindang forces, and of the pressure of constant enemy attacks. Another assault by the White forces was imminent at the time Mao and Zhu left, and Peng Dehuai may not have been happy at the prospect of staying behind to face it on his own.

Mao and Zhu set out on January 14. During the march, the “Notice of the Fourth Army Headquarters” and the “Manifesto of the Communist Party,” which constitute the first two texts for 1929 translated below, were issued.43 The “Official Fund-Raising Letter” of February 13, 1929, and the two communications of March 16, 1929, addressed to merchants and intellectuals, and to soldiers in the Guomindang armies, represented an attempt to adapt the Red Army’s appeal to the wider and more complex society into which it was now penetrating.

The Report of March 20, 1929, to the Fujian Provincial Committee and to the Central Committee contained news of a recent victory at Tingzhou and outlined plans for “carrying out guerrilla warfare within an area of more than twenty xian in southern Jiangxi and western Fujian,” establishing “independent régimes under soviet power,” and linking these to form a larger independent régime “in the Hunan-Jiangxi border area as a whole.” Mao obviously hoped that the Party leaders would be pleased and impressed by what he had to tell them. The Central Committee’s letter of February 7, addressed to Mao Zedong and Zhu De and received on April 3, 1929, was written in ignorance, not only of these recent developments but of Mao’s report of November 25, 1928, which had not yet reached Shanghai. Even so, Mao must have been taken aback by the conclusion that “the problem is ... how to avoid the annihilation of our armed forces by the enemy.”44

The letter of February 7 began on a rather petulant note with a complaint about Mao’s silence:

In the half year since the new Central Committee elected at the Sixth Congress returned to China and began work, we have several times sent people and letters to you, but from beginning to end we have been unable to obtain a reply. This is truly worrisome.

Although the letter went on to note that the Western Jiangxi Special Committee had confessed to having lost a letter from the Jinggangshan which they were


42. Peng Dehuai (1896–1974) was, like Mao, a native of Xiangnan xian, Hunan. A former regimental commander in the Guomindang National Revolutionary Army, he joined the Chinese Communist Party in April 1928. In July 1928, he led an uprising at Pingjiang, and created the Fifth Red Army, of which he assumed command.

43. See Gui Yulin, Jinggangshan, pp. 286–87; The Jinggangshan Régime, pp. 320–21; Ma and Zhang, Mao’s Way, pp. 245–49.

supposed to transmit to the Central Committee, Li Lisan and his comrades still seemed to blame Mao for the difficulties in communication. After reiterating the line of the Sixth Congress regarding the nature of the revolution, which was "bourgeois-democratic," but would "necessarily be transformed into a socialist revolution," and the "main task," which was "winning over the masses," the letter spelled out the implications for the role of the Red Army:

If our Party cannot unite around itself the broad worker and peasant masses, especially the masses of industrial workers, then however favorable the objective political circumstances may be for us, however much the workers' and peasants' struggles may develop, or however much it may even continue to be possible to set up soviet areas in the countryside, and however much Red Army organizations such as those you lead can survive in other areas, it will not be possible to push forward the high tide of this revolutionary wave... Hence, the main work of the Party at present is to establish and develop the Party's proletarian basis (chiefly the branches of industrial workers), and lead the workers and peasant masses in their struggle for their daily living... Consequently, the armed forces you lead must also be evaluated anew in the light of this nationwide political situation and the Party's tasks.

"In accordance with the directives of the Sixth Congress, the Central Committee long ago informed you," the letter stated with some asperity, that "you should divide up the Red Army's armed forces into small... units, and scatter them in all the villages of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, to carry on and deepen the agrarian revolution." Such a policy of avoiding concentration would provide fewer targets for the enemy and "would be advantageous for the provisioning and survival of your troops. But either this directive did not reach your organization, or you did not accept it or put it into practice." Mao had, of course, not received the directive in question.43 This renewed injunction to divide up his forces was rendered even less palatable because it was accompanied by a brusque order to leave the army and come to Shanghai:

In the light of present circumstances, the Central Committee has decided that it is necessary for Comrades Zhu and Mao to leave the army and come to the Center. You two comrades have been working in the army for more than a year, and you may, of course, be inclined to leave it. The thing is that the Central Committee, on the basis of objective investigations and subjective necessity, is profoundly convinced that it is necessary for Comrades Zhu and Mao to leave the army at present... If Comrades Zhu and Mao remain with the army, the target will be extremely great, and if the enemy is paying more attention it will be harder to divide up our forces.

The concluding remark that Zhu and Mao, when they came to the Center, could "make their precious experience of more than a year of struggles of the armed popular masses available to the whole country and the whole revolution" did not suffice to make the proposal acceptable. The document closed with the order to leave the army "immediately" and "come quickly to the Center." Mao's reply, dated April 5, 1929, explained in detail why he did not agree with the Central Committee's assessment of the situation. Though he made a tactical concession by agreeing in principle to leave the army "for another assignment," he made it brutally plain that he would not comply with the order to break up the army.

Before analyzing Mao's response, it is important to ask who was speaking in the name of the Central Committee and what were his, or their, motives. Li Lisan is commonly assumed to have been the most powerful figure in the leadership from the Sixth Congress until his disgrace at the end of 1930, but in fact it can be argued that at this time Zhou Enlai exercised greater influence. In any case, it was he who drafted the February 7 letter.46

Zhou, who had returned to China in early November 1928, was a member of the Politburo and also head of the Organization Department of the Central Committee. In this capacity, it was natural that he should deal with a matter of this kind. The content of the letter was dictated in part by the position of the International, which had recently advised the dispersal of the Red Army and recommended that Mao and Zhu should spend some time in "study."47 It was also the case, however, that at the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, Zhou (who used the name Moskovin or "Comrade M") had spoken disparagingly of Mao Zedong in his report on organization. Mao, he said, had a considerable armed force at his disposal, but was "continually flying from place to place," and his troops had "a bandit character."48

Both Li Lisan and Zhou Enlai were more thoroughly schooled in Marxism than Mao and had devoted more time to the workers' movement. Thus, on grounds of both ideology and experience, they were more inclined to stress the
role of the urban proletariat in the Chinese revolution. This was, of course, also
the attitude of Moscow, as documented in a whole series of Comintern directives
from the late 1920s and early 1930s. But at the same time, Stalin was impressed
with the achievements of the Red Army in China, at a time when victories were
scarce on the world scene. As a result, it had been laid down at the two con-
gresses of the summer of 1928 that, while placing primary emphasis on the cities
and the working class, the Chinese Communist Party must take full account of
the possibilities offered by the struggle in the countryside.

It had been logical for Qu Qiubai to advocate dividing up the Party’s forces in
the rural areas and using small detachments to ignite the flames of revolution,
since he really believed that a nationwide revolutionary conflagration was im-
minent. Such a strategy seems less natural on the part of a Central Committee
which had been told by Moscow not to expect revolution too soon. To explain Li
Lisan’s behavior, Richard Thornton has advanced the hypothesis that Li—who
could not violate Moscow’s injunction to support the Red Army, but did not
want to build up a rival with an independent power base in the countryside—
sought to give the appearance of supporting the rural soviets, while in fact
undermining their leaders.49 There is undoubtedly some substance to this ar-
ument, though when this first letter from the new Central Committee was written
in February 1929, on the basis of fragmentary information about the situation in
Jiangxi, Mao must have appeared less powerful, and therefore less threatening,
than he subsequently became.

In any case, Mao Zedong, having achieved the victories chronicled in his
March 20 report, felt himself to be in a strong enough position to defy the
Central Committee. The plan for preserving the Red Army by dispersing it to
arouse the masses he characterized as “a kind of ideal view (yizhong lixiang),
meaning that it was the invention of theorists far removed from reality, if not a
figment of the imagination.

The weightiest passage in the letter of April 5, 1929, was undoubtedly that
regarding the relation between the cities and the countryside. Mao began by
stating and accepting the whole of the orthodox Marxist position on this matter
and then went on to argue that his own strategy was, in fact, entirely compatible
with this orthodoxy:

Proletarian leadership is the sole key to the victory of the revolution. Building
up the Party’s proletarian basis and establishing Party branches in industrial
enterprises in key areas are the greatest organizational tasks for the Party at
present. But at the same time the development of the struggle in the coun-
tryside, the establishment of soviets in small areas, and the creation and expan-
sion of the Red Army are prerequisites for aiding the struggle in the cities and

(Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), especially pp. 76–79 (hereafter, Thorn-
ton, The Comintern and the Chinese Communists).

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The parenthetical remark about the error of fearing the power of the peasants,
"if any of our Party members hold such views," was ironic to the point of
provocation; Mao knew very well that many of those in Shanghai did. Most
people in Moscow did also, but Mao chose to ignore that fact, and evoke none-
theless, in conclusion, the authority of Moscow, where the Sixth Congress had
been held, in support of the importance of what he was doing. By "the leadership
of the workers," Mao meant, of course, the leadership of the Party of the prole-
tariat and, more concretely, his own leadership.

As it happened, at the very moment when Mao was composing his letter, the
Central Committee in Shanghai was revising its attitude somewhat, in the light of
information received about the victories in Jiangxi. On April 4, Zhou Enlai
declared, at a meeting to discuss the problem of the Fourth Army, that the
instruction to Mao and Zhu to leave the army was "correct in principle," but that
account should be taken of current reality. A new letter was therefore sent on
April 7, to the effect that if Mao and Zhu "could not come for the time being, the
Central Committee would like to see the Front Committee send a capable com-
rade to discuss the matter."

An important dimension of the confrontation between Mao Zedong and Li
Lisan was the agrarian question, and in particular the attitude which should be
adopted toward the rich peasants. The letter of September or October 1928 to
Mao Zedong contained the following passage on this theme:

The general line of the work in the countryside is the struggle of the peasants
against the landlord class. At present, the landlord class is the principal
enemy of all the peasants51 (including the rich peasants, the middle peasants,
the small peasants, and the semi-small peasants), and the party must rally the
whole body of the peasants to oppose the oppression and feudal exploitation of
the landlords and despotic gentry... On the basis of the overall strategy of
opposing the landlords, we must unite with the rich peasants; deliberately to
accentuate the struggle against the rich peasants is wrong, for this serves to
confuse the principal contradiction between the peasants and the landlord class.

50. This letter is not included in Central Committee Documents. It is cited in Jin, Zhou
Enlai, p. 193.
51. Emphasis in the original.
This statement was qualified by the proviso that, when class struggle between the poor peasants and the rich peasants took place, the Party should, of course, stand on the side of the poor peasants. The overall position of the Central Committee toward the rich peasants was, nevertheless, rather indulgent. Mao, as we have seen, took a very different line toward the "intermediate classes" in his report of November 25, 1928. This letter did not reach Mao for some time, but a copy was received in Moscow, where it aroused grave misgivings.

During the first half of 1929, the leftward trend in Stalin's economic policies which had manifested itself in the summer of 1928 took new and harsher forms, culminating in the removal of Bukharin from his position as chairman of the Executive Committee of the International on July 3, 1929. In this context, even the qualified sympathy of the Chinese Communist Party for the rich peasants was totally unacceptable, and on June 7, 1929, the International sent an extremely blunt letter on the peasant question to the Chinese comrades. Singing out for criticism the passage cited above, the International declared that "some leading comrades" were "still permitting serious errors in decisions on the peasant question." These errors, the letter said, dated back to the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (i.e., before Stalin's turn to the left at the Sixth Comintern Congress), when the "kulaks" had been included among the peasantry as allies of the proletariat. This "opportunist interpretation" of Lenin's position was extremely harmful at a time when the "kulak elements" were going over to the side of reaction in China.

The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party apparently did not receive this Comintern letter during its Second Plenum, in June-July 1929. Circular No. 40 of July 9, 1929, outlining the decisions of the Plenum, asserted once again: "At the present stage of the rural struggle, it is still a mistake to oppose rich peasants unconditionally." When this document was published in the Party organ Buersaiweihe (Bolshevik) on August 1, 1929, there was, however, a note to this passage reading: "This erroneous sentence has already been corrected by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on the original resolution, following receipt of the directive letter from the Communist International." 54


56. His illness has been variously reported in the literature as malaria and tuberculosis. The fact that he was suffering from malaria is confirmed in Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 281–90, passim. His withdrawal because of a mysterious ailment accounts for the well-known incident of the publication of an obituary of Mao Zedong in early 1930 attributing his death to "a long-standing disease of the lungs." (See International Press Correspondence for March 20, 1930.)
much about military strategy. Zhu De’s feeling that he should be in charge of strictly military matters was further accentuated by the fact that the troops he had brought with him to the Jinggangshan significantly outnumbered those of Mao and his bandit allies, and by the fact that the Twenty-Eighth Regiment, under Zhu’s own command, was the best fighting force in the Red Army.

The situation was aggravated when, in early May 1929, the Military Department of the Central Committee sent Liu Angong to join the Fourth Army, with instructions that he should be given a leading position.57 In accordance with orders from the International, Liu became head of the Political Department of the Front Committee, and secretary of the newly-created provisional Army Committee of the Fourth Army. He immediately sought to expand the role of the Army Committee, and to limit that of the Front Committee. Liu, freshly arrived from Moscow with no knowledge of the Red Army at all, saw in grossly simplified fashion two factions—one for and one against the Central Committee and the International. Zhu De, he said, supported the directives of the Central Committee; Mao Zedong, who had invented his own system, opposed the Center.58

According to accounts recently published in China, while Liu Angong was thus attacking Mao, Lin Biao did his best to exacerbate the conflict by setting Mao against Zhu De. In a letter sent to Mao only a few hours before an enlarged meeting of the Front Committee held in Baisha on June 8, 1929, Lin denounced the overweening ambitions of “certain comrades,” meaning Zhu De, and their attempts to ingratiate themselves with the rank and file.

The text of Lin’s letter of June 8 is not available, but Mao’s long reply of June 14, 1929, recently published in Beijing and translated below, provides a comprehensive overview of the situation as Mao saw it at this time. Evoking a struggle which had been going on “for over a year,” and had only recently been exposed, Mao asserted, “When controversy arises over questions within the Party, this represents progress for the Party, not retrogression.”

The first and most important point taken up in this letter was that of individual leadership and Party leadership. At first glance it may appear somewhat paradoxical that Mao, often perceived as a dissident guerrilla leader who resisted the orders of the Central Committee, should have come down unequivocally on the side of Party leadership. In fact, it was entirely logical that he should do so, since within the Fourth Army he was resolved that the Party organization should maintain supremacy over individual military leaders bent on carrying out heroic exploits. A second crucial theme, among the fourteen points discussed by Mao in this letter to Lin Biao, was that of attacks on the “patriarchal system within the Party in the Fourth Army,” by which critics meant the concentration of authority in the Party secretaries and other leading organs of the Party, and above all Mao’s own authority.59

At the Baisha meeting, Mao complained bitterly that, because of the role taken by the Army Committee, the Front Committee had to assume responsibility, but was unable to exercise effective leadership. Mao also requested that a new secretary of the Front Committee be appointed immediately, so that he could escape from this ambiguous situation.60 Mao’s general point about organization was accepted. By a large majority, the meeting voted to abolish the Army Committee, and to replace Liu Angong by Chen Yi as head of the Political Department of the Front Committee. If, as seems probable, Mao’s offer to resign, echoed in his letter to Lin Biao, was intended to strengthen his own position, that gambit was not successful.

When the Seventh Congress of Party Representatives from the Fourth Red Army met a week later, on June 22, 1929, at Longyan in Fujian, it was chaired by Chen Yi, who presented the main report, though Mao Zedong and Zhu De also spoke during the debates. The resolution adopted by the congress reviewed the ideological debates within the Fourth Army since its formation. While declaring that the overall trend had been correct, the resolution criticized as erroneous the view, which Mao had caused to be adopted in early May 1929 at a conference in Yudu, according to which it would be possible to conquer the whole of Jiangxi Province within one year.

Regarding the controversies which had taken place immediately before the Seventh Congress, the resolution asserted that while there had been a tendency toward “patriarchalism,” it was too one-sided to speak of a “dictatorship of the secretary” [of the Front Committee]. In other words, Mao’s style of leadership had been authoritarian, but not excessively so. At the same time, Mao’s complaint at the Baisha meeting regarding the paralysis of the Front Committee was dismissed as unfounded, and his ideological stance and work style were rigorously criticized. Zhu De’s work style was likewise censured, and both Liu Angong and Lin Biao were denounced for attacking the Party from outside.

Although Mao remained a member of the new Front Committee of thirteen members elected by the congress, he was replaced as secretary by Chen, thus losing his leading position in the Fourth Army. The rationale behind this decision was that, since Mao and Zhu De were continually quarreling, it was better to put the third main leader of the Fourth Army, Chen Yi, in control. Mao, at his own request, was permitted to go to a Red Army hospital in western Fujian for treatment; while there, he would also direct the work of the Western Fujian Special Committee.61

57. Liu Angong (?–1929), was a native of Sichuan, who had spent a period in the Soviet Union studying military affairs. He was killed in combat in October 1929.
61. This account of the congress is drawn in the first instance from Xiao Ke, The Zhu-Mao Red Army, pp. 88–102. See also Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 281; and Zhongguo gongchandang huìyì gaiyao (A Summary Account of Chinese Communist Party Meet-
On July 29, 1929, at an emergency meeting of the Front Committee, Mao agreed that Chen Yi should go to Shanghai, in the role of the “capable comrade” asked for by Zhou Enlai in his letter of April 7 cited above. During the month of August, the Central Committee met several times to discuss the decisions of the June 22 conference, and Mao’s letter of June 14 to Lin Biao. A committee of three, consisting of Li Lisan, Zhou Enlai, and Chen Yi, was appointed to draft a directive to the Fourth Army. Zhou Enlai made the final revisions on September 28, and Chen Yi carried the resulting document back to Jiangxi.62

This directive letter asserted that “at present, when the reactionary political setup is in the process of collapse, but the nationwide revolutionary high tide has not yet arrived,” the Red Army’s strategy of guerrilla warfare in the Guangdong-Hunan-Jiangxi-Fujian border areas was correct. At the same time, it urged Mao and his comrades to make greater efforts to rouse the masses. In carrying out guerrilla actions, they should constantly move about and not follow a conservative strategy of staying in one place. The experience of the Jinggangshan had shown that it was impossible to survive for long in a poor and backward place. On the other hand, to envisage (as Mao had done in his April letter) conquering the whole of Jiangxi in one year was also wrong.

A whole section was devoted to the “Zhu-Mao problem.” So much time and energy had been consumed by this matter, the letter said, because it had not been dealt with in terms of a clear political line which would have indicated “who was right and who was wrong.” Criticisms of Zhu and Mao had also been made in an “idealist” fashion, without “investigating their mistakes from a political standpoint.” Moreover, Zhu and Mao themselves had often been suspicious of each other on personal rather than political grounds. The Front Committee should therefore “correct (jiuzheng) their errors and restore their prestige among the masses.” They could, however, retain their leadership functions, and Comrade Mao should remain secretary of the Front Committee.63

On October 22, Chen Yi wrote Mao sending him a copy of the September letter, and inviting him to resume a leading role in the Front Committee of the

ings) (Shenyang: Shenyang chubanshe, 1991), pp. 88–90 (hereafter, Party Meetings). Jiang Hua, who was at this time secretary general of the Political Department of the Fourth Army, and who personally delivered Lin Biao’s letter of June 8, 1929, to Mao, categorically rejects the widely accepted view that Mao willingly gave up his post as leader of the Front Committee because he was ill. Mao, according to Jiang, became ill only after he went to Fujian. See Jiang Hua, “Guanyu hongjun jianshe wenti de yichang zhegulun” (A controversy regarding the problem of building a Red Army), Dangde wenxian No. 5, 1989, pp. 36–40.


63. For the text of this letter, see Central Committee Documents (1929), pp. 473–90. Zhou Enlai’s role in preparing this letter is explained in detail in a note to the text as it appears in his works, but in that version section 8, on the Zhu-Mao problem, is missing. See Zhou Enlai xuani (Selected Works of Zhou Enlai), Vol. I (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1980), pp. 29–43 (hereafter, Zhou, Works).

Fourth Army. Zhu De and Chen Yi both wrote to Mao again on November 18 urging him to return immediately to lead the Front Committee, and on November 26, Mao met with Zhu and Chen and agreed to accept this invitation.64

On November 28, Mao sent to the Central Committee a letter formally notifying them of his recovery, and of the fact that he was resuming his functions as secretary of the Front Committee. At the same time, he wrote in a more personal vein to his old friend Li Lisan. The concern he expressed about his family was undoubtedly sincere, even though he had been living for some time with another woman, He Zizhen, who formally “became his revolutionary companion” in June 1928, a year and a half before his wife, Yang Kaihui, was executed in February 1930.65 How sincere he was in asking for Li’s “excellent guidance” is another matter.

On December 28, 1929, the Ninth Congress of Party organizations in the Red Army met in Gutian (in Shanghang xian, Fujian), under the chairmanship of Chen Yi. Mao presented the political report, translated below as the “Draft Resolution of the Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in the Fourth Red Army.” Only the first section of this important document appears in the Selected Works, under the title “On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party.” This portion of the report took up some of the issues which, according to the Central Committee’s September letter, called for rectification, such as “ultrademocracy.” The full report went on to deal at length with problems of organization, training, and propaganda.

Meanwhile, a letter from Moscow dated October 26, 1929, which arrived in Shanghai in early December, had altered fundamentally the context in which Li Lisan must elaborate his strategy, in ways which would have a decisive impact on the relationship between Li and Mao. On July 10, 1929, Chinese authorities in the Northeast had taken over the telegraph installations of the Chinese Eastern Railway, closed the Soviet trade delegation in Manchuria, and arrested the Soviet manager of the railway. This action had been taken on the orders of Zhang Xueliang, who in December 1928 had accepted nominal subordination to Chiang Kai-shek’s Nanjing government, and the matter was pursued aggressively by Chiang. In the end, after a Soviet military offensive on the border in November 1929, the Chinese government was obliged to back down and restore the status quo. Meanwhile, however, Moscow saw the crisis over the Chinese Eastern
Railway as yet another aggressive imperialist plot against the Soviet Union, and the letter of October 26 was, in effect, a call to the Chinese Communist Party to throw all its weight into the struggle to frustrate this design. In order to encourage them in this, the Comintern suddenly discovered that the “revolutionary wave” in China was beginning to rise. The consequences of this directive were to prove exceedingly far-reaching.66

Carrying Out the Li Lisan Line

On December 8, 1929, the Central Committee issued Circular No. 60, in which the previous position regarding the tactics of the Red Army was completely reversed. This document advocated concentration rather than dispersal of forces, and linked the armed struggle of the masses in the countryside to that in the cities. “The previous tactics of avoiding the capture of major cities must be changed,” the directive stated. “Provided only that there is a possibility of victory and the masses can be aroused, attacks should be launched on the major cities.” These tactics, “if coordinated with the workers’, peasants’, and soldiers’ struggle in the whole country,” could “promote the great revolutionary tide.”67

This circular has long been regarded as marking the first step in the elaboration and application of the “Li Lisan Line.” At the same time it must be emphasized that, as noted earlier in this Introduction, Zhou Enlai’s influence in the Central Committee was at least as great as that of Li Lisan, and this document could not have been issued without his agreement. In fact, both Li and Zhou adopted at this time an exceedingly radical position. There were, however, differences between them. Zhou Enlai saw a revolutionary high tide in China; Li Lisan believed such a tide was rising in the whole world. Li Lisan wanted immediate action; Zhou Enlai wanted to prepare first. Nonetheless, they were the joint protagonists of the leftward impulse which asserted itself beginning in December 1929.

The new view of the relation between the rural and urban struggles stated in Circular Number 60 was not too far removed from that of Moscow. The Comintern letter of October 26 asserted: “One distinctive characteristic of the national crisis and the revolutionary upsurge in China is the peasant war.” But although the movement in the countryside (in which the Comintern lumped together the soviets under Mao’s leadership and the activities of traditionalistic organizations such as the Red Spears) was “in the process of becoming one of the courses along which the mighty upsurge of the all-Chinese revolution will continue to develop,”


67. For the text of this directive, see Central Committee Documents, Vol. 5 (1929), pp. 561-75. The extracts quoted here are from section 8, pp. 570-71.

...the “truest and most substantial indication of the swelling upsurge” was “the animation of the workers’ movement, which has emerged from its depressed state following the heavy defeat of 1927.” In other words, guerrilla warfare in the countryside was a legitimate and valuable part of the revolutionary effort, under Chinese conditions, but the more conventional and less exotic activities of the workers in the cities were not only more fundamental, but would, in the end, be decisive.

For his part, Li Lisan had long been far more skeptical than the Comintern regarding the significance of anything which took place in the countryside. After the turnabout of December 1929, however, as he began to lay his plans for a great offensive the following summer, Li concluded that that Red Army could provide an extremely useful auxiliary force, which would complement the action of the workers’ movement and ultimately permit victory through a two-pronged attack from the cities and the countryside.

Previously, Mao Zedong had been reluctant to throw his forces against Guomindang strongpoints, thus risking both the future of the revolution and the foundations of his own power. No doubt this reticence on his part stemmed from an acute awareness of the shortcomings of the Red Army, which he openly acknowledged in the Guian Resolution of December 1929. These included not only “incorrect ideas” (treated in the portion of this text included in the Selected Works) but serious organizational weaknesses and “feudal” practices such as the beating of soldiers by the officers. By early 1930, however, Mao himself had become extremely sanguine regarding the prospects for rapid victory. In his letter of January 1930 to Lin Biao, he criticized Lin for his undue pessimism about the coming of the high tide and declared that though the time limit of one year he had himself set in April 1929 for the conquest of all of Jiangxi had been “mechanical,” such an achievement was not far off.

On the issue of the relative weight of the cities and the countryside in the Chinese revolution, Mao Zedong and Li Lisan remained in 1930 at opposite extremes, with Moscow occupying a position somewhere in the middle. On two other points, the time-scale of the revolution and the central role of China in the world revolution, Mao and Li stood in many respects close to one another, and in opposition to Moscow.

If Circular No. 60 of December 8, 1929, was the first expression of the Central Committee’s new orientation, Circular No. 70 of February 26, 1930, formulated that line more systematically. This directive, too, like the February 1929 letter to Mao, was in fact drafted by Zhou Enlai. At a Politburo meeting in Shanghai on February 17, 1930, Zhou declared that the Party’s present task, in the light of circumstances such as the continuing struggles of the warlords, was to “create a direct revolutionary situation and seize political power.” Thereupon, he was entrusted with the task of drafting Circular No. 70.68

68. On Zhou’s role, see Jin, Zhou Enlai, pp. 209–10. The full text of Circular No. 70 can be found in Central Committee Documents, Vol. 6 (1930), pp. 25–35.
This new document called for organizing political strikes of the workers, local insurrections, and uprisings of the soldiers in the White armies, as well as expanding the Red Army, in order to achieve “preliminary victory in one or several provinces.” If the Party pursued these policies resolutely, “a direct revolutionary situation in the whole country” could be brought about. Criticizing Zhu and Mao by name for their “persistent attitude of hiding and dispersion,” the directive called for urban leadership of insurrections, in order to eliminate all such tendencies rooted in “peasant consciousness and banditism.”

While he can scarcely have appreciated the renewed criticism of his peasant or bandit mentality, Mao’s general outlook at this time did not differ sharply from that enunciated by Zhou Enlai. His radicalism, and his chiliastic expectation of a rapidly rising revolutionary tide, are vividly illustrated by the texts of February 1930 translated below. On February 6–9, 1930, Mao presided over a joint meeting of the Front Committee of the Fourth Red Army, the Western Jiangxi Special Committee, and the Army Committees of the Fifth and Sixth Red Armies held at Pitou (in Ji’an xian, not far from the town of Donggu). This conference adopted a land law calling for the confiscation of owner-peasants’ land, as well as that of the landlords. Mao also maintained his own egalitarian criterion of the number of mouths, rather than the Central Committee’s criterion of labor power, as the preferred basis for redistribution.69

As for broader political and strategic issues, a recent authoritative Chinese publication states that the assessment by the Pitou conference was “excessively optimistic.”70 The proclamation issued on February 14 in the name of the presidium of the joint conference called on the Red Army to encircle Ji’an, demoralize the defenders, and take the city. Such a directive could assuredly be regarded as optimistic in view of the fact that the West Jiangxi Special Committee had been calling for the seizure of Ji’an since the previous November, but the two attacks already launched against it had been unsuccessful, and future attempts also failed.71

Order No. 1 of the newly established joint Front Committee (of which Mao was the secretary) conjured up even wider vistas. “With the movement of the imperialists to attack the Soviet Union,” this document asserts, “a high tide of world revolution will burst out, the high tide of the Chinese revolution will arrive very soon, Chinese soviets will appear as successors to the Russian soviets, and they will become a powerful branch of the world soviets.” Here, and in the letter of January 1930 to soldiers of the Guomindang Army, also translated below, the need to make revolution in China in order to defend the “state of the proletariat” is strongly underscored. At the same time, this text holds out the prospect of a revolutionary upsurge in the whole country which will “bury the ruling classes completely.” Thus, the promotion of a revolutionary high tide was seen not simply as the internationalist duty of the Chinese Communist Party but as an enterprise which would rapidly lead to victory, first in Jiangxi and then in several other provinces.72

In early March, shortly after the adoption of Circular No. 70, the Central Committee sent Zhou Enlai to Moscow to report to the International.73 Consequently, during the crucial period in the summer of 1930 when the Central Committee actually ordered the Red Army to attack the cities, Li Lisan was virtually in sole control of Party policy. Zhou Enlai, who had joined enthusiastically in formulating the radical and offensive line from December 1929 to March 1930, did not approve of the steps toward immediate action taken by Li Lisan in the spring and summer of 1930. Thus these policies can, after all, legitimately be called the “Lisan Line.”

In recent years, Mao Zedong’s attitude toward the Li Lisan line has been the subject of a wide-ranging debate among Chinese scholars enjoying access to the relevant sources. Although some of these authors still adhere to the view laid down in the resolution of 1945 on Party history, according to which Mao never agreed with Li’s plan to attack the cities and carried it out only because discipline required obedience to orders, others argue that Mao Zedong was won over to this strategy by the winter or spring of 1930 and followed it spontaneously and enthusiastically.74

As noted above, the texts translated in this volume provide solid evidence that, beginning in January 1930, Mao did believe a revolutionary tide would soon sweep across China. That does not, of course, mean that Mao and Li agreed in all respects, or that their interests were convergent. On April 3, 1930, the

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69. See below, the Land Law of February 7, 1930.
70. See Party Meetings, p. 104.
72. See below, the documents of February 14 and 16, 1930. It is confirmed in Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 298, that Mao, as one of three members of the presidium of the Pitou Conference, shared responsibility for the proclamation of February 14. As secretary of the new Front Committee, he must also have endorsed the notice of February 16, whether or not he wrote it himself.
73. Jin, Zhou Enlai, pp. 210–13. The immediate reason for sending him was a dispute between the Chinese Communist Party and the “Eastern Bureau” of the Comintern, which served as the agency for transmitting Moscow’s orders.
Central Committee sent a letter to the Front Committee of the Fourth Army stating that the Red Army was “one of the forces directly contributing to an initial victory in one or several provinces.” It was, however, an “extremely erroneous” conservative attitude to assume that this meant (as Mao had said in his letter of April 1929) “taking the whole of Jiangxi in one year.” Taking Jiangxi was possible, but only in the context of a nationwide revolutionary upsurge, and only if the Fourth Army overcame its tendencies toward dispersion and recruited the broad masses to form a truly powerful Red Army. The immediate destination should be Jujiang, which would serve as a guarantee of victory in Wuhan. Finally, Mao was told that he absolutely must obey the order to come to Shanghai for a conference of delegates from the soviet areas which the Central Committee would soon hold.75

Neither Mao’s actions nor those of Li Lisan can be interpreted purely in terms of their rivalry with each other as Richard Thornton tends to argue. Both of them did, after all, seek victory for the Party and the revolution. There can be no doubt, however, that at the very least, Li hoped in this way to kill two birds with one stone: to make use of Mao’s military strength in achieving his own goals and to assert his control over Mao Zedong.76 Mao, for his part, obviously had no intention of risking his freedom, or his life, by going to Shanghai. Further appeals from Li Lisan went unanswered, and at the end of May, Li was obliged to hold the conference of soviet areas without the leader of the most important of them. Mao’s rival Li Wenlin, a leader of the revolutionary organizations in Southwest Jiangxi, did attend, and used the occasion to build up his own standing.77

The political resolution adopted on this occasion repeated the view that, while the Red Army could help achieve victory in one or several provinces, such a prospect was inseparable from a nationwide revolutionary upsurge. To imagine that the soviet areas could preserve their conquests over a prolonged period of time without a victory of the revolution in the entire country was “a great mistake.”78

Meanwhile, Mao was busy conducting an investigation of social, economic, and political conditions in Xunwu, where his forces spent a fortnight in May 1930. As pointed out above, in the General Introduction, an emphasis on practice as the source of knowledge had long been characteristic of Mao Zedong’s thought, and he had frequently carried out social surveys since his student days.79 The Xunwu investigation, presented below in Roger Thompson’s meticulous translation, contains a wealth of information about many aspects of life in that area, including not only agrarian relationships and the history of the land struggle but the types of food and other consumer goods available in the xian town, culture, and relations between men and women.

It was in the course of the Xunwu investigation that Mao first met Gu Bo, who soon became one of his close personal associates, and played an active role in the Futian affair, discussed below in the concluding section of this Introduction.80

From mid to late June 1930, Mao convened a Joint Conference of the Red Fourth Army Front Committee and the Western Fujian Special Committee, which constituted in effect his response to Li Lisan’s May conference of the soviet areas.81 This conference, which met first at Nanyang in Changting xian, and then in Tongzhou City, adopted an extremely harsh line toward privileged strata in the countryside. The International had already warned Li Lisan against his kindness to the rich peasants, and at the May conference of the soviet areas Li called for confiscating “all land of counterrevolutionary kulaks.”82 Mao, for his part, needed no guidance from Moscow to stiffen his hostility to the rich peasants. As noted earlier, his report of November 25, 1928, had adopted a wholly negative attitude toward the “intermediate classes,” and the land law of February 7, 1930, had called for the confiscation of the land of owner-peasants.

The June resolution “On the Problem of the Rich Peasants” began by extend-
ing the definition of this category to include not only “feudal” rich peasants with extra land to rent out, and “capitalist” rich peasants with the resources to hire others to work the land for them, but “newly enriched” peasants who had surplus grain every year, though they relied on their own labor. Such people were regarded by many in the Party as “middle peasants,” but Mao in this text characterized their “semifeudal exploitation” as even crueler than that of the landlords. In his preface to the Xunwu investigation, written in February 1931, Mao acknowledged that in May 1930 he “still did not completely understand the problem of China’s rich peasants” and deplored the absence, in the Xunwu investigation, of a separate discussion of the landholdings of rich, middle, and poor peasants. His self-proclaimed ignorance of the rich peasants did not, however, inhibit him from urging that they be pitilessly expropriated. Mao’s continuing faith in a rapid and total victory of the revolution found expression in the statement that land redistribution could be completed in two weeks, after which the Party could begin immediately to criticize the limitations of individual ownership in the countryside and urge the peasants to move forward toward socialist collective cultivation.83

The Nanyang conference also adopted a resolution on the vagabonds which treats these people as generally counterrevolutionary and “capable of turning traitor at any time.” It is, read the text, particularly necessary to purge them from the ranks of the Red Army “at this time, when the high tide of revolution is approaching swiftly, and preparations for a general uprising in the whole country to achieve nationwide victory are ever more urgent.”84 This may well have reflected an attempt on Mao’s part to make himself appear more orthodox in the eyes of the Central Committee, which was constantly accusing him not only of “peasant consciousness” but of associating with bandits and other riffraff. It is, in any case, unlike most of Mao’s other writings regarding such marginal elements in Chinese society.

Mao was not, of course, investigating these matters merely out of idle curiosity. On the one hand, a knowledge of social relationships was obviously important to someone who wished to manipulate them in order to make revolution. But, on the other hand, Mao considered that the concrete knowledge he had acquired by engaging in such surveys gave him unique qualifications for leading the revolution.

This point is driven home in the text which appears, below, immediately after the Xunwu investigation: “Oppose Bookism.” After enunciating at the outset his famous aphorism “Without investigation, there is no right to speak,” Mao went on to spell out the obvious implications of this view for his relationship with Li Lisan and others in Shanghai. “Surprisingly,” he wrote, “when problems are discussed within the Communist Party, there are also people who say, whenever they open their mouths, ‘Show me where it’s written in the book.’ ” Even Marxist books, he added, though they should be studied, “must be integrated with our actual situation.” Plainly this was aimed at those who had learned about Marxism in Moscow, or in Paris, but did not know or understand the realities of rural China.

In “Oppose Bookism,” Mao also wrote: “To carry out directives blindly without discussing and examining them in the light of the real conditions, simply because they come from ‘higher levels,’ is a formalistic attitude which is quite wrong.” Mao Zedong had, as we have seen, refused a year earlier to commit this error of blind obedience. And yet, in mid-June, when Li Lisan, having determined that the moment had arrived to put his line into practice, ordered the Fourth Army to attack major cities, Mao immediately agreed to do so.

On June 11, 1930, Li put through the Politburo a resolution declaring that the Chinese revolution could set off the world revolution and bring about the final victory over imperialism.85 At about the same time, a resolution was adopted calling for the reorganization of the Red Army in four army groups. The First Army Group comprised the forces of Zhu and Mao, the Second those of He Long in Hunan, the Third those of Peng Dehuai in the former Jinggangshan base area, and the Fourth the guerrilla bands in areas north of the Yangzi. All these forces were to be placed under a single command, with Zhu De as commander in chief and Mao Zedong as political commissar. No doubt Li Lisan believed that he could control Mao more effectively if he were directly subordinated to the Central Committee.86

On June 15, Li addressed a letter to the Front Committee denouncing the previous behavior of the Fourth Army in the bluntest possible terms and demanding that they change their ways. Mao and his comrades, said Li, understood nothing of the changed political situation brought about by the contradictions in the reactionary camp and were therefore incapable of comprehending the orders of the Central Committee, which they had persistently disobeyed. These points were repeated like a refrain in every paragraph. Li also taunted Mao with being “terrified of imperialism” and having for this reason rejected earlier instructions to take the offensive in directions where the imperialists were strong. Once again, Mao was accused of “peasant consciousness,” which led him to regard rural work as primary and urban work as secondary. He did not understand, said Li, that the land revolution could be carried through only if the rule of the Guomindang were overthrown in the whole country. “Your viewpoint regarding independent régimes,” Li wrote, “is a peasant viewpoint.”87

84. See below, “The Problem of Vagabonds,” June 1930. This text was drafted by Deng Zhui, but Mao revised and endorsed it.
85. The resolution of June 11, 1930, can be found in Central Committee Documents (1930), pp. 115–35. For a slightly abridged translation, see Documentary History, pp. 184–206.
86. This view has been put forward by Thornton, The Comintern and Chinese Communists, p. 157.
87. For the text of the letter dated June 15, 1930, see Central Committee Documents (1930), pp. 137–41.
This rude and insulting missive did not, in fact, reach Mao until October. Meanwhile, however, Li Lisan sent an emissary, Tu Zhennong, to inform Mao of the substance of the Central Committee’s recent decisions. Tu arrived at the headquarters of Zhu and Mao in Changting on June 21, 1930, and gave a report lasting two days.

In the context created by Li Lisan’s order to launch an offensive against the cities, Mao was led to devote a great deal of his time to military matters. This volume contains nearly fifty orders and directives, signed by Zhu and Mao, for the six months from June 22 to December 29. Many of these deal in fine detail with routes and schedules for the movement of various units belonging to the First Army Group, but they also contain Mao’s observations on the overall strategy of the revolution. This dimension of his thinking is developed more systematically in nine or ten letters, telegrams, reports, and resolutions dating from the second half of 1930. Taken together, these materials provide a far more concrete and vivid account of Mao’s role in the implementation of the Li Lisan Line than has previously been available.

The day after Tu Zhennong came to report on Li’s new strategy, Zhu and Mao issued an order stressing that the situation “was opening up a good deal” because of the conflict between Chiang Kai-shek and his rivals, so that the First Route Army, “in concert with the masses of workers and peasants,” could “seize Jiuxiang and Nanchang so as to establish political power in Jiangxi.” Three days later, Mao produced a telegram which echoed in fact, with exemplary fervor, all the key points of the Li Lisan line. “The revolutionary rule,” Mao wrote, “is already headed toward collapse.” He confirmed that the First Army Group would advance on Nanchang and regroup at Wuhan with the Second and Third Army Groups. They would “seize victory first of all in the provinces of Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi, in order to push forward the nationwide revolutionary high tide.” But at the same time, the telegram called for political strikes by the workers, local uprisings by the peasants, and revolts by the troops of the White armies. It looked forward not only to the complete overthrow of the Guomindang but to the “final decisive battle against the Guomindang warlords and the imperialists,” adding that the victory of the Chinese revolution would raise the curtain on the world revolution.

88. This fact is stated by Mao himself in the letter of October 14, 1930, to the Central Committee, translated below. It is confirmed by Jin Chongxi, Zhu De, p. 205.
89. Jin, Zhu De, p. 205. For information regarding Tu Zhennong, see the note to the report of September 17, 1930.
90. As explained below, in the “Note on Sources and Conventions,” we have placed at the head of this volume two maps showing the area in which these military actions took place. It has not seemed appropriate to annotate all the names of places and individuals which appear in these orders, but the full texts have been translated as background to the writings of a more general character referred to below.
91. See below, “Order to the First Route Army of the Red Army to Set Out from Western Fujian and regroup at Guangchang,” June 22, 1930.
for coordinated uprisings in those places, arguing that both the Red Army and the workers' movement should first be further strengthened.94

Although Li Lisan received this letter four days before Peng Dehuai's Third Army Group attacked and occupied Changsha on July 27, 1930, he chose to ignore it and to conceal it from others in the Party. He probably felt that he had no choice but to go forward. Victory, which he still believed possible, would justify him in the eyes of the International; defeat would be scarcely a greater disaster than ignominious retreat.

Peng's forces were able to take Changsha, thanks to the "chaotic struggles among the warlords" to which Mao repeatedly referred. In the context of the war between Chiang Kai-shek and the Guanzhong faction, Governor He Jin had sent most of his forces to pursue the troops of Zhang Fakui and Li Zongren, thus greatly weakening the garrison at Changsha. Despite this initial victory, however, the workers' uprising central to Li Lisan's strategy did not materialize. As a result, the Red Army was obliged to evacuate the city ten days later, on August 6, 1930.

Meanwhile, at the end of July, the First Army Group of Zhu and Mao approached Nanchang, as promised in the June 25 telegram. Some of the cadres wanted to attack the city, but Mao Zedong and Zhu De were skeptical about the prospects, and sent Luo Binghui to reconnoiter. Luo reported back that the enemy forces were extremely strong and their positions were well fortified. It was therefore decided to limit the action to taking a railroad station across the river from Nanchang, and shooting off guns to commemorate the third anniversary of the Nanchang uprising on August 1.95

These events provide the context for Mao's poem, dated July 1930, "From Tingzhou to Changsha." It is suggested in the notes to our translation that this was written after the first onslaught on the cities had ended in defeat. The exact date of composition is uncertain, and it could also have been written on the way, but in the awareness that the enterprise on which Mao and his comrades had embarked was hazardous indeed.

In mid-August, despite the difficulties and defeats already encountered, Mao proclaimed his intention of taking Changsha, and advancing on Wuhan. At the same time, he asked the Central Committee to send him reinforcements—if possible, as many as thirty thousand.96 On August 23, 1930, the First Army Group of Zhu and Mao, having gone to Hunan to participate in the new attack on Changsha, joined together with Peng Dehuai's Third Army Group to establish


95. See below, the "Order to Seize the Niuhang Railway Station," and also Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 312–13.

96. See below, "Letter to the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, for Transmission to the Central Committee," August 19, 1930.

97. See below, the translations of these two documents. The order of September 12 referred explicitly only to "postponing" the assault on Changsha until a more opportune moment, but its significance was clear.

98. "Report to the Central Committee," September 17, 1930.

99. Regarding the extremely complex interrelation between ideology, regional and provincial differences, economic interests, and political organizations in Jiangxi at this time, see the previously cited article by Stephen C. Averill, "The Origins of the Futian Incident," pp. 79–115, especially pp. 100–102.
Mao argued, while it had cost the Red Army heavy losses, had “demolished the prestige” of more than thirty Guomindang regiments, and in that sense constituted a great victory.100

On September 29, Zhou Yili, an emissary from the Yangzi River Bureau of the Central Committee, came to the headquarters of the First Front Army in Yichun (now Yuanzhou) with a letter from the Central Committee dated August 29 ordering yet another attack on Changsha. Mao succeeded in convincing him that this was not feasible, and Zhou accepted the plan for taking Ji’an put forward by Mao and Zhu. The ensuing military orders dated September 29, October 2, and October 3 contain little of general interest, but trace the progress of the offensive against Ji’an. As stipulated in the orders of October 2 and October 3, the final attack took place on October 4, and the Red Army occupied the city on that day.

A resolution dated from Ji’an on October 7, 1930, refers to the existence of “a revolutionary situation in the whole world, in the whole country, in all provinces,” and concludes: “In the course of this revolutionary ‘high tide’ [gaochao] ... soviet power must undoubtedly burst upon the scene in the whole country and in the whole world.”101 This language echoes the telegram of June 25, 1930. The same tone continues three weeks later, in the resolution of October 26, 1930, on the political situation, which states that the “revolutionary high tide in China will soon take the form of a general outburst.”

**Toward a Strategy of Protracted War**

The disastrous failures of the summer and early autumn of 1930 led, understandably, to a sharp struggle within the top leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, in which the Communist International ultimately played a decisive role. This, in turn, changed the context in which Mao Zedong was operating, creating both opportunities and threats. But before turning to these aspects of the situation in late 1930, some of Mao’s writings of this period merit a brief comment.

Among the most interesting of these are his rural investigations. Both while his army was occupying Ji’an and during the retreat from that city, Mao continued the practice of summoning meetings everywhere he went to collect data regarding social and economic conditions which he had inaugurated in May 1930 with the Xunwu investigation. The most important of these exercises in late 1930 was the Xingguo investigation of October 1930. This text, translated below, is only slightly over half as long as that regarding Xunwu. It contained, however, as Mao noted in his preface, more analysis than did the Xunwu survey regarding the differing attitudes of the various classes toward land reform. This substantial document, and the brief notes regarding Dongtang, Mukou Village, and other places underscore Mao’s continuing commitment to the axiom he had laid down in May 1930: “No investigation, no right to speak.”

Particular importance attaches to Mao’s attitude toward the rich peasants, since this was one of the main points of divergence between him and Li Lisan. We have already noted Mao’s continuing sharp hostility to this class, from the Jingshangshan Report of November 1928 to the February 7, 1930, land law, to the June 1930 conference which produced the resolution “On the Problem of the Rich Peasants.” Generally speaking, this attitude continues in the materials of the second half of 1930, though it is perhaps slightly attenuated. Thus, in the Xingguo investigation, Mao stigmatizes the rich peasants as, with the landlords, one of the “truly exploiting classes” (see Section II, “The Old Land Relationships in this District”), but adds that, in one district, five out of twelve rich peasant families had in fact joined the revolution (Section III, “The Various Classes in the Struggle”). In the same text, he declares that the youmin, or vagrants, “generally favor the revolution” (Section III, par. 8). His sweeping denunciation of similar elements in the text of June 1930, “The Problem of Vagabonds,” may thus have been something of an aberration.

In defending his own policy of equal redistribution on the basis of the number of family members versus the criterion of labor power, Mao Zedong several times attacked the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, which had adopted the latter principle at its Second Plenum of July 1930.102 The tension between this body and the First Front Army has already been mentioned above. The Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee was to be Mao’s adversary in November and December 1930 in one of the most savage inner-Party struggles in which he was ever involved: the so-called Futian Incident.

During the months leading up to this clash, Li Lisan’s position in the Party was significantly weakened, but he by no means lost all influence. The Third Plenum of the Central Committee met in Shanghai from September 24 to 28, 1930.103 Zhou Enlai, who had been sent to Moscow by Li in March 1930 to explain his new line, was sent back to China by the International to participate in this gathering, as was Qu Qiubai, who chaired the meeting. Stalin’s intention was that on this occasion Li Lisan should be sternly condemned, but the Plenum was, in fact, largely a whitewash. Li was found guilty only of individual tactical mistakes, but not of a systematic error of “line.”

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100. See below, the translations of these two texts.
101. The full text of this resolution is not currently available. The passages cited here were quoted by Qu Qiubai in an article in Shui hua (True Words), no. 2 (December 9, 1930), pp. 3–4. Qu was, of course, seeking to justify himself by criticizing the leftist errors of others, but these extracts are undoubtedly authentic.
103. Most earlier studies, including serious monographs such as that of Thornton (The Comintern and the Chinese Communists, p. 187), indicate that the meeting took place in Lushan, but it has now been revealed that this statement in the contemporary documents was a deliberate distortion for security reasons.
This development can be understood in part as an effort by the leftists Qu and Zhou to protect their fellow leftist Li Lisan, in order to safeguard their own position vis-à-vis the rightists such as Zhang Guotao and Cai Hesen. It should also be noted, however, that Moscow did not begin denouncing “errors of line” by the Chinese Party until it was learned that Li Lisan was calling for uprisings in Mongolia, and talking about “world revolution.” Such a perspective, which implied the involvement of the Soviet Union in a worldwide civil war, was wholly unacceptable to Stalin. The International therefore sent a letter in November utterly condemning the Third Plenum. “The peasant movement,” stated the letter, “has far outpaced, in speed and scope, the movement of the industrial workers.” When Li Lisan proposed an armed uprising in Wuhan, the letter noted, the Chinese Communist Party had only two hundred members there. To attack the major centers, tightly controlled by imperialism, would only bleed white both the urban working class and the Red Army.

Toward the end of November, the Comintern’s China expert, Pavel Mif, arrived in China, and at a Politburo meeting on December 14, he obtained the agreement of the Chinese leadership to the convening of a Fourth Plenum. This meeting, which took place on January 16, 1931, finally and definitively repudiated the Li Lisan line and installed a new leading group headed by Chen Shaoyu (better known under his pseudonym, Wang Ming). Zhou Enlai, who at the December 14 meeting had wholeheartedly endorsed Mif’s position and denounced Li Lisan, remained a member of the Politburo chosen at the Fourth Plenum. Li Lisan had already been sent to Moscow for a “trial” before Comintern interrogators. Qu Qiubai lost influence in the Party and was assigned to cultural work. Otherwise, the leadership was entirely made up of Mif’s pupils and protégés known as the “Twenty-eight Bolsheviks.”

Information regarding the Third Plenum reached the First Front Army only in December. In any case, on reading it, Mao could only have concluded that Li Lisan remained a powerful figure whose influence constituted a threat to his policies. Of the Comintern letter of November 16 and Li’s subsequent disgrace, Mao presumably knew nothing.

Whatever his understanding of the situation in Moscow and Shanghai, Mao Zedong was also involved, as already noted, in a complex set of relations with those who exercised power in the Party at the local level. The conflict was particularly acute with the Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee and the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, dominated at this time by Li Wenlin. Despite the tensions between them, Mao’s General Front Committee and Li Wenlin’s Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee held a “Joint Conference” in Luofang from October 25 to November 1, 1930. The “Resolution on the Land Problem” of October 19, 1930, endorsed on this occasion, asserted that the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee was filled with AB Corps elements. (The initials “AB” are commonly thought to stand for “Anti-Bolshevik”; in any case, this body had been formed in 1925–1926 to fight the Communists.)

The Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee had, in fact, waged a major campaign from May to September 1930 against AB Corps infiltration of the Party, in response to prompting from Moscow and the Central Committee. The reference to this phenomenon in the October 19 resolution was thus, in itself, widely acceptable. Indeed, another resolution adopted at the Luofang Joint Conference called for a struggle against the AB Corps in the First Front Army as well. There was, however, disagreement both about the nature of the AB Corps and about the reasons for the excesses committed in the course of the campaign in Southwest Jiangxi.

At the Luofang Conference, Li Wenlin had criticized the principle of “luring the enemy deep,” which Mao regarded, together with the strategy of a “protracted war,” as one of the two cornerstones of his military thought. In November, Mao therefore judged that the time had come to take forceful action against his opponents in Jiangxi. In the course of the ensuing confused struggles, the real policy differences became intertwined with reciprocal accusations of association with the AB Corps, on the basis of tenuous evidence, or no evidence at all save for confessions under torture. In November 1930, some 4,000 of the 40,000 officers and men in the First Front Army were arrested as AB Corps members, and about half of them were executed.

In late November, Mao arrested Li Wenlin on the same charge. Thereafter, Mao sent his fellow Hunanese, Li Shaojiu, a member of his political staff, to carry out a purge in Futian and then in Donggu, in which many cadres were arrested, tortured, and executed or threatened with execution. It was in the context of these actions that the events known as the “Futian Incident” or the “Futian Rebellion” took place.

This whole episode is so confusing and controversial that it is difficult to summarize the facts with confidence, but a few points are agreed on by all the

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104. Perhaps the most cogent argument for this view is that of Thornton, _The Comintern and the Chinese Communists_, pp. 188–200.

105. For extracts from the Comintern letter of November 16, 1930, including the passages cited here, see Degras, _Communist International_, III, pp. 135–41.


107. See below, the translation of this resolution.

108. See below, “The Present Political situation and the Tasks of the First Front Army and of the Party in Jiangxi,” October 26, 1930.


110. On “luring the enemy deep,” see below, “Investigations in Dongtang and Other Places,” November 8, 1930. The strategy of a “protracted war” is outlined in Section III of “Eight Great Conditions for Victory,” December 22, 1930, translated below, which also discusses “luring the enemy deep.”
conflicting accounts.111 In the aftermath of Li Shaojiu’s exactions, Liu Di, a battalion political commissar, turned against him on December 11, seized control in Donggu, made a forced march to Futian and there attacked the prison, releasing some twenty members of the Southwest Jiangxi Action Committee. More than a hundred of Mao’s supporters were killed in the course of these events.112

The men freed in Donggu and Futian thereupon declared that, although hostile to Mao, they were loyal to the Party and to the Central Committee. They appealed to the three military leaders, Zhu De, Peng Dehuai, and Huang Gonglue, to detain Mao and join them in resisting his policies. Zhu De, as noted above, had earlier clashed with Mao on some issues, but Zhu and Peng now agreed with Mao’s military strategy. Their support ultimately enabled Mao to assert his authority once again. A highly polemical but rather detailed overview of the inner-Party polemics in December 1930, and of the role of Zhu De and Peng Dehuai, is provided by the “Letter of Reply by the General Front Committee” of December 1930, translated below. Although it is not signed by Mao, he was the secretary of this committee, and the letter may therefore be presumed to reflect his views.

There followed a period of confused military and political struggle, which was not pursued wholeheartedly by either side because each was waiting to hear more about what had happened to Li Lisan and his line. The worst killings by Mao’s supporters took place in early 1931, after news of the final overthrow of Li Lisan at the Fourth Plenum had reached the area, in the context of a campaign to “suppress counterrevolutionaries.”

Meanwhile, despite the disruption thus caused, the forces of Mao Zedong,

Zhu De, and Peng Dehuai defeated the Guomindang troops sent against them by Chiang Kai-shek in the first “Campaign of Encirclement and Annihilation,” in late December 1930 and early January 1931.

Although Mao had thus won a substantial military victory, and the role of Li Lisan was greatly diminished, he would soon find himself faced with an even more powerful faction in the Central Committee, supported by the Soviet Union. Those developments, like the further unfolding of the struggle symbolized by the Futian Incident, belong to the period covered by Volume IV of our edition and will be illustrated by the materials published there.

111. Among the earlier studies, some of the most detailed and interesting are that of John Rue, in his Mao Tse-tung in Opposition 1927–1935 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), pp. 218–35, (hereafter, Rue, Mao in Opposition), sympathetic but not uncritical; Hsiao Tso-liang, Power Relations within the Chinese Communist Movement, 1930–1934 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), pp. 98–113, (hereafter, Hsiao, Power Relations), hostile to Mao but balanced and well documented; and, for a critical Soviet perspective, Grigor’ev, The Revolutionary Movement in China, pp. 223–27. The most authoritative recent overview is that, already cited, of Stephen Averill, “Futian Incident.” Basing himself on recently published Chinese studies and a wide range of primary sources, Averill stresses the importance of local conditions and especially of the tensions between cadres from Jiangxi and Mao’s largely Hunanese army in bringing about the incident. Yung-fa Ch’en, in his article already cited, while recognizing the significance of this factor, emphasizes rather the political conflict between Mao and Li Wenlin resulting from the fact that Li was a fervent partisan of the Li Lisan Line, which both Mao and Li still believed to correspond in large measure to the position of the Central Committee.

112. See Averill, “Futian Incident,” especially pp. 100–08. Some authors have argued that the AB Corps had ceased to exist in Jiangxi by 1930, but Averill offers convincing evidence that such a group did exist within the Guomindang. That does not mean, of course, that those denounced by Mao, or by his rivals in the Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee, were actually members of this organization, or even that their accusers sincerely believed they were.
Note on Sources and Conventions

This edition of Mao Zedong's writings in English translation aims to serve a dual audience, comprising not only China specialists, but those interested in Mao from other perspectives. In terms of content and presentation, we have done our best to make it useful and accessible to both these groups.

Scope. This is a complete edition, in the sense that it will include a translation of every item of which the Chinese text can be obtained. It cannot be absolutely complete, because some materials are still kept under tight control in the archives of the Chinese Communist Party. The situation has, however, changed dramatically since Mao's death, as a result of the publication in China, either openly or for restricted circulation (neibu), of a number of important texts.

Although the Zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Department for Research on Party Literature), which is the organ of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party responsible for the publication of Mao's writings, has always disclaimed any intention of producing his complete pre-1949 works, it appeared at one time that an edition containing a very full selection was in fact on the way, at least for a part of his early career. An advertising leaflet dated December 20, 1988, announced the appearance, in the spring of 1989, of two volumes, Mao Zedong zaoqi zhuzuo ji (Collected Writings by Mao Zedong from the Early Period), and Jiandang he da geming shiqi Mao Zedong zhuzuo ji (Collected Writings by Mao Zedong during the Period of Establishing the Party and of the Great Revolution [of 1924-1927]), and invited advance orders for both volumes. The events of June 4, 1989, led first to the postponement of publication, and then to the decision to issue only the first of these volumes, for internal circulation, under the new title of Mao Zedong zaoqi wengao, 1912.6-1920.11 (Draft Writings by Mao Zedong for the Early Period, June 1912-November 1920).

Prior to June 1989, further volumes in a similar format were in preparation. These plans have now been set aside, and no complete Chinese edition can be expected unless there is a radical change in the political situation. But, as forecast in Volume I, the corpus of available materials has now been substantially expanded by the publication in Beijing in December 1993 of two major series to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Mao's birth. These are the Mao Zedong wenji (Collected Writings of Mao Zedong), of which the first two volumes, for the period 1921-1942, have now appeared, and the third volume is in press; and a six-volume edition of Mao's military writings, Mao Zedong junshi wenji (Collected Military Writings of Mao Zedong). We have therefore resumed the publication of our edition, after the pause for the centenary announced in Volume I.
Sources. Since there is no complete, or nearly complete, Chinese edition of Mao’s writings from December 1920 onward, this and all subsequent volumes of our edition must be drawn from a variety of materials.

The twenty volumes of the Mao Zedong ji (Collected Writings of Mao Zedong) and the Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan (Collected Writings of Mao Zedong. Supplement), edited by Professor Takeuchi Minoru and published in Tokyo in the 1970s and 1980s still constitute the most important single collection of Mao’s pre-1949 writings available outside China. (For details on this, and other sources cited below, see the Bibliography at the end of this volume.) Apart from the Selected Works of the 1950s (discussed below), other official Chinese editions of Mao’s works, especially the two century series described above, contain a number of important new items. The various specialized volumes issued in the 1980s to commemorate Mao’s ninetieth birthday also provide useful materials from the pre-1949 period. Those drawn on in this volume include Mao Zedong nongcun diaocha wenji (Collected Writings by Mao Zedong on Rural Surveys), published in 1982, and Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji (Selected Correspondence of Mao Zedong), which appeared in 1983.

As already indicated, all of these recent publications of the Party center are selective. Fortunately, we have been able to supplement them with materials drawn from an extremely wide range of sources, including contemporary newspapers and periodicals of the 1920s and 1930s, individual texts published in China for restricted circulation, and facsimiles of handwritten materials. Particularly important, for the period covered by this volume, is the series Jiangxi dangshi ziliao (Materials on Jiangxi Party History), published in Jiangxi Province, which contains the texts of many orders and letters signed by Mao that are not available elsewhere.

Information regarding the source we have followed is given in an unnumbered footnote at the beginning of each text. We have also included in these source notes information about the first publication, or the earliest known version, of the writing in question, whenever available. To avoid ambiguity, all works referred to in these notes are designated by their Chinese titles, sometimes in a shortened version. (For indications regarding short titles, and for full bibliographical details regarding all works cited, including those mentioned above, see the Bibliography at the end of this volume.)

Other things being equal, we have generally referred the reader who wishes to consult the Chinese text to the Mao Zedong ji and the Bujuan whenever the item in question appears there, because this series offers the convenience of a large quantity of materials in compact form. There are, however, instances in which the version contained in recent official Chinese publications is more accurate or more complete, and we have accordingly taken it as the basis for our translation. In such cases, the nature of the more significant differences is indicated in notes to the text in question, but we have not sought to show the variants systematically. That has been done only in dealing with changes made in the original text of Mao’s writings when they were revised for inclusion in the official edition of his Selected Works.

Variants. While there are some differences between the various versions of texts by Mao published in the 1930s and 1940s, these are on the whole minor. Systematic revision of his pre-1949 writings was undertaken only from 1950 onward, in preparing the four-volume edition of the Mao Zedong xuanji, translated into English as the Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung. This problem did not arise in our Volume I, because its coverage ended in 1920, and the earliest item in the Selected Works is the “Analysis of All the Classes in Chinese Society,” written in 1925. Apart from this text, Volume II contained the well-known “Report on the Peasant Movement in Hunan” of February 1927. The present volume includes four items of this kind, two from late 1928, one from December 1929, and one from January 1930.

Much ink has been spilled regarding the question of which version of the texts included in the official canon is more authentic, or more authoritative. Despite the passions formerly aroused by this issue, the answer seems rather obvious. For purposes of the historical record, only the text as originally written (when it is available) can tell us what Mao actually said in the 1920s and thereafter. For the study of Mao’s thought, both versions have their uses in documenting how his ideas evolved over time. For purposes of defining ideological orthodoxy under the People’s Republic, the Selected Works version is, of course, the ultimate standard.

In any case, the purpose of this edition is not to lay down which was the “real” Mao, but to enable the reader to distinguish between what Mao wrote at any given moment in his life, and the revised texts which were produced in the 1950s under Mao’s close supervision, and often with his own active participation. We have endeavored to do this in the following manner:

1. The translations that appear here correspond to the earliest available version of the text in question.
2. Words and passages from this original version that have been deleted in the Xuanji are printed in italics.
3. Substantive and significant changes in the text, including additions made by Mao, or under his authority, in the 1950s, are shown in the footnotes. The Mao Zedong ji indicates meticulously all changes, including those that involve only matters of punctuation or style (such as the frequent replacement of the somewhat more literary conjunction yu by the more colloquial he, both meaning “and.”) We have shown in the English version only those changes that appeared to us to have a significant impact on the meaning of the text. Any such judgement is, of course, in some degree subjective. We have sought to err on the side of showing too many variants, rather than too few, even when there was monotonous repetition in the changes, but we have not hesitated to leave out of account variants we regarded as trivial.
In footnotes of this kind, the words that appear before the arrow reproduce enough of the original text to identify what has been changed. The words that appear after the arrow correspond to what has been added or revised in the Xuanji. Because, in the rewriting of the 1950s, sentences and whole passages have often been substantially recast, it would take up far too much space, and make our text unreadable, to show every variant in detail. In some instances, it has been possible to show the new version in the form of complete sentences, but frequently we include only enough of the new wording to make plain the main thrust of the changes.

Because the official translation of the Selected Works has been available for four decades, and has been widely quoted in the literature, we have taken this version as our starting-point whenever it corresponds to the original Chinese text, but have modified or corrected it as we judged appropriate. As indicated above, in the Introduction, we have incorporated Roger Thompson’s translation of the Xunwu investigation of May 1930 into this volume. In those few instances where other materials in this book had already been published in English, we have made our own translations, comparing them subsequently with existing versions.

Annotation. So that any attentive reader will be able to follow the details of Mao’s argument in each case, we have assumed no knowledge of anything relating to China. Persons, institutions, places, and events are briefly characterized at the point where Mao first refers to them. Some individuals of secondary importance, especially those who appear only as names in a long list, are not included in the notes. We have also ruled out, with rare exceptions, annotations regarding people or events in the West. Despite these limitations, the reader will soon discover that the personages who appear in these pages are as numerous as the characters in a traditional Chinese novel.

To keep the notes within reasonable compass, we have generally restricted those regarding Mao’s contemporaries to their lives down to the period covered by each volume. To make it easier to locate information, a number of references have been inserted indicating where the first note about a given individual appears in the volume. In a few instances, notes about Mao’s contemporaries have been split into two, so that the reader will not be confronted in reading a text regarding the late 1920s with information relating to events of the 1930s which might themselves require explanation.

In most biographical notes dates of birth and death, separated by a hyphen, are given immediately after the name. A blank following the hyphen should, in principle, signify that the person in question is still living. In the case of individuals born in the 1870s and 1880s, this is obviously unlikely, but in many instances even the editors working in Beijing have not been able to ascertain the facts. We have done our best to fill these gaps, but have not always succeeded. Sometimes a Chinese source ends with the word “deceased” (si/guo), without giving the date of death. Here we have inserted a question mark after the hyphen, and have mentioned the fact in the note. It should not be assumed that all those born in the 1890s for whom no second date is given are already dead; some of them are in fact very much alive as of 1995.

Beginning in 1928, the geography of the areas in Jiangxi, Hunan, and Fujian where the forces of Mao Zedong and Zhu De were operating figures extensively in the texts of Mao’s writings. This is especially true for the latter half of 1930, where many of the orders translated here chronicle the progress of the Red Army from day to day, and even from hour to hour. To annotate all of the place names mentioned would have imposed an intolerable burden on the printer, and on the reader. We have therefore provided notes regarding geography, or the terrain, only in exceptional cases. In order to facilitate the understanding of the text, we have, however, included two maps, one of South-central China, and the other showing, on a larger scale, the principal localities in the base areas mentioned by Mao. These appear immediately after the present “Note on Sources and Conventions.”

The introductions, including that to the present volume, should be considered in a very real sense as an extension of the notes. These texts will, we hope, help readers unfamiliar with Mao Zedong, or with twentieth-century China, find their own way through Mao’s writings of the early period. Any controversial or provocative statements which they may contain are intended to stimulate reflection, not to impose a particular interpretation on the reader. This is a collection of historical source material, not a volume of interpretation.

Use of Chinese terms. On the whole, we have sought to render all Chinese expressions into accurate and readable English, but in some cases it has seemed simpler and less ambiguous to use the Chinese word. These instances include, to begin with, zi (courtesy name) and hao (literary name). Because both Mao, and the authors he cited, frequently employ these alternative appellations instead of the ming or given name of the individual to whom they are referring, information regarding them is essential to the intelligence of the text. The English word “style” is sometimes used here, but because it may stand either for zi or for hao, it does not offer a satisfactory solution. The Chinese terms have, in any case, long been used in Western-language biographical dictionaries of China, as well as in Chinese works.

Similarly, in the case of second or provincial-level, and third or metropolitan-level graduates of the old examination system, we have chosen to use the Chinese terms, respectively juren and jinshi. The literal translations of “recommended man” and “presented scholar” would hardly have been suitable for expressions which recur constantly in Mao’s writings, nor would Western parallels (such as “doctorate” for jinshi) have been adequate. We have also preferred xian to “county” for the administrative subdivision which constituted the lowest level of the imperial bureaucracy, and still exists in China today. Apart from the Western connotations of “county,” there is the problem that xian is also often translated “district” (as in the expression “district magistrate”), and “district” itself is ambiguous in the Chinese context. We have also preferred to use the Chinese word li rather than to translate “Chinese league” (or simply “league”), or to give the equivalent in miles or kilometers.
Approximately one-third of this entire volume consists of the investigations of local conditions to which Mao attached such importance. The most important of these are the Xunwu investigation of May 1930, reproduced here from Roger Thompson’s monograph Mao Zedong, Report from Xunwu (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), and the Xingguo investigation of October 1930. For obvious reasons, Mao employed in these texts many different units of measurement, which it has seemed on the whole preferable to leave untranslated, in order to avoid ambiguity. Each such unit is explained and defined at the point of its first occurrence. To make it easier to find the relevant footnotes, they have been included in the index, under the Chinese name of the unit in question.

Monetary units are, if possible, the source of even greater confusion than units of weight or volume. Generally speaking, the Chinese term for “dollar,” yuan, has been left untranslated. It was, however, used in the 1920s and 1930s in two different senses: to designate 1 yuan silver coins, and the corresponding banknotes, and to refer to 10-cent or 20-cent silver coins totaling 1 yuan. This fractional currency did not enjoy its full face value, but was discounted by varying amounts depending on the time and place. To avoid ambiguity, whole-yuan coins or banknotes were commonly referred to as da yang, or “big foreign [dollars],” while the smaller coins and notes were called xiao yang or “small foreign [dollars].”

As in Volume II of this edition, where this problem occurs in Mao’s report of May 1926 on propaganda (p. 373 and note 3), we have translated da yang as “big foreign dollars.” Xiao yang, in contexts where Mao explicitly discusses the relation between the two units, is translated “small foreign dollars.” Where yuan appears without any further indications, it can be assumed that it almost certainly stands for fractional silver currency with a face value of one dollar. More information about monetary units is contained in the notes to the Xunwu and Xingguo investigations. (See also Appendix A to Roger Thompson’s Report from Xunwu.)

In one other instance, we have used an English translation instead of a Chinese term. The main subdivisions in older writings, commonly referred to by their Chinese name of juan, are here called simply “volume” (abbreviated as “Vol.”). Readers who consult the Chinese texts should have no difficulty in determining when this refers to the physically-separate volumes of modern editions, and when it means juan.

Presentation. As already indicated, we have tried to turn Mao’s Chinese into good English. At the same time, since this is a work of reference, we have sometimes followed Mao in directions which do not accord with English usage. Mao frequently emphasized words or phrases by placing dots or circles next to each of the characters involved. In this edition, the corresponding text has been set in bold. Usually we have also added a note explicitly pointing this out, but it should be clearly stated that all such highlighting is Mao’s, not ours. Also, some of the Chinese texts we have translated contain omissions, because the editors in Tokyo, or even those in Beijing, did not have access to a complete version of the document in question, or could not read a few characters. When the number of
About the Maps

As explained above, in the Note on Sources and Conventions, the two maps which appear here have been included in order to aid the reader in following Mao’s often minutely detailed account of the geography of battles and of political events. The different symbols employed indicate the importance of the towns in question. On Map No. 1, the solid squares designate provincial capitals; the hollow squares represent other major centers. Since Map No. 2 does not include any provincial capitals, solid squares are used there for the biggest cities shown. On both maps, the larger round dots correspond to xian administrative centers. The small dots are used for lesser localities prominently mentioned in the materials included in this volume. Since the aim of the maps is to illustrate the text, rather than to achieve cartographic precision, the location of the various dots may not always be mathematically exact.
The Hunan Problem
(July 4, 1927)

Zhong,1 Luo,2 Mao, Zhong,3 He,4 Liu,5 Zhou,6 Shuzhi,7 Teli.8

This text consists of a portion of the stenographic record of a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party. Our source is a photocopy of the handwritten text contained in *Mao Zedong junshi shengyu* (Mao Zedong's Military Career), edited by the Chinese People's Revolutionary Military Museum (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1993), p. 29. A passage from these minutes is reproduced in an article by Sun Gang, "Mao Zedong 'shangshan' sixiang de tichu" (How Mao Zedong Put Forward the Idea of "Going up the Mountains"), *Dangde wenzian*, no. 1, 1988, p. 78. Although the copy we have followed is not entirely clear, we believe that our translation renders the content with reasonable accuracy. Our source breaks off rather abruptly, but no fuller version is available to us.

1. Zhongfu was the zi of Chen Duxiu, who at this time was still secretary general of the Party. (On July 12, 1927, he was dropped from these functions, and from the Politburo, on the orders of the International.) For details regarding Chen, see below, the relevant note to the letter of November 28, 1929, to Li Lisan.

2. Luo stands for Luo Mai, pseudonym of Li Weihan (1896–1984), also known as Li Hesheng, a native of Hunan. After studying at the First Normal School in Changsha, Li had visited in France on the work-study program. He had been secretary of the Hunan Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party from April 1923 until April 1927. At the Fifth Congress, he was elected to the Politburo, and on July 12, 1927, he became a member of the new temporary Standing Committee of the Central Committee.

3. This Zhong stands for Deng Zhongxia (1894–1933). Regarding Deng, see the note in Volume II of this edition, p. 115.

4. He stands for Cai Hesen (1895–1931), alternative name Cai Linbin, a native of Hunan who had been Mao's close friend since his student days. He had played an important role in convincing Mao that China should follow a Leninist path. (On this, see Mao's letter to him of January 21, 1921, in Volume II, pp. 35–36.) At this time he was a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo; he was relieved of that responsibility in the reorganization of July 12, 1927.

5. Liu stands for Liu Zhixun (1898–1932), alternative name Keming, a native of Changsha, who had been secretary of the Hunan Provincial Peasant Association, and would shortly participate in the August 1 Nanchang Uprising.

6. Zhou stands for Zhou Enlai. For information on Zhou and his role from 1927 to 1930 see above, the Introduction to this volume.

7. Shuzhi is Peng Shuzhi (1895–1983), a native of Hunan, who had joined the Communist Party in 1921 and had served as an editor of the Party journal *Xiangdao*.

8. Teli is the zi of Zhang Guotao (1897–1979), a native of Jiangxi. After studying at Beijing University, he was elected a member of the Central Committee at the First Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, and thereafter played a major role in the Party. At this time, he was a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, and he remained on the new temporary Standing Committee of the Central Committee after July 12.
Zhong: He is linked to Feng and Chiang. Tang is on the side of the left wing. Wang spoke about how to deal with Tang, and said our method was so careless that wasn’t it natural Tang should be upset? Instead of opposing him, can we comfort him? For the sake of opposing Chiang we do not oppose him, but since four people have already been killed, we cannot make a public statement.

Wasn’t the clash between Tang and He supposed to end in a compromise? Recently, however, Tang has indicated that he was against He, but where are the differences?

He does not have enough strength to resist Tang. The question is whether or not Tang is determined to finish off He. If we are really out to punish Chiang, in Wuhan at present we should encourage Tang to get rid of He.

Luo: Get in touch with Tang directly.

13. Feng is Feng Yuxiang (1882–1948), zi Huanchang, a native of Hebei, who rose through the ranks to become commander of the Sixteenth Mixed Brigade, which played a key role in the defeat of Zhang Xun’s attempt at monarchical restoration in 1917. In 1924, Feng participated in a conspiracy against Wu Peifu which led to Wu’s dismissal. He then reorganized his army as the First Army of the Guomindang (National People’s Army), a title which he continued to use thereafter. In 1926, on his return to China after spending three months in the Soviet Union, Feng made a public declaration of allegiance to the Guomindang. By the spring of 1927, his troops occupied Shaanxi and northern Henan, and held an important position between the rival régimes in Wuhan and Nanjing. After discussions with Chiang Kai-shek from June 19 to 21, 1927, Feng rallied to Nanjing, and began to purge Communists in areas under his control, thus decisively weakening the Wuhan government.

14. Jiang Jieshi (1887–1975), school name Zhongzheng, is (with Sun Yat-sen) one of two persons referred to in these volumes by the Cantonese form of his name, in the spelling long used in the West, Chiang Kai-shek. A native of Zhejiang, he received military training in Japan, where he joined the Tongmenghui in 1908. In 1923 he was appointed chief of staff in Sun’s headquarters in Guangzhou, and in 1924 he became commandant of the Huangpu (Whampoa) Military Academy. In the summer of 1925, he took command of the newly formed National Revolutionary Army, and soon established himself as one of the top leaders of the Guomindang. In May 1926 he acted to curtail the influence of the Communists in the Guomindang. After the victorious advance of the Northern Expedition he further consolidated his power, he turned decisively against the Left and massacred the workers in Shanghai in April 1927, thus laying the foundation for his own preeminence in the régime subsequently established in Nanjing.

15. The reference is to Wang Jingwei (1883–1944), zi Jixin, a native of Guangdong. He joined the Tongmenghui in 1905 and was closely associated with Sun Yat-sen from that time forward. It was he who drafted the testament which Sun signed on his deathbed in 1925. Though he ended his life as the premier of the Japanese puppet government in Nanjing, he was a leading figure in the Guomindang Left in 1925–1927. It was on his recommendation that Mao became acting head of the Propaganda Department of the Guomindang in 1925–1926. Many of the texts translated in Volume II reflect Mao’s positive attitude toward him at that time.
Mao: Zhou and Cao said that they had their own difficulties. He is ferocious and insatiable—if you give an inch he wants a foot, he uses gold to bribe his opponents. Last time Cao said that we were pressing too hard. We think that the He faction is too weak.

Zhong: Our policy is to oppose Chiang, ally ourselves with Tang, and finish off He.

Shu: He forced Li to dissolve the special Party headquarters in the Second Division of the Eighth Army; He’s strength in Wuhan is very great.

Mao: Apart from promoting the dissension which already exists between Tang and He, we should draw Tang to our side, so that Tang, Jingwei, Deng, and Zhang will be able to exert some kind of influence. In addition to the decision by the Thirty-sixth Army to oppose Chiang, the Second Front Army has decided to oppose Chiang as well, and so has the Eighth Army. Ye Qi’s division has links with Kaixin.

Luo: Regarding the consultations between Tang and Feng.

Mao: If Feng’s telegram is authentic, Feng is sure to attack Wuhan; then the situation in Wuhan will be like that [X][X][X][X].

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16. The reference is presumably to Zhou Lan (1891–1953), zi Shaqi, a native of Hunan, deputy commander of the Thirty-sixth Army. Tang Shengzhi, as military governor of Hunan, had sent him to Changsha as special commissioner to resolve the problems created by the Horse Day Massacre.

17. The reference may be to Cao Bowen (1893–1971), a native of Changsha, who was at this time a member of the Hunan Provincial Government.

18. The reference is to Li Pinxian, the commander of the Eighth Army, which had disarmed the picket corps of the Wuhan General Labor Union on June 18, 1927, while He Jian’s Thirty-fifth Army occupied the headquarters of labor unions in Hankou and Hanyang.

19. Deng is Deng Yanda (1895–1931), zi Zesheng, a native of Guangdong. In 1924 he had helped create the Huaguan Academy, and at the Second Congress of the Guomindang in 1926 he was elected an alternate member of the Central Executive Committee. During the Northern Expedition he served as director of the General Political Department of the National Revolutionary Army. At the Third Plenum in March 1927, Deng had sided firmly with the Wuhan leftists against Chiang Kaisheng, and he was at this time head of the Guomindang Peasant Department.

20. Zhang is Zhang Fakui (1896–1980), zi Xinghua, a native of Guangdong. After rising steadily in rank in the military forces supporting Sun Yatsen, he distinguished himself in 1926 as a divisional commander in the Northern Expedition. In the summer of 1927 he led Wuhan’s Second Front Army in a campaign against Chiang Kaisheng.

21. Ye Qi (1882–1935) commanded the First Division under Tang Shengzhi. Ye Kaixin (1887–1937), zi Jingqu, a native of Hunan, was at this time the commander of the Fifth Army.

22. The reference is to Feng’s telegram of June 21, 1927, to Wang Jingwei and Tan Yankai, following his meeting with Chiang. It demanded that Borodin be immediately sent back to the Soviet Union, and that the leadership of the Nanjing government be accepted.
associations], and we should use them to fill up the peasant associations. The slogan of confiscating the land will not have much effect in the countryside.

Weihan: The peasants do not want to turn the land over to the state; instead they want to own it themselves.

Zhongfu: At present, the slogan of rent reduction should be put forward in the countryside.

Hesen: The peasant movement in Hunan can get in touch with Deng Yanda.

Zhongfu: The Peasant Department of the Central Committee should send someone to reorganize the peasant associations.

Mao: It will be best to send a left-wing comrade.

Weihan: One of the big shortcomings in Hunan is that there are no Party comrades in the countryside.

Hesen: What should we do about the developments in the countryside? We should penetrate it if we can.

Hesen: (1) Quickly develop the Party in the rural areas; (2) the peasant self-defense army should go up the mountains; (3) the rent reduction movement [should be pursued].

Weihan: I do not agree with Hesen's second point, because if that happens the peasant army is sure to turn into a bandit force. They may think that guns can be hidden, but it will be better if they can be changed into a pacification corps.

Zhongfu: The provincial Party headquarters should pay particular attention to the problem of recruitment by the various armies. If they want to run labor unions or peasant associations, we need not stand on ceremony in sending the masses to them in large numbers, but we must maintain our links with the peasant associations, in order to preserve their class nature and revolutionary nature. So every call for recruits should be made in conjunction with the peasant association, for we have people in every army political department. In this way, we will be able to see to it that the peasants are turned into an armed force [wuzhuang hua]; otherwise, we will merely be engaging in empty talk about arming the peasants.

Mao: There are two tactics for the Provincial Peasant Association: (1) They can transform themselves into a pacification force [anzhu jum] with a legal existence, but this is really difficult to do. (2) Apart from this, there are two lines: (a) go up the mountains, or (b) join the army. By going up the mountains, we can create a foundation for a real military force, and supplies can be obtained by selling guns.

Teli: In my opinion, they can go up the mountains, but they need not have any links with the Communist Party. They can rob the rich and help the poor.

Zhongfu: We can't do that. Those who are unable to hide their guns can go up the mountains. The provincial Party headquarters should do their utmost to recruit soldiers.

Mao: If we do not maintain a military force, then in future, as soon as an emergency arises, we will be helpless [wuban fa].

Hesen: Those who can remain should remain. (1) Send them to join the army, (2) preserve them as they are, (3) go up the mountains.

Mao: As regards the question of a training course, [X] [X] some comrades want to join the army.

Weihan: That can be postponed temporarily.

Zhongfu: The best thing is to become soldiers.

Hesen, Teli: Agree with the previous speaker.

Zhongfu: We may find a mutually beneficial method.

Weihan: There is a very good secret society in Hunan (the Red [X] Society), they [X][X]28 us to be bandits.

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25. Beginning here, through the statement "Hesen and Teli: Agree with the previous speaker," this portion of the minutes is reproduced in the article by Sun Gang cited in the source note, and we have been able to check our transcription against this printed text.

26. This observation by Cai Hesen, and Mao's response to it, are omitted from Sun's article.

27. The Chinese is Hong hui, with a clear gap between the two words. We assume that the person taking notes on the meeting was uncertain about the name of this society, and therefore omitted the middle character. The reference may well be to the Red Spear Society (Hongqianghui), a peasant self-defense organization of a hybrid character which was active in the countryside in Hunan and elsewhere at this time. It is also possible, however, that the reference was to the Hongjianghui or Hong River Society, an organization formed by radical students from the members of various secret societies in Liuyang and Liling in eastern Hunan, and Pingxiang across the border in Jiangxi, to play a leading role in the uprising which took place there in 1906, and which still existed in both Hunan and Jiangxi.

28. As we have not been able to decipher these characters, it is not clear whether the peasant associations would teach the secret society to be bandits, or vice versa.
Mao: Guo Liang\(^{29}\) can do secret work.

Zhongfu: Guo cannot survive, he should come out immediately and go to Shanghai to do work with the labor unions. More than a hundred people have already gone back. Though Wu Hongqian, Wu Hengqi, Dong Ziyuan and other left-wing leaders were attacked, we were not blamed.

Zhongfu: These people can be turned over to Wang, Deng and the other leftists. We should organize left-wing organizations.

Mao: We should try our best to preserve left-wing leaders in Hunan.

Zhongfu: Now the leftists have two doubts about the issue of left-wing organizations: (1) whether it will arouse the rightist . . . .

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The Overall Tactics of the Peasant Movement at Present

Central Committee Circular,\(^1\) Peasant Series, No. 9

(July 20, 1927)

1) The development of the peasant movement in recent years has already shown that the Chinese revolution has entered a new stage, the stage of agrarian revolution. The agrarian revolution is, quite simply, a process. The development of this process requires a democratic political power of the workers, peasants, and petty bourgeoisie led by the proletariat and an armed force of the workers and peasants. At present, this revolution has encountered a setback in China. The reasons are that (a) the leadership of the proletariat is not yet firmly established; in other words, the subjective organizational capacity of the proletariat is not sufficient for leading this revolutionary alliance of workers, peasants, and petty bourgeoisie; (b) an armed force of the workers and peasants has not been established; (c) our Party has made the mistake of having wavering and uncertain policies; (d) the class nature of the Wuhan Central Committee of the Guomindang, the

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\(^{29}\) For a note regarding Guo Liang, see below, the "Guidelines on the Movement in Southern Hunan," August 1, 1927.
National Government, and the so-called revolutionary army is that they are the representatives of the landlord class and cannot shoulder the new historical task, the agrarian revolution. They have gone from restricting the worker and peasant movements to the completely counterrevolutionary stance of opposing and killing the workers and peasants. This betrayal is historically inevitable and shows that the deepening of the revolution is in no way surprising. The duty of our Party can consist only in waging resolute struggles against this new counterrevolution, gathering together all revolutionary forces, and carrying out the revolution in its new stage, the agrarian revolution. This is the objective situation of the revolution at present, which requires us to give an answer in the form of new tactics.

2) The peasants of the whole country are now gasping for breath under the new and old warlords. The burdens of over ten years of wars among the new and old warlords and the economic aggression of imperialism have been imposed mainly on the poor peasants. In the north, heavy taxes and levies have already made the majority of peasants abandon their land, so they cannot earn a living. In the various provinces of the south, the sufferings of the peasants are no different from those of the peasants in the north. Such freedoms as were won after repeated struggles have been completely taken away again. Whether in the south or in the north, the majority of the poor peasants (tenant peasants, semi-owner peasants, farm laborers, unemployed peasants, and the majority of owner-peasants) who suffered excessive oppression have already awakened and are fighting their enemies everywhere. Especially in the south, since the killings by Li Jishen and Tang Shengzi, the peasants' resistance and struggle have become more heroic and resolute. At the same time, new and old warlords, because of the conflicts among them and their internal contradictions, cannot establish a unified reactionary political regime. On the contrary, they now continue to collapse rapidly one after another. Therefore, the national revolutionary tide, though seemingly at a temporary low ebb, is actually rising. The present counterrevolutionary situation is only a reflection of the class conflicts at a time when the revolution has entered the period of solving the land question. Only by taking a resolute stand on behalf of this agrarian revolution can our Party lead the advance of this revolutionary tide. How can we develop the tide of the agrarian revolution? This goal can be reached only by quickly grasping the objective conditions, seizing every opportunity, raising appropriate slogans, and leading the broad masses to continue the struggle without interruption. At present, the impetus for promoting the agrarian revolution should come from slogans such as "refuse to hand in heavy taxes and supplementary levies," "refuse to pay in money and grain in advance," "reduce rent by 25 percent," "abolish usury," "confiscate the land of big landlords, local bullies and bad gentry, and counterrevolutionaries," "take over ancestral halls and monasteries and all other public land," "carry out [the policy of] land to the tiller," "down with greedy officials and corrupt bureaucrats," "down with the local bullies and bad gentry," "down with new and old warlords," "implement revolutionary democracy," "establish the political power of the peasants' associations in the countryside," "elect xian governments," "disarm the reactionary armies," "restore the peasants' associations," "arm the peasants," "peasants have the freedoms of assembly, association, speech, publication, and resisting rent and taxes."

3) In the various northern provinces such as Zhili, Shandong, Shanxi, and Henan, owner-peasants and semi-owner peasants account for the majority. They are increasingly bankrupt under the misery of heavy taxes and levies and become bandits or flee to other provinces. In these places, we should regard the owner-peasants, poor peasants, tenant peasants, and farm laborers as the center in uniting all the impoverished popular masses in the countryside, together with the small landlords, in a fighting alliance to oppose all heavy taxes and miscellaneous levies and advance payments of money and grain, oppose all requisitions in time of war, and reduce rent by 25 percent. At the same time, following on from the development of these struggles, we should move forward to seize political power in the countryside, seize weapons, and even confiscate the land of all ancestral halls, monasteries, despot gentry and big landlords, and counterrevolutionaries, and redistribute it among the peasants and tenants without compensation.

In the southern provinces of Hunan, Hubei, Jiangxi, and Guangdong, tenant peasants are the majority, followed by owner-peasants and semi-owner peasants. Tenant peasants are exploited by the landlords' heavy rent, while owner-peasants and small landlords are exploited in the extreme by the taxes and levies of the warlords. We should immediately, under the slogans of reducing rents "by 25 percent," and of resisting vexatious levies and taxes and taxation in advance, carry out rent and tax strikes. On the one hand, this will serve to lay bare the hypocritical features of the Wuhan and Nanjing governments' reduction of rent and taxes. On the other hand, it will enable us to unite all the impoverished popular masses in the countryside, including the small landlords, around the

2. Zizengnong, literally, "peasants who cultivate their own land."
3. Li Jishen (1886-1959), zi Renchao, a native of Jiangsu, was at this time military governor of Guangdong.
4. On Tang Shengzi, see the relevant note to the text of July 4, 1927.
5. Buduan de douzheng. The adverb used here is the same as that in the Chinese translation of Trotzky's "permanent revolution" (buduan geming). It reflects the general climate in the Party in the autumn of 1927, when the Central Committee, headed by Pu Qiubai, called for wujieduan geming, "uninterrupted revolution."
6. Literally, "people's rights" (minquan), the second of Sun Yat-sen's "Three People's Principles," a term commonly used at this time by Mao and others to convey the idea of democracy.
7. The term which appears here in our source is dizhu, "landlord." A note indicates that this is probably wrong, but offers no guess as to what the correct character might be. The version in the Bujuan has dihu, or "rural household." "Tenants" seems as good a solution as any, but the situation remains obscure.
nucleus of tenant peasants, owner-peasants, and poor peasants, in order to deal heavy blows to the local bullies and bad gentry, greedy officials and corrupt bureaucrats, to seize political power and arms in the countryside, under the peasants’ associations, and even to confiscate all land belonging to despotic gentry and big landlords, counterrevolutionaries, and all ancestral halls and monasteries, in order to promote the agrarian revolution. This is the slogan which we should now propagate with all our might, concentrating the forces of the peasant masses in order to realize it.

Everywhere without exception, the struggle to oppose usurious loans with annual interest exceeding 20 percent should be carried out thoroughly, because this is the common demand of all the oppressed popular masses.

4) The agrarian revolution is simply a process, and the struggle for political power is a main characteristic of this process. Only through a struggle to seize political power can the rule of the feudal landlords in the countryside be overthrown, can the explosion of the land question be accelerated, and can a powerful organ be provided to resolve this issue. In various southern provinces such as Guangdong and Hunan, though the main characteristic of the peasant movement has already become the expropriation of the big landlords, it is in fact impossible to solve the land question on its own if the peasants have not grasped political power. According to the experiences in Hunan and Guangdong, this analysis is absolutely correct.

What is called the struggle for political power means establishing the revolutionary democracy of the peasants, or in other words, establishing the political power of the peasants’ associations. In the history of the peasant movement in China, the peasants’ associations are no longer an occupational organization, but are rural political alliances with the poor peasants as the backbone. The reason is that in fact the peasants’ associations have united not only the ordinary peasants (those who cultivate the land and those who are unemployed), including handicraft workers, primary school teachers, and small merchants, but also those small landlords who have freed themselves from the influence of the big landlords and expressed sympathy for the peasants’ associations. Therefore, the peasants’ associations are currently the revolutionary political alliance of the poor peasants with the rest of the petty bourgeoisie in the countryside, the political power of the peasants’ associations. This is a correct form of political power in the countryside, and we must begin realizing it everywhere in practice.

5) In light of the experience of the peasant movements in the two provinces of Hunan and Hubei, a few points for special attention regarding the organization of peasants’ associations should be stated:

a) In every province, the peasant movement should concentrate our human and financial resources in the areas that are important from a political, military, or communications standpoint, so as to set up central bases for leading the movement in the whole province. It is better to deepen the

movement in these areas, at the expense of a temporary delay in expansion; we must absolutely not pursue expansion alone and forget the work in the central bases.

b) In addition to uniting ordinary peasant masses, handicraft workers, primary school teachers, and small merchants, the peasants’ associations have also included small landlords under certain conditions. We must, however, pay attention to the composition of the leading organs of the peasants’ associations at all levels. Generally speaking, small landlords are not admitted to the leading organs. In addition, tenant peasants, poor owner-peasants, and unemployed peasants should each make up at least one-fifth of the members of the executive committees of district associations. It is necessary to elect primary school teachers to the executive committees of district associations.8

c) The peasants’ associations at all levels should set up women’s departments and youth departments. The children’s movement and children’s organizations are completely under the direction of the youth department of the peasants’ associations. Female peasants are to join the peasants’ associations, and a separate body for women is not to be organized.

6) Only if there is a revolutionary armed force can victory be assured in the struggle of the peasants’ associations for political power and in the agrarian revolution. But the present so-called revolutionary armies are in fact led by reactionary officers who represent the landlord class and are slaughtering the peasants everywhere. Armed clashes have already become an extremely widespread phenomenon in the peasant movement and are therefore a most serious and urgent issue at the present stage of the peasant movement. Any participant in the peasant movement who has neither given 120 percent of his attention to this issue, nor sought a correct answer to it, has in fact not prepared for the victory of the peasant revolution. The Party headquarters at all levels should use all sorts of methods to provide military training to the peasants and to enable them to arm themselves. We now point out a few important ways of doing this:

a) Using various methods to seize weapons from the landlord class and all counterrevolutionaries and to arm the peasants with them.

b) Brave and trained members of the peasants’ associations may join the armies in an organized way to receive military training and to carry out the work of undermining the army organizations and seizing their weapons by various methods.

c) The above methods may be also adopted with regard to the military forces of the landlord class, such as the militia headquarters [tuanfangjia] and the local militia [baowetuan], when it is impossible to take over their arms immediately.

8. This recommendation may not be unrelated to the fact that Mao himself had been a primary school teacher and the principal of a primary school.
d) At present, it is not possible for peasant armed forces to exist openly, under names such as “peasants’ self-defense army” or “peasant army.” Such forces can exist only in the following three forms: (i) under local names such as “household militia” [aihuatuan], “local militia” [baoweituan], and “united village association” [lianzhuanghu]; (ii) training in a dispersed and secret way in peacetime and concentrating forces when battles occur; (iii) in case both methods are impossible, “going up the mountains.”

e) In the case of armed groups in the north such as the Red Spear Society and the Big Sword Society, the Party should send suitable comrades to mix with their lower-level masses and lead them to fight for their own interests, so as to win their trust, thus enabling them gradually to free themselves from their reactionary leaders and become a revolutionary armed force. It is absolutely impermissible to begin by attacking their reactionary leaders, or by proposing changes in the form of their organizations, or doing away with superstition. Such mechanical and hasty methods cannot win the support of the masses. At the same time, the past methods of only contacting their leaders or borrowing the names of military leaders to inspire them are also ineffective.

In the south, the secret societies [hui] who generally use the slogan of “robbing the rich to help the poor” have, during the high tide of the peasant revolution, introduced the slogans of “down with the local bullies and bad gentry” and “down with greedy officials and corrupt bureaucrats.” They have also been capable in their actions of drawing close to the peasants’ associations, or even of joining an alliance under the peasants’ associations. Originally, most of them were unemployed peasants or peasants on the brink of bankruptcy. Their economic slogans, such as “robbing the rich to help the poor,” are close to the slogan of “confiscating the land of big landlords.” Naturally they are the enemies of the landlord class, and the opponents of the reactionary armies in cities (before they are sold out by their reactionary leaders). If they can be led to take the correct revolutionary road, they will certainly become forceful allies of the agrarian revolution. Their lives and environment are, however, altogether abominable. Most of their leaders are waiting for the opportunity to become warlords. Therefore, they cannot obtain correct political leadership in taking the revolutionary road and fighting consistently for certain goals. On the contrary, they regard “looting and pillaging” as their normal way of life. Their ideas and actions follow those of their leaders completely. Consequently, we must understand the active role of the secret societies in the peasant revolution on the one hand, but at the same time we must understand that they may turn toward reaction. Our goal is to strengthen their revolutionary spirit and revolutionary training, so that they will turn into forceful supporters of the agrarian revolution under the leadership of the peasants’ associations. The methods are basically the same as those discussed above.

7) In the past, the Party’s organizations among the peasants were unable to fulfill their leadership responsibilities properly. In many places, although there were struggles involving hundreds of thousands of peasant masses, usually only a few comrades were active there, and the Party organizations there did not carry out their leadership responsibilities. In some places, although there were organizations of the Party, they did not go deeply among the masses (remaining at the level of district associations and not reaching township associations). In some cases, even though there were organizations, they played no role. In others, the comrades responsible for the peasant movement ignored the collective leadership of the Party and were accustomed only to individual actions. Consequently, all the work of our Party in the countryside often appears to be a case of “Let there be men and the government will flourish; but without the men, their government decays and ceases.” If our Party cannot actively fulfill its organizational responsibilities in time of peace, then in [X][X] time, there is naturally even less hope that it can become the sole leading core of the struggle of the masses. If the leadership of our Party is to be set up properly among the peasantry, then first, the Party branches should be able to reach down to township level and truly become the leading core of the mass struggle. Second, the Party’s guidance of the peasants must go through the Party and the [Youth] League (correcting the past mistakes of [X][X] leaders). Both the Party and the League must submit absolutely to the direction of the Party. Third, peasant departments should [X][X] be set up in the Party headquarters of every province, to supervise and [X][X] the effective implementation by Party headquarters at all levels of the plans which are put forward once a month or once every two months for the peasant movement of the province as a whole.

An Zhongyuan
Zong Rongming

9. The Big Sword Society was a secret society of the traditional type; the Red Spear Society, which had been praised by Li Dazhao in an article of 1926, was a hybrid organization, halfway between a secret society and a peasant association. In its letter of June 7, 1929, to the Chinese Communist Party regarding the peasant problem, the Comintern would stress the importance of making use of such forces to promote the revolution.

10. The words cited here, which the authors of this circular place in quotation marks, correspond to a slightly abridged citation from The Doctrine of the Mean, XX, 2 (Legge, Vol. I, p. 405).

11. The missing expression must be one meaning war or struggle.

12. In the context of the repression which followed the break with Chiang Kai-shek in April and with the Left Guomindang in July 1927, the Chinese Communist Party took various security measures, including the use of code words in its written communications. Some of these involved the use of characters which sound vaguely similar to the intended meaning, but are written quite differently. This is the case of the two names which appear here. An Zhongyuan evokes Dang zhongyang, or Party Central; Zong Rongming stands for Zhongyang nongmin [weiyanhu], or Central Peasant Committee.
Declaration of Members of the Central Committee

(August 1, 1927)

Since the Second National Congress, when we were elected as members of the Party Central Committee, thanks to the great trust placed in us by the comrades of the whole country, we have striven for the future of the national revolution in accordance with the principles and policies of this party, and the teachings of the late Director General. Thanks to the cooperation and hard work of the comrades of the whole country, the party and the state have been able to traverse several critical periods without suffering excessive damage. Now the crisis of the party and the state is even more acute than in the past, so we must inform our comrades of the whole country honestly of the true facts regarding recent events and point out the only way for them to continue the struggle. Since the March Twentieth Incident last year, we have seen in the course of the revolution, there are always a few ambitious people, with military force at their command, who are trying to collude with the counterrevolutionary forces in order to seek their own interests rather than those of the party. At that time, taking the interests of the revolution as a whole into consideration, and hoping that by promoting the Northern Expedition and developing the force of the broad masses of the people, it would be possible one day to deter the conspiracy of these careerists, for the space of a year we went so far as to bend our wills and abase ourselves by dealing with Jiang Zhongzheng and the like. We could not venture to abandon the comrades of the whole country, ignore the future of the revolution, and go off, claiming to be above politics and worldly considerations. From then until the spring of this year, Renegade Chiang Kaishek first sought to move the party headquarters and the government to Nanchang, in order to achieve his personal goal of exercising a reactionary autocracy; then he openly turned traitor, setting up a separatist regime in the southeast, colluding with the warlords, cruelly killing comrades, and slaughtering the masses. To ensure the survival of the party and the state, comrades of the whole country have initiated the movement to restore party rights. The Third Plenum of the Central Committee was also held and passed various resolutions for consolidating the revolutionary forces. The principles and policies of this party, and the teachings of the late Director General, are under threat and must be restored. This movement for restoring party rights depends entirely, however, on the united efforts of the comrades of the whole country. Only thus can a heavy blow be dealt to Renegade Chiang Kaishek, and the future of the revolution regained. Tang Shengzhi and other military men, however, have also seized the occasion to pursue their private interests of getting rid of Chiang and expanding their own forces, in the name of supporting this movement. We clearly know that these military men are in no way sincere about the revolution, and it is inevitable that they will endanger the party and the state in the future. Furthermore, only if our party follows the teachings of the late Director General and secures the participation of the broad peasant masses in the revolution can we consolidate the revolutionary bases. Therefore, not only do we believe that the development of the peasant movement by the broad masses of the peasants in Hunan and Hubei and their revolutionary actions to solve the land problem and to establish self-government in the villages should not be repressed; we also hold that this is precisely the result of our party’s principle of “land to the tiller” being gradually understood by the broad masses of the peasants. Only when the broad masses of the peasants have such an understanding and carry out such actions can we destroy the remaining feudal forces and have a real guarantee for the revolutionary forces of this party, and for a new China of the people, by the people, and for the people. After the Second Northern Expedition began, General He Jian, who is under Tang Shengzhi’s command, unexpectedly began to plot betrayal. He instigated Xia Douyin and others to make a sudden attack on Wuchang, and secretly ordered Xu Kexiang and others to launch a revolt in Changsha. At this crucial moment, the military men and those in collusion with them, who controlled the military forces, simply sat by and watched, and were unwilling to join in putting

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1. As will be seen from the text, the reference is to the Central Executive Committee of the Guomindang. Although Wang Jingwei and the leadership of the Wuhan Left had decided on July 15 to break with the Communists, a few individuals remained committed to the united front, the most eminent of these being Sun Yat-sen’s widow, whose name heads the list at the end of this document.

2. Sun Yat-sen.

3. Chiang Kaishek’s coup of March 20, 1926, against the Soviet military advisers, which led in May 1926 to a purge of Communists from senior positions in the Guomindang.

4. Chiang Kaishek, here called by his school name Zhongzheng.

5. On He Jian, see the relevant note to the text of July 4, 1927.

6. Xia Douyin was the commander of the Fourteenth Independent Division. On May 13, 1927, he suddenly transferred his allegiance from the Left Guomindang to Chiang Kaishek and moved toward Wuhan, though his attack was beaten off.

7. On Xu Kexiang, see the relevant note to the text of July 4, 1927.
down the rebel troops. Frightened by the reactionary bluff and bluster, a few weak leaders in the Central Party Bureau became wavering and soft in their attitudes and dared not take resolute and appropriate punitive actions against the rebel troops. In the meantime, Zhu Peide in Jiangxi, who was planning to compromise with Mr. Chiang, also took action to expel the revolutionaries and to halt the labor and peasant movements. This was again tolerated and regarded as natural by a few leaders of the Central Party Bureau. After Feng Yuxiang entered Henan, he even went openly to Xuzhou to meet Renegade Chiang and sent a telegram to the Central Committee threatening to dismiss all the political workers in the army. Again a few leaders of the Central Party Bureau were unable to restrain this. They could not help dealing with matters and taking decisions, but they disrupted their own measures. Under the direction of these few weak leaders, the Central Party Bureau has completely lost its prestige. They are simply dependent on the pleasure of the military men and have used the sacred resolutions of the Central Committee to seek their private gains. Because of this, the military men have become even more swollen with arrogance, while the party and the government have become nothing but a tool for the military men. Since Tang Shengzhi returned to Hunan, he has arbitrarily reorganized the provincial government and the provincial party headquarters and ceaselessly applied a policy of massacre. Tens of thousands of party members and peasants who had struggled faithfully were hacked to pieces in the whole of Hunan, and five thousand in Hubei. The Central Committee in Wuhan, however, expressed the following opinions regarding the killing of these tens of thousands of comrades: first, most of them were Communists; secondly, those killed had not obeyed the orders of the Central Committee and had acted on their own; third, the principle of “land to the tiller” “should be dealt with through politics and the laws.” Today the facts are obvious and can hardly be covered up. Among those killed in Hunan and Hubei, apart from a certain number of Communist Party members who were faithful to the revolution and joined this party, more than 80 percent were members of this party who had not joined any other party. These tens of thousands of party members were all engaged in arduous work among the masses of the workers and peasants, in accordance with our party’s resolutions regarding the peasants and the workers and the teachings of the late Director General. Now they have been cruelly murdered in this way by the reactionary military men, and the Central Committee in Wuhan has even accused them of disobeying the orders of the Central Committee. Their selling out of the party and of their comrades has reached this extreme! The teachings of the late Director General state that the problem of “land to the tiller” should not be solved by politics and the law. Now the Central Committee in Wuhan uses politics and the law to protect Tang Shengzhi and the like in massacring party members, workers, and peasants. They are even going so far as to use politics and the law to solve the problem of massacring the peasants. Such [they claim] was the Director General’s real intention! Tang Shengzhi, He Jian, and the like went on a rampage in Wuhan, the capital. They surrounded the Central Party Bureau, occupied the offices of the mass organizations, robbed the Central Bank, arrested the members of the Central Committee, searched the houses of Comrade Song Qingling, the widow of the Director General, and of Comrade Chen Youren, the foreign minister. Intimidated by such military men, the Central Committee put forward a resolution on splitting with the Communists, in an attempt to drive all the faithful members out of the Party, so as to facilitate the counterrevolutionary schemes of the military men. They went to this extreme in their shameless betrayal of the party! The resolution on splitting with the Communists could not be put through the Standing Committee of the Central Committee. Now these people want to call for the convening of a plenum of the Central Committee on August 15. In the meantime, they have already begun to make up stories and twist the facts in Wuhan and in all the other institutions under their control. They are carrying out a big anti-Communist propaganda campaign, in an attempt to force the members of the Central Committee to pass their resolution, so as to cover their illegal acts of betrayal. While witnessing all this, we know that a few leaders in Wuhan have already willingly accepted the domination of the military men and are selling out the party and themselves. If we still suffer patiently and do not struggle against them, thus facilitating their schemes of betrayal, how will we be able to explain all this to our comrades throughout the country who have placed their great trust in us? What shall we say to the Director General and earlier martyrs of our party? We have therefore decided, for the sake of the future of the revolution and of the party, to leave Wuhan one after the other and to try our best to lead the comrades of the whole country in a struggle to preserve the revolutionary legitimacy of this party. What is more painful is that Comrade Wang Jingwei, who used to hold the leading position in this party, has this time adopted a vague attitude.

8. Zhu Peide (1888–1937), zizi Yizhi, was a native of Yunnan and a graduate of the provincial Military Academy. Long associated with Sun Yat-sen, he was elected to the Guomindang Central Executive Committee in 1926 and commanded the Third Army in the Northern Expedition. Because of a personal relationship with Zhu De, dating back to his days at the Yunnan Military Academy, Zhu Peide opted for Wuhan at the time of the split between Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang Left and became governor of Jiangxi. In May 1927, however, he began to take action against the Communists in Jiangxi, even while supporting Wuhan against Nanjing. After the Nanchang Uprising of August 1, 1927, Zhu Peide played an important role in the peace negotiations among conflicting Guomindang factions.

9. On Feng Yuxiang, see the relevant note to the text of July 4, 1927.

10. Commonly known in the West as Eugene Chen.

11. Regarding Wang Jingwei, see the relevant note to the text of July 4, 1927.
has been surrounded by a bunch of bad people, and has finally yielded to the military force of the warlords. After this, he uses a glib tongue to befuddle the minds of the public. Having thus submitted, he makes confused and contradictory speeches and acts in an abnormal manner. Compared to his behavior when he first returned from abroad, all his actions now are like those of a totally different person. When the Director General was dying, he was worried that some leaders of this party might be won over by the soft tactics of the enemy. Now, less than three years after the Director General’s death, more than half the old leaders of the party have been won over by the enemy. How distressing it is to think of this! When we consider the difficulties that the Director General encountered during forty years spent in building this party, and the great expectations placed in us by millions of revolutionary comrades throughout the country, we cannot sit and watch the glorious history of this party ruined by a few old leaders. We therefore solemnly declare: We have not given our consent to all the directives and resolutions recently issued by a few members of the Central Committee in Wuhan, falsely appropriating the name of the Central Party Bureau, and we will not be held responsible for them. The so-called Party Bureaus and governments in Wuhan and Nanjing have both become the tools of the new warlords. They have misinterpreted the Three People’s Principles, and scrapped the Three Great Policies. They are criminals, condemned by the Director General and by the national revolution. By different routes, these leaders and Chen Jiongming, Yang Ximin, Feng Ziyou, Xie Chi, Zou Lu, and their ilk are heading toward the same end. The sacrifices of the Northern Expedition should have brought about the full implementation of the testament of the Director General of our party, rescued the masses of the people from their sufferings, and liberated the workers and peasants, thus promoting the revolutionary forces. Now the old and new warlords work hand in glove with each other in massacring the workers and peasants and oppressing the popular masses. This will not only waste the sacrifices of the Northern Expedition but also result in the creation of separatist warlord regimes like those that existed before, causing war and chaos in China to come and go in endless cycles. From now on, we have no choice but to lead the comrades of the whole country in fighting all our lives to carry out the Director General’s testament. We dare not hesitate, for this would adversely affect the revolutionary situation as a whole. At this moment, the comrades of the whole country should adhere to the spirit in which the Director General built this party and struggle resolutely against those who make fraudulent use of the revolutionary name of this party. We especially hope that the loyal commanders and soldiers, under the direction of this party, will be able to summon up the unflinching courage of the Director General and thus make it impossible for those who have usurped the name of the Party to make use of even one soldier. We hope they will fight to the end for the realization of the true revolutionary program of this party. At this difficult moment, all our comrades must unite closely, and fight for the following proposals:

1. Oppose the directives and resolutions issued in the name of the Central Party Bureau by a few members of the Central Committee in Wuhan.
2. Uphold the Three People’s Principles for building a society of the people, by the people, and for the people, and support the Three Great Policies of allying with Russia and with the Communist Party, and assisting the workers and peasants. Oppose every attempt to misinterpret or to betray the Principles and the Policies.
3. Work hard to build a new base area, so as to convene the Third National Congress outside the spheres of the old and new warlords, to discuss the question of concentrating the revolutionary forces and continuing the revolutionary work.
4. Before the Third National Congress is convened, the representatives from the Provincial Party Headquarters will elect leaders trusted by the whole Party to form a provisional leading body for the revolution.
5. Continue to fight against the imperialists, and strive for the solution of the land problem. Totally change the weak, compromising, and excessively accommodating attitudes of a few members of the Central Committee in Wuhan. Correctly and bravely appeal to the general public with our revolutionary programs in order to arouse the masses.
6. Make every effort to abolish the exorbitant taxes and levies, to end all corrupt practices, and to realize this party’s positions representing the interests of the common people.
7. Actively prepare our forces for wiping out the new-style warlords such as Chiang, Feng [Yuxiang], and Tang [Shengzhi], who represent the forces

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12. The so-called Three Great Policies listed below in the second of the proposals put forward in this document, were advocated by Sun Yatsen in the political testament which he endorsed on the brink of death in Beijing in 1925. Their significance has been a subject of dispute.
13. Regarding Chen Jiongming see, in Volume II, p. 228, the relevant note to Mao’s editorial of October 20, 1925.
15. Regarding Feng Ziyou see, in Volume II, p. 263, the relevant note to the text of December 4, 1925. Although he had opposed cooperation with the Communists since 1924, Feng was discredited at this time because of his participation in the assault on, and abduction of, two prominent Guomindang members who had come to Beijing at the end of 1925 to attend the Western Hills conference and never again enjoyed significant political influence.
16. On Zou Lu and Xie Chi, both leading participants in the Western Hills conference, see in Volume II, pp. 280 and 328, the notes to Mao’s articles “Zou Lu and the Revolution,” December 5, 1925, and “Opposition to the Right-Wing Conference Spreads Throughout the Whole Country,” January 10, 1926.
of all the imperialists, the northern warlords, and feudal society within the country.

We believe that all these things are extremely urgent at the moment. Only if the whole Party is determined to strive resolutely and in unison for these programs will the revolutionary movement in China have a chance of success. Let all our comrades remember this!

Sun Song Qingling, Deng Yanda, Tan Pingshan, Peng Zemin, Lin Zuhan, Wu Yuzhang, Yu Shude, Yun Daiying, Enkebatu, Yang Baoan, Liu Yazi, Gao Yuhua, Xie Jin, Bai Yunti, Mao Zedong, Dong Yongwei, Jiang Hao, Han Linfu, Xia Xi, Xu Suhun, Deng Yingchao, Qu Wu.17

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17. Without taking up the space which would be required to annotate each of these names, it should be pointed out that, of the nine full members of the Central Executive Committee listed here, seven (Tan Pingshan, Peng Zemin, Lin Zuhan, Wu Yuzhang, Yu Shude, Yun Daiying, and Yang Baoan) were Communists. Mao, Xia Xi, Deng Yingchao (Zhou Enlai’s wife), and many of the alternate members were also Communists. Several of the others, including prominent figures such as Song Qingling and Deng Yanda, were strongly sympathetic to collaboration with the Communist Party. By issuing this declaration as a Guomindang document, Mao and his comrades were faithfully obeying Stalin’s orders, rescinded only in mid-September, that the “Guomindang flag” should still be used in China.

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General Guidelines of the Hunan Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on the Movement in Southern Hunan

(August 1, 1927)¹

1) The center of the special movement in southern Hunan should be Rucheng xian, and from this center, four or five xian such as Guidong, Yizhang, Chenzhou, and others should be occupied next, to create a political situation and organize a revolutionary leading organ like a government which will carry out the agrarian revolution, oppose the Tang [Shengzh] government in Changsha, and establish liaison with the anti-Tang forces in western Hunan. Such a government in southern Hunan has three functions:

a) To destabilize further the already unstable rule of Tang in Hunan, and promote the rapid disintegration of Tang’s subordinates.

b) To serve as the vanguard of the peasant uprising in the whole province.

c) To create centers of revolutionary force for the purpose of overthrowing the Tang government.

2) The military aspect:

a) The Central Committee is requested to order Comrade Peng Pai not to move the peasant army of Guangdong now in Rucheng to other places.²

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¹This text has been translated from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 4–5, which states that it has been taken from a handwritten copy in the Party archives.

²This document was drawn up by Mao in late July and approved by the Standing Committee of the Central Committee on August 1, 1927.

2. Regarding the revolutionary career of Peng Pai, who had begun organizing peasant associations in his native province of Guangdong as early as 1921, see Fernando Galbiati, P’eng P’ai and the Hai-lu-feng Soviet (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985). Peng himself was, at this time, about to embark on the retreat from Nanchang toward Shantou (Swatow) and was nowhere near Rucheng, which is located in the southeastern corner of Hunan, on the edge of what would later become the Jinggangshan base area. The reference is apparently to the Haihe peasant army under Wu Zhenmin, which had undertaken an expedition northward toward Hunan after the failure of an uprising in Haihe and Lufeng in May 1927.
b) The one thousand troops in Liu[yang] and Ping[jiang] should immediately leave for Rucheng under the command of Guo Liang.3

c) One regiment of the Jiangxi revolutionary army should be dispatched to Rucheng.

Since these three units have the strength of approximately one division, with the regiment of the revolutionary army as the core, they can certainly occupy at least five xian or more.

3) Southern Hunan must come under the orders of the Jiangxi revolutionary leading organ. After the founding of the revolutionary Guangdong government,4 it will come under the orders of the Guangdong government and supply all its needs. The Central Committee should order the Jiangxi side to implement this plan.

4) The Party's Southern Hunan Special Committee should come under the orders of the Hunan Provincial Committee, but may act independently when communications are interrupted.

3. Guo Liang (1901–1928), also known as Guo Jingru, a Hunanese from Changsha xian, had been a fellow student of Mao's at First Normal School and a member of the New People's Study Society. He played a leading role in the labor movement in the 1920s and was elected to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party at the Fifth Congress. In August 1927, after participating in the Nanchang Uprising, he was, like Peng Pai, retreating southward through Jiangxi and Fujian. On August 3, 1927, in the context of a program for peasant uprisings in the four provinces of Hunan, Hubei, Guangdong, and Jiangxi, the Central Committee proceeded to appoint the Southern Hunan Special Committee mentioned in paragraph (4) of this document. (See below, the note to the text of August 9, 1927.) Guo was one of the four members, together with Mao Zedong, and it was no doubt in that capacity that he was to take charge of the two regiments located near Pingjiang and Liuyang. In early 1928, Guo was appointed secretary of the Hunan-Hubei-Jiangxi Special Committee, but was soon arrested and was executed in Changsha on March 29, 1928.

4. i.e., after the success of the uprising that Peng Pai launched in Haifeng and Lufeng at the end of October, which was expected to spread to all of Guangdong.

Remarks on the Report of the Representative of the International at the August 7 Emergency Conference

(August 7, 1927)

The whole of the Comintern representative's report is very important.1 First, the issue of the Guomindang has long been a problem for our Party and has not yet been resolved. There was, in the first place, the issue of joining it, and then there emerged the question of what kind of people were supposed to join it, i.e., that industrial workers should not join it. In fact, we did not make up our mind whether we should instruct the peasants to join it or not, let alone the industrial workers. At that time, a fundamental idea of ours was that the Guomindang belonged to others. We did not realize that it was an empty house waiting for people to move in. Later, like a maiden getting into the bridal sedan chair, we reluctantly moved into this empty house, but we never made up our mind to play the host there. I think this was a big mistake. Afterward, some of our people argued that industrial workers should also join it. I heard that in Hubei a decision was made to that effect, but it was merely empty words on paper which were never carried out. In the past, there were some among the masses who, disregarding the orders of the Center, seized some lower-level organs of the Guomindang and played the host in the house. But this ran counter to the opinion of the Center. It is only now that we have changed our tactics, so as to let the workers, peasants, and masses enter the

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We have translated this text from Baqi huiyi (The August 7 Meeting) (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi ziliao chubanshe, 1986), pp. 57–58. According to the preface to this volume, most of the documents it contains were there openly published for the first time. Mao's remarks regarding Lominadze's report had, however, been copied down at the Museum of the History of the Revolution and included in the Mao Zedong Ji, Bijuaren, Vol. 2.

1. The reference is to Besso Lominadze, a protégé of Stalin, who had replaced M. N. Roy as Comintern representative to the Chinese Communist Party in late July 1927. (Borodin, who left China at about the same time, had been representative to the Guomindang.) For a translation of Lominadze's report, see Saich, Rise to Power, Doc. C.3, pp. 308–13.
Guomindang to play the host there. Second, the issue of the peasants. The peasants want a revolution, Party [members] close to the peasants also want a revolution, but the upper level of the Party is a different story. Before I arrived in Changsha, I had no reason to oppose the Party's decision, which sided entirely with the landlords. Even after arriving in Changsha, I was still unable to answer this question. It was not until I had stayed in Hunan for more than thirty days that I completely changed my attitude. I made a report in Hunan expressing my opinion, and simultaneously also sent a report to the Center. This report had its impact in Hunan, but it had no influence whatever on the Center. The broad masses inside and outside the Party want revolution, yet the Party's guidance is not revolutionary; there really is a hint of something counterrevolutionary about it. I have established these views under the guidance of the peasants. Formerly, I thought the opinion of the leading comrades was right, so I didn't really insist on my own views. Thus my opinions, which they said were unreasonable, did not prevail. So the Party's opinion went in the direction of Xu Kexiang. It was really strange that even Tang's troops admitted that only eight households of military officers had been destroyed; and yet our Party seemed to accept that no one knew how many households had been destroyed. In sum, the influence of the masses over the Party leadership was far too small in the past. Third, as regards military affairs, we used to censure [Sun] Yatsen for engaging only in a military movement, and we did just the opposite, not undertaking a military movement, but exclusively a mass movement. Both Chiang [Kaishek] and Tang [Shengzhi] rose by grasping the gun; we alone did not concern ourselves with this. At present, although we have paid some attention to it, we still have no firm concept about it. The Autumn Harvest Uprising, for example, is simply impossible without military force. Our conference should attach great importance to this issue. The members of the Standing Committee of the new Politburo should take a firmer stand and pay attention to this issue. The failure in Hunan this time can be said to have resulted entirely from pedantic and subjective mistakes. From now on, we should pay the greatest attention to military affairs. We must know that political power is obtained from the barrel of the gun. Fourth, the issue of organization. From now on, higher authorities should listen attentively to reports from the lower levels. Only then can the nonrevolutionary be transformed into the revolutionary.

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2. The first of these was the celebrated "Hunan Peasant Report," intended primarily for the Guomindang, which appears in Mao's Selected Works; the second, more forthright assessment of the situation, prepared for the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, has only recently become accessible in Chinese and is translated for the first time in Volume II of this edition, pp. 425-28.

3. I.e., in the direction of commanders troubled by the disorders and attacks on landlords brought about by the revolution. Regarding Xu Kexiang, the prime mover of the "Horse Day" incident, see above, the note to the text of July 4, 1927.

4. The reference is to Tang Shengzhi.

5. Because he sought to make maximum use of the small number of troops under his command when he led this uprising in Hunan a few weeks later, Mao would subsequently be censured by the Party leadership for his "military deviationism."

6. Mao's enunciation of this axiom has long been thought to date from 1938, but in fact he first put it forward in 1927. The Chinese formulation is slightly different, but the essential idea is the same. Here the wording is: "Zhengquan shi you qiangguanzhi zhong qude de." In November 1938, at the Sixth Plenum of the Sixth Central Committee, he put forward the formula: "Qiangguanzhi limian chu zhengguan," which can be rendered "Political power grows (or comes) out of the barrel of a gun." (For the context, see the Selected Works, Vol. II, pp. 224-25.)
Mao Zedong's Statement Regarding the Resolution on the Struggles of the Peasants

(August 7, 1927)

1. A criterion must definitely be fixed for big and medium landlords. Otherwise, we will not know who is a big or medium landlord. In my opinion, we could take fifty mu as the limit; above fifty mu, whether the land is fertile or barren, it should all be confiscated.

2. The question of small landlords is the central problem of the land question. The difficulty is that, if we do not confiscate the land of the small landlords, then since there are many localities where there are no big landlords, the peasant associations would have to cease their activity. Hence, if we wish basically to abolish the landlord system, we must have a certain method for dealing with the small landlords. At present we must resolve the small landlord question, for this is the only way we can satisfy the people.

3. The problem of owner-peasants. The land rights of rich peasants and middle peasants are not the same. The peasants want to attack the rich peasants, so we must adopt a clear orientation.

4. The bandit problem is an extraordinarily great problem. Because such secret societies and bandits are uncommonly numerous, we must have tactics [for dealing with them]. There are some comrades who hold that we can simply use them; this is [Sun] Zhongshan’s method, which we should not follow. It suffices that we carry through the agrarian revolution, and then we will certainly be able to lead them. We must definitely regard them as our own brothers, and not as strangers.

Hunan Is Important

(August 9, 1927)\(^1\)

D: \(^2\) We have all read the report on the problem of Hunan (by Meyer\(^3\)). From this report we can draw three conclusions: (1) The plan for the insurrection by He Ye of the Provincial Committee is erroneous; we should not organize a division in Hunan to take Guangdong together with the military forces from Nanchang, but should form a broad basis in Hunan, and extend it to include the whole province. (2) The Provincial Committee is not strong, there is not a single worker or peasant element, and it is the same with the C.Y.\(^4\) Judging by the way he talks, the secretary wants to protect the interests of the small landlords; this secretary is unsuitable, and the Provincial Committee should be reorganized. People close to the masses must join the Provincial Committee and guide the work there, and there should be five or six worker and peasant elements. (3) Their acceptance of the International's decisions is insincere, so they do not have a firm attitude toward the Party's position. At present, we should send capable comrades such as Dong\(^5\) to explain things in detail, and to support resolutely the views of the [August 7] Emergency Conference.

Dong: To organize a division to go to Guangdong is wrong. All of us should not look only at Guangdong; Hunan is also very important. The organization of the

This document has been translated from the extracts quoted in the article by Sun Gang in Dungde wenxian, no. 1, 1988, cited in the source note to the first text in this volume. Mao's own remarks are conveniently available in Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, p. 6, but without Lominadze's introductory statement, which provides the context.

1. The text translated below is an extract from the record of a meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee held on this date.
2. Lominadze, the Comintern representative.
3. Meyer was the Soviet consul in Changsha, and concurrently a representative of the International. His report was highly critical of the Hunan Provincial Committee.
4. The Communist Youth League.
5. Mao Zedong. As indicated above, in a note to the text of August 1, 1927, the Central Committee decided on August 3 that a Southern Hunan Special Committee of four members, including Mao Zedong, should be set up right away, to direct operations there. (See the plan for the Autumn Harvest Uprising in the four provinces of Hunan, Hubei, Guangdong, and Jiangxi in Saich, Rise to Power, Doc. C.6, pp. 317–19.) Resolutions adopted at the Politburo meeting of August 9 stipulated that Mao Zedong and Peng Gongda were entrusted with the compilation of the list of the nine members of the new Provincial Committee, of whom at least three must be workers or peasants. Peng Gongda was appointed provincial party secretary. (See the letter of August 9, 1927, to the Hunan Provincial Committee transmitting these decisions, in Saich, Rise to Power, Doc. C.7, pp. 319–21.)

\(^1\) Sun Yat-sen.
\(^2\) Kerensky. The usual meaning is "guest," but here "stranger" seems more apt.
popular masses in Hunan is even more extensive than that in Guangdong. What is lacking is military force, and now that the time for an uprising is at hand, military force is even more necessary. Not long ago, I drafted a plan, which has been approved by the Standing Committee, for establishing a military force of one division in southern Hunan, to occupy five or six xian, and create a political base, in order to develop the agrarian revolution in the whole province. Even if it should be defeated, this force ought not to move to Guangdong, but should go up the mountains. The present Provincial Committee has been trying to pick up the pieces in the tragic situation following the emergency. It was set up less than two months ago, and it has established some merit for itself in restoring the Hunan organization. It is very true that in the future, the Provincial Committee should add worker and peasant comrades to the leadership. Previously, the masses within the Party were dissatisfied with the Party leaders.

Views Expressed at the First Meeting of the Hunan Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party

(August 18, 1927)

I. The Peasant Question (the land question)

(A) Zedong’s views:

1. There must be targets for land confiscation. In China there are only a few big landlords, but quite a number of smaller landlords. If we confiscate only the big landlords’ land, few landlords will be affected, and the amount of land confiscated will be extremely small. The number of poor peasants demanding land is very great, and if we confiscate the land of the big landlords alone, we cannot satisfy the demands and needs of the peasants. If we want to win over all the peasants, we must confiscate the land of [all] the landlords and distribute it among the peasants.

2. The method of land confiscation should be that the revolutionary committee (our Party) lays down a land policy, and the whole procedure is carried out by the peasant unions or by the revolutionary committees.

3. This land confiscation policy must include suitable arrangements for the landlords whose land has been confiscated. I therefore propose that those landlords who are unable to work, or whose labor power is deficient, that is to say, those who are old and weak, should be provided by the peasant unions with equal rations of agricultural produce from the proceeds of the agricultural tax.

4. We should proclaim the abolition of all the unreasonably heavy taxes for the peasants; an agricultural tax should be levied.

[passage omitted]

6. See above, the document dated August 1, 1927.

7. By “emergency” (shibian), Mao is referring to the situation created by the Horse Day Massacre of May 21, 1927, and the subsequent repression.
II. The Question of the Uprising

(A) Zedong’s and Lirong’s1 views:
(1) The development of the Autumn Harvest Uprising in Hunan will solve the land problem for the peasants. Nobody can deny this. But if we wish to create and unleash this uprising, it will not do to rely on the power of the peasants alone. There must be military support. With the help of one or two regiments, the uprising can take place; otherwise, it will fail in the end.
(2) The development of the uprising must lead to the seizure of political power. If you want to seize political power, to try to do it without the support of military forces would be sheer self-deception. Our Party’s mistake in the past has been that it neglected military affairs. Now we should concentrate 60 percent of our energies on the military movement. We must carry out the principle of seizing and establishing political power on the barrel of a gun.2

[balance omitted]

Report of the Hunan Provincial Committee to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party1

On the Methods for Carrying out the Autumn Harvest Uprising in Hunan

(August 19, 1927)

Dear Brother Shirong:2

At present, in terms of objective circumstances, the Hunan Autumn Harvest Uprising has indeed come at a most opportune time. We here have now decided on the following methods:

1. The Hunan Autumn Harvest Uprising should start from Changsha, and southern and western Hunan should rise up simultaneously. We should resolutely seize all of Hunan, in order to carry out a land revolution, and set up a worker-peasant-soldier soviet régime.
2. The uprising in Changsha will have the workers and peasants as its main force. It has been decided to move Chen Lie’s and Li Longguang’s regiments forward to kindle the flames of the uprising, so if only we employ to the greatest possible extent all other methods for smashing the reactionary government, the uprising can be carried through.
3. Once Changsha is taken, a revolutionary committee should immediately be set up to carry out all the revolutionary measures of the political power of the workers, peasants, and soldiers.
4. Right now in Hunan, because of Xu Kexiang’s rebellion against Tang Shenzhi and the fact that Tang’s forces have all been sent to the front to fight against Xu, southern Hunan and Changsha are literally cut off from each other. Consequently, a separate committee has been organized in

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong ji. Buyuan, Vol. 9, pp. 321–22, which reproduces the text as published in Qiushou qiji (The Autumn Harvest Uprising) (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1982).

1. This report was drafted at a meeting of the Hunan Provincial Committee on August 19, 1927, in which Mao Zedong participated. Mao was probably not the author, but it reflects his views on the agrarian revolution, and on the Autumn Harvest Uprising.
2. Shirong, or Wu Shirong, was another code name for the Central Committee.
southern Hunan to direct the uprising there. If it should by any chance prove impossible to take southern Hunan at present, we have decided to take the three xian of Dongguai, Rucheng, and Zixing and set up the political power of the workers, peasants, and soldiers. The southern Hunan and the other revolutionary committees will resolutely carry out a policy of agrarian revolution.

The above are the principles we have adopted here for dealing with the Autumn Harvest Uprising in Hunan. As for the details, they will be related to you face to face by some of the more experienced friends. It is our hope that you will send a reply approving our position as soon as you have received this letter, and that you will give us all the support you can.

Xiang Caixia³

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A Letter from Hunan to the Central Committee
(August 20, 1927)

[Preceding passage omitted] ... (3) A certain comrade has come to Hunan announcing that a new instruction from the International proposes the immediate establishment of soviets of workers, peasants, and soldiers in China.¹ On hearing this, I jumped for joy. Objectively speaking, the situation in China has long since reached 1917, but formerly, everyone held that we were in 1905. This has been an extremely great error. Soviets of workers, peasants, and soldiers are wholly adapted to the objective situation, and we must therefore resolve to establish immediately the political power of the workers, peasants, and soldiers in the four provinces of Guangdong, Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi. As soon as it is established, this political power should rapidly achieve victory in the whole country. We expect that the Central Committee will without a doubt accept the instruction of the International and will, moreover, apply it in Hunan.

This new instruction of the International influences my view of the Guomindang, since in the period of soviets of workers, peasants, and soldiers, we should no longer use the banner of the Guomindang. We must raise high the banner of the Communist Party, to oppose the flag of the Guomindang carried by Chiang [Kaishek], Tang [Shengzhi], Feng [Yuxiang], Yan [Xishan], and other warlords. The Guomindang banner has already become the banner of the warlords, and only the banner of the Communist Party is the banner of the people. I was not very well aware of this point when I was still in Hubei. In the past few days, since I have arrived in Hunan and seen what Tang Shengzhi’s provincial party committee² is like, and what the people’s attitude toward it is, I have come to the conclusion that we really cannot use the Guomindang banner any more, and that if we do, we will

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3. Xiang is pronounced like the traditional name for Hunan, though the character is quite different. The whole of the signature is presumably a code name for "Hunan Provincial Committee."

¹. Mao is referring here to Meyer’s summary of current policies at the meeting on August 18. Neither Moscow nor the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party had in fact called for "the immediate establishment of soviets," because Stalin still believed in the possibility of collaborating with the Left Guomindang, and abandoned that hope only in mid-September. Meanwhile, the Chinese comrades were instructed merely to explain the idea of Soviets, without actually forming any. It is not clear whether Mao or Meyer was responsible for this misunderstanding.

². The reference is, of course, to the Guomindang party committee in Hunan. Judging by the document of August 1, 1927, which appears above, already by that date Mao had few illusions about Tang Shengzhi.
certainly be defeated again. In the past, we did not actively seize the leadership of the Guomindang, but let Wang, Chiang, Tang, and the others go on leading it. Now we should let them keep this flag, which is already nothing but a black flag, and we must immediately and resolutely raise the Red flag. As for the petty bourgeoisie, let them rally entirely under the leadership of the Red flag; objectively, they are certainly entirely under the leadership of the Red flag.

(4) The Land Question

This time, I have learned from investigations among the peasants in two areas, Qingtai Township in Changsha [xian] (where I went myself), and Shaoshan Township in Xiangtan [xian] (from which five peasants came to the provincial capital) that the Hunanese peasants definitely want a complete solution of the land question. Yesterday, I discussed the matter with some peasant comrades from the countryside, and on the basis of conclusions drawn from their opinions, I propose some guidelines for the land question, of which the most important are:

a) Confiscate all the land, including that of small landlords and owner-peasants, take it all into public ownership, and let the peasant associations distribute it fairly to all those in the village who want land, in accordance with the two criteria of “labor power” and “consumption” (in other words, the actual amount of consumption for each household, calculated on the basis of the number of adults and children in the household).

b) During the process of land distribution, the peasant association at the district level first directs its counterpart at the township level to draw up a household register. After it is finished, the township association submits the register to the district association, which then distributes the land according to the register.

c) The unit for land distribution should be the district, not the township. A township which has more people in proportion to the land may be included with a township which has fewer people in proportion to the land. This is the only way to ensure a fair distribution. As for including District A with District B, this is impossible for the time being.

d) After the land has been confiscated, there must be a method for settling the family members of the landlords (excluding the big landlords), for only thus can the people’s minds be set at ease. The method distinguishes among . . . [passage omitted] four categories: 4 percent for the first category, 3 percent for the second category, 2 percent for the third category, and 1 percent for the fourth category.

Although this draft was discussed once yesterday at the meeting of the provincial Party committee, it still needs more opinions from the peasant comrades before I present it to you for a decision. The above draft is merely presented here as material for discussion. . . . [balance omitted]

Letter from the Hunan Provincial Party Committee

(August 30, 1927)

To a certain superior [organ]: ¹

Your letter, Hunan series no. 5, has been received. With regard to the two mistakes pointed out in the letter, neither facts nor theory are at all compatible with what you say. Our reply is as follows:

1) In terms of their overall revolutionary significance, both the seizure of Changsha and the Autumn Harvest Uprising are meant to promote the agrarian revolution; they are one and the same thing. The uprising in Changsha will serve as the starting point for the Autumn Harvest Uprising, and the development of the Autumn Harvest Uprising will lead to agrarian revolution and the seizure of political power. According to our plan, the principal fighters in taking Changsha will be the workers and peasants. The purpose in deploying a certain two² regiments in the attack on Changsha is to compensate for the insufficiency of the worker-peasant forces. They are not the main force, they will serve to shield the development of the uprising. They are not the only important component in this uprising. When you say that we here are engaging in military adventurism, and order us to cancel the plan for the uprising in Changsha, this truly reflects a lack of understanding of the situation here, and constitutes a contradictory policy which pays no attention to military affairs, while at the same time calling for an armed uprising of the popular masses.

2) You say that we pay attention only to the work in Changsha and neglect other places. This is absolutely untrue. It is an error on our part that we did not

¹ Our source for this document is Mao Zedong Ji, Vol. 2, pp. 13–14, which reproduces the text from Zhongyang tongxin no. 5, September 20, 1927.

² The salutation actually reads, “To a certain elder brother” (moumou xiong). “Elder brother” was, however, a common location at the time for referring to a hierarchical superior. Since Mao was in Hunan as the special commissioner entrusted directly by the Central Committee with organizing the Autumn Harvest Uprising, it may be assumed that the organ addressed here was the Central Committee. This follows also from the fact that the letter to which he is replying was “Hunan Series no. 5” (Xiangci wuhao). Only the central Party authorities would have a separate series for Hunan.

3. Once again, for security reasons the names of the regiments, presumably those indicated in the document of August 19, are replaced by “certain” (moumou).
inform you earlier of the considerable preparations that have been made in various areas. (See the plan for the uprising in central Hunan.) With regard to the work in southern Hunan, we have one more thing to add. That we take the uprising in Changsha as the starting point in no way implies that we will abandon southern Hunan. We do not use Hengyang as a second starting point simply because our force is sufficient only for a rising in central Hunan. If we launched an uprising in every xian, our force would be dispersed, and we fear that even the plan for the uprising in central Hunan could not be carried out. For this reason, we have decided not to use Hengyang as a second starting point. Nevertheless, every xian in southern Hunan has already been ordered to make preparations in an organized way according to plan for the uprising, and every xian has already done so. As soon as the uprising starts in Changsha, every xian will rise up at the same time.

Autumn Harvest Uprising

(To the Tune of “Moon over the West River”)

(1927)

Ours is called the Workers’ and Peasants’ Revolutionary Army,
Ours is the flag of the sickle and axe.²
We won’t linger among Lushan’s peaks;
We’ll advance directly to the rivers of Hunan.³

Landlords inflict every manner of oppression,
The peasants hate them one and all.
In the autumn harvest season, gloomy clouds at dusk;
With a clap of thunder, the uprising takes place.

This poem was first published “ unofficially” in the periodical Jiefangjun wenyi (People’s Liberation Army Literature and Art), no. 7, 1957, where it was cited in an article on the poetry of Mao Zedong. We have translated it from Mao Zedong shici duilian jizhu (Annotated Edition of Mao Zedong’s Poems and Couplets) (Changsha: Hunan wenyi chubanshe, 1991), pp. 21–22, which remains, as in previous volumes of this edition, our source for all of Mao’s poems.

1. As noted in Volume II of this series, much of Mao’s poetry makes use of the convention of “tune title” (cipai), a label traditionally attached to this form of classical poetry. The conventional “tune title” relates to technical matters of meter and rhyme, but has nothing to do with the theme or expressions in the particular poem.

2. According to the editors of the Mao Zedong shici duilian jizhu, at the time this poem was written, the hammer on the flag of the Communist Party was commonly mistaken for an axe.

3. When this poem was first published, instead of Lushan and the rivers Xiao and Xiang in Hunan, Mao gave specific local place names indicating the route of march of the troops that took part in the uprising.
Report on Arrival at Anyuan

(September 1927)

As soon as he arrived at Anyuan, Comrade Mao immediately called together the comrades and reported on the proceedings of the August 7 meeting, and the changes in the new policies, such as the reorganization of the Hunan Provincial Committee, his return to Hunan, and the decision to launch the Autumn Harvest Uprising. He said the decision to launch an Autumn Harvest Uprising in Hunan and Hubei was made while he was at the Central Committee [meeting]. The commanding organ of the Hunan uprising is divided into two parts. One is the Front Committee, with Mao Zedong as secretary and various responsible military persons as members. The other is the Action Committee, with Comrade Yi Lirong as secretary and responsible comrades from the various xian as members. The uprising at Changsha should use rickshaw workers and the peasants of the suburbs as the main force and may also organize about five hundred wounded soldiers. Every xian has already prepared to launch peasant uprisings, and preparations have already been made to cut the electric lines and railroads in all areas. I have also brought with me a letter of introduction from the Central Committee which requires He and Nie to deploy two regiments of their armies to serve as the military force of the uprising. They are now taking a roundabout route along the border of Fujian. If they can come, it will be all the better. I hope that Comrade Pan

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3. Pan Xinyuan (1903–1931), alias Pan Qingquan, a native of Liujiang, Hunan, joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1923. In 1927, he was Party representative in the Second Regiment of the First Division of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Revolutionary Army, and in this capacity participated in the Autumn Harvest Uprising. In 1930 he was a political commissar in the Fourth Red Army during its assault on Changsha; in August 1931, he was captured and executed.

4. This brief and optimistic document represents the last contemporary word from Mao himself about the Autumn Harvest Uprising in Hunan, but on September 16 and 17, the Soviet consul and emissary of the International, Meyer, under the pseudonym of Ma Kefu, produced two letters and a report to the Central Committee containing savage criticism of Mao and Peng Gongda. These materials, which helped prepare the ground for Mao’s disgrace in November 1927, first appeared in the internal Party organ Zhongyang tongxin, no. 6, September 30, 1927. For a translation, see Hyobom Pak, Documents of the Chinese Communist Party 1927–1930 (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1971), pp. 103–11. Meyer denounced the decision to postpone the attack on Changsha, originally scheduled for September 15, as “extremely shameful treachery and cowardice,” and “an evil instance of Chinese-style philistinism,” and demanded that the Central Committee send a plenipotentiary to reorganize the Hunan Provincial Committee.
Report to the Jiangxi Provincial Party Committee and to the Party Central Committee

(May 2, 1928)

To the Central Committee:

Here we present the report by Comrade Mao Zedong forwarded from Ji’an:

Dear Elder Brother Yulin:

Enclosed is Comrade Zedong’s letter to you people, and to the Central Committee. It is important that you forward the letter to the Central Committee after you read it. Comrade Zedong’s report is as follows:

1) After the defeat, we retreated from southern Hunan to the Jiangxi border (our troops did not suffer heavy losses, but the organs of political power in southern Hunan and Chaling were destroyed). What is outrageous is that the xian Party Committees and xian governments of Hunan brought a large group of peasant troops along with us. Now there are eighteen thousand troops here.

2) We have occupied the three xian of Yongxin, Ninggang, and Suichuan, and we will soon be able to expand our territories.

3) Yang Ruxuan’s division, which had pursued Mao’s troops, ended up being driven away by Mao’s troops to the border of Jiangxi. Its Eighty-first Regiment was cut off at Wudoujiang in Suichuan. One battalion of the Seventy-ninth Regiment was previously disarmed by Mao’s troops. Now this regiment has also

We have translated this document from Jìnggǎngshān de wūzhūng gēju (The Armed Independent Régime on the Jìnggǎngshān) (Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanse, 1979), pp. 120–21 (hereafter, The Jìnggǎngshān Régime). The text is conveniently reproduced from this source in Mào Zédōng jì. Bùjuàn, Vol. 2, pp. 301–03.

1. Once again, the term “elder brother” is used to address a hierarchical superior in the Party. Yulin (“Jade forest”) is probably a code name for the Jiangxi Provincial Committee.

2. The reference is to the defeat of March 1928 in southern Hunan, where Mao had been ordered to go by the Southern Hunan Special Committee, after the Front Committee which constituted the basis of his own power had been abolished. See the Introduction to this volume.

3. Presumably Mao’s objection was that these peasant troops were, as indicated under point (6) of this report, “messy” and undisciplined. By their requirements for food, they also placed a heavy logistic burden on his army, and they were in any case ill-trained and ill-armed. Subsequently, as indicated in the report of November 25, 1928, translated below, they further disrupted operations because of their desire to return home to southern Hunan.
been put to flight by Zhu’s troops at Yongxin. The Thirty-first Regiment of Mao’s troops is now coming from Ninggang, and the enemy troops from Yongxin have retreated to J’ian. This time, we have captured three hundred rifles.

4) The reason we did not go directly to J’ian is that we have adopted a strategy of deepening our work both internally and externally. By keeping Yongxin as the center, and by organizing insurrections in the nearby xian, internally we can establish a Party army, raise money, and make clothes. Externally, we can help the localities launch worker and peasant uprisings, establish the political power of the workers and peasants, and distribute the land. We have, therefore, decided that it will be much more significant to devote our efforts to this work than to launch an attack on J’ian.

5) The Hunan Special Committee decided previously that the troops of Zhu and Mao should be combined into the Fourth Red Army, with Zhu De as military commander and Mao Zedong as Party representative. Zhu’s troops have been organized as the Tenth Division, and Mao’s troops as the Eleventh Division. The peasant troops from the xian of southern Hunan were incorporated into these two divisions. Zhu is concurrently commander of the Tenth Division, with Wan Xixian as Party representative. Mao is concurrently commander of the Eleventh Division (a post which was originally held by Zhang Ziqing, but because he has been wounded, Mao acts as commander concurrently), with He Tingying as Party representative. We also have a training corps, commanded by Chen Yi. We are equipped with a few machine guns. The Twenty-eighth Regiment of Zhu’s division, and the Thirty-first Regiment of Mao’s division, have relatively high combat capability and can beat off some relatively mediocre enemy troops.

6) A mass of ten thousand messy people with very poor discipline (except for a certain portion of them) are quite a burden. Now we are trying hard to strengthen discipline, and the situation is improving daily.

7) The Party is improving daily, as the army, divisional, and regional Party Committees and each Party branch have started Party training classes.

8) Feeding the troops is a big and difficult problem. In the past month, most people received only three cents a day for rice and nothing else. These days in Yongxin, however, we have been able to raise some money.

9) The border area between the two provinces covers about ten xian. In the past, the two Provincial Party Committees had always been unable to control them. Thanks to the efforts of our comrades, the organizational activities of the Party in these xian are growing every day. But since Comrade Zhou Lu (representative of the South Hunan Special Committee) came to Ninggang in March to abolish the Front Committee, the Party organizations in the xian have suddenly lost their center and become independent régimes. Certain unhealthy tendencies are developing among them. Already at the meeting of the Front Committee last December, it was suggested that a Border Area Special Committee be established. The Hunan Provincial Committee and the Central Committee had best send another capable comrade here to be Party secretary. Comrade Mao is responsible for work in the army and finds it very difficult to do both concurrently.

10) Our permanent mailing address is as follows:

Mr. Yuan Wencai
Ninggang

Mr. Wang Zuo
The Five Big and Small Wells
Jinzhuh Mountain, Suiuning Border

4. The reference is to Zhu De (1886–1976), zi Yujie, a native of Sichuan. In 1909 Zhu had entered the Yunnan Military Academy, where he joined both the Guomindang and the secret society known as the Gelaohui. After participating in the 1911 revolution under the command of Cai Ao and receiving important commands, he drifted into warlord ways, and became addicted to opium. In 1922, he made a clean break with this past, putting himself under medical care to overcome the opium habit and going to Germany to study. In Berlin, he met Zhou Enlai, who sponsored him for membership in the Chinese Communist Party, and also joined the Guomindang. Expelled from Germany in July 1925 for his revolutionary activities, he spent a period in the Soviet Union studying military affairs. After returning to China at the end of 1926, he renewed his friendship with Zhu Pei, who had been his student at the Yunnan Military Academy (see above), the relevant note to the Declaration dated August 1, 1927), and thus became chief public security officer in Nanchang. In this capacity, he played a significant, though not dominant role in the Nanchang Uprising. In the course of the retreat from Nanchang toward Shantou, his troops, which constituted the rear guard, were far less severely mauled by the enemy than the main force under Ye Ting and He Long, and he was thus able to maintain their existence as a small but effective fighting unit. In January 1928, Zhu De set up a short-lived soviet in Yichang in southern Hunan. From there he made his way to the Jinggangshan, meeting up on the way with Mao Zedong, who had been ordered to go to Hunan in March by the Southern Hunan Special Committee.

Regarding He Long, see above, the relevant note to the report of September 1927. Ye Ting (1896–1946), at Xiyi, was a native of Guangdong. He joined the Guomindang in 1919, and thereafter held various military commands. In August 1927, he played a leading role in the Nanchang Uprising in his capacity as commander of the Eleventh Army. After the retreat to Shantou, and a brief sojourn in Hong Kong, he was sent by the Party to Guangzhou to exercise military leadership during the Canton Commune. After that uprising was defeated, he left China for Europe, returning only in 1937 at the beginning of the Anti-Japanese War.

5. Chen Yi (1901–1972) was a native of Sichuan. In 1919–1921, he visited France on the work-study program, but was expelled because of his participation in the student occupation of the Institut Franco-Chinois in Lyon. In 1926, he joined the staff of his former comrade in Paris, Zhou Enlai, at the Huangpu Academy. After participating in the Nanchang Uprising of August 1927, he made his way to the Jinggangshan as the second in command of Zhu De’s forces.

6. The Chinese here is fen, which was originally the name for the copper cent created in the currency reforms of 1914. By this time, these coins had depreciated by approximately one-half in terms of the silver dollar or yuan, and the term fen was commonly used for a unit of account corresponding to one-hundredth of a dollar, rather than to the actual coin. Because the meaning is vague in any case, we have translated simply “cents” in this and other texts of 1928 referring to the soldiers’ pay.

7. Wang Zuo (1898–1930), hao Nanshan, and Yuan Wencai (1898–1930) were natives of Jiangxi. They were the two chieftains of the bandit forces which Mao had found
11) Please send us political analyses and important party documents frequently.

12) Please send us large numbers of insurgents who can no longer hold out in other districts, regardless of whether their skills are military or political, the more the better. The Front Committee has done nothing deserving of a rebuke, and yet it was rebuked. Is this not intolerable? Being unable to sleep is an unavoidable evil at present. Since receiving the letter from Ji’an, the view is that a Special Committee should be organized. What do you think? We want to receive clear and definite directives from you. As soon as such an organization is approved, we will organize it. If we thus establish an organ of political power in the Luoxiao mountain range, with Ninggang as its center, and if the Party organization is strong, the army can create a real revolutionary base area in Hunan and Jiangxi. Comrade Mao and others have put forward this argument very clearly many times in reports, which have been repeatedly forwarded by the Southern Hunan Special Committee to the Hunan Provincial Committee, and then to the Central Committee. We have, however, received no clear word of either approval or rejection. Meanwhile, in the letter from the Anyuan City Party Committee, it is mentioned in passing that the Hunan Provincial Committee has approved it. But this is not a clear directive from the Provincial Committee. Two days ago, we received a letter from the Ji’an Xian Committee in which it is mentioned that the Jiangxi Provincial Committee has also approved it, and Comrade Mao has been appointed to be Party secretary. But again this is not a clear directive from the Provincial Committee. How can we begin to organize such a committee? Besides, we are afraid of receiving unpleasant censure.

With our greetings,

Mao Zedong
Secretary of the Military Commission
Fourth Army of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Revolutionary Army
May 2, in Yoxuxin City

Forwarded by the Ji’an Xian Committee; transmitted by the Jiangxi Provincial Committee, May 19

A Report on the Current Status of the Red Army

(June 16, 1928)

1) The struggle here now has been rather intense and widespread. The enemies, with ten regiments (Yang Ruxuan’s four and Wu Shang’s six) are advancing toward us, not including, of course, the landlords’ household militia. The broad peasant masses from the two xian of Chaling and Lingxi have been suppressed. The cleanup in the countryside by the Whites has totally crushed our party organization to the point that many of our brave comrades working in Chaling have been killed, as was the leader of the Lingxi Xian Committee. The Eighth Army has fought against us four times, losing once and winning three times. But because of the enemy’s stubborn resistance, we were obliged to withdraw completely from the two xian, Chaling and Youxi, which we had previously occupied. We no longer have even one inch of land in southern Hunan. Recently, however, there has been a military victory. In May, Yang Ruxuan’s Seventy-ninth Regiment and one battalion of the Twenty-seventh Regiment, their engineer and artillery units, the machine-gun company, the medical unit of their division headquarters, and their transportation unit were all wiped out and most of them captured. Yang escaped to Ji’an (some said that he had been wounded), and the commander of the Twenty-seventh Regiment, Liu, was killed. We have captured seven mortars, two mountain cannons, and over twenty Dan of silver yuan. But since the enemy’s two crack regiments were still in the vicinity of Yongxin xian, we decided not to pursue any further. The military dispositions here are that we assume a defensive posture toward Hunan and an offensive posture toward Jiangxi. But we have not yet made any move in the last

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 8–10, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Party archives.

1. This is an extract from a letter which Mao sent to the Hunan and Jiangxi Provincial Committees for transmittal to the Central Committee.
2. Yang Ruxuan was at this time the commander of the Twenty-seventh Division of the Guomindang Third Army. Wu Shang was commander of the Guomindang Eighth Army.
3. As indicated by Mao’s reference to it in the Circular of July 20, 1927, para. (6), the household militia (aihutuan) was originally a kind of peasant military organization. “Household” referred to the compulsory participation by almost every household. After the defeat of the left in the summer of 1927, many “household militia” units were taken over by the landlords and used against the revolution.
4. This refers to the counterattack at Caoshi’ao in mid-May 1928, during the third “annihilation” campaign against the Jinggangshan base.
few days. We will decide after the situation becomes clearer. A group of lower-ranking officers in the army have not yet given up their opportunist attitude and are looking for a chance to escape to southern Jiangxi. This has become an internal party struggle. Now that the Special Committee has been set up, it is only by the orders of the Special Committee that it will be more or less possible to control them. There are three reasons for using Ninggang as our base camp: (1) This is the middle section of the Luoxiao range. The location is excellent, easy to defend and hard to attack; (2) the Party has been able to organize the masses for the first time (Red Guard units and Red guerrilla units have been formed), and it would be a shame to give them up; (3) southern Hunan and southern Jiangxi can influence only one province and can extend only to the upper reaches, whereas here we can control two provinces and extend to the lower reaches. For these three reasons, we will struggle against our enemies with all our might and never retreat or give up. But up here in the mountains, it is extremely difficult to get supplies for food, money, and medicine for the wounded. We are constantly trying to solve these problems.

II) We have learned for the first time, from a letter from Ji’an, that the Jiangxi Provincial Committee has approved the setting up of a Hunan-Jiangxi Special Committee (Chaling, Youxian, Lingxian, Ninggang, Lianhua, Yongxin, and Suichuan), and has also endorsed the congress of xian representatives called together on May 20 and 21, which adopted resolutions on political issues, political discipline, slogans for the uprising, and political slogans, and elected leaders (the majority of them worker and peasant elements). Wan Xixian and Mao Zedong were elected members of the Standing Committee, and Zhu De, Chen Yi and Liu Feixiao, alternate members. Mao Zedong was designated as temporary Secretary. Since [I], Zedong, am studying right now, I really cannot assume these responsibilities. Later, when the two provincial committees and the Central Committee send someone here, a meeting of the worker-peasant-soldier representatives will be called to carry out elections. (1) [We must] expand the Party to include six provinces. (2) Launch a peasant uprising here. (3) Transform the army into a real Red army. (4) Establish a strong Party within the army. (5) Set up military schools and Party schools. Please send us the political news every three days via the eastern Hunan Special Committee. I read from the newspapers that in Gaolong one xian magistrate, two company commanders, and over fifty soldiers have been martyred, but victory was finally won when Zhu De joined in the fight. (6) The Fourth Army Committee secretary will officially take charge today.

5. The First Congress of the Party in the Border Area was convened in Maoping, Ninggang xian, on May 20, 1928. Mao Zedong, who chaired the meeting, delivered a report (of which the text is not presently available) in which he addressed the question of how long the Red régime could survive. The congress elected a Special Committee as the supreme leading organ in the border area, with a standing committee of which the membership is given in the text. Mao became secretary, with Chen Yi as secretary of the Army Committee. For the context, see the Introduction to this volume.

Report to the Hunan Provincial Committee by the Special Committee of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area and the Army Committee of the Fourth Red Army of the Chinese Communist Party

(July 4, 1928)

To the Hunan Provincial Committee:

Comrade Yuan and Comrade Du¹ arrived at Yongxin at the same time on June 30, and from them we have obtained the circular of the Provincial Committee and the resolution of the Central Committee regarding work in Hunan. The directives given in the two letters from the Provincial Committee are quite inconsistent. The former asks us to continue to build the organs of political power in the xian in the middle section of the Luoxiao mountain range as the military bases, without changing the Central Committee and Provincial Committee directives of a month ago. The latter, however, asks us to rush to southern Hunan after we capture Yongxin in order to avoid “annihilation” by the enemy and to solve the problem of economic difficulties. Here, after they defeated the troops of Yang Chi sheng on June 23, most of the Fourth Red Army troops have moved toward Lianhua, Anfu, and southwest of Ji’an through Yongxin, carrying on guerrilla warfare to raise money and mobilize the masses for uprisings. On the evening of June 30, the Special Committee, the Army Committee, and Yongxin Xian Committee held a Joint Conference to discuss the letters from the Provincial Committee. Comrades Yuan and Du also attended the meeting, at which it was decided that the Fourth Red Army should continue to deepen the work among the masses in various xian in the border area of Hunan and Jiangxi to build or consolidate the bases. With such bases, moving forward toward

¹. Regarding Yuan Desheng and Du Xiujing, representatives of the Hunan Provincial Committee, and their roles at this time, see the Introduction to this volume. Mao’s own views about their errors are spelled out in several documents translated below, including the resolution of October 5, 1928, and the report of November 25, 1928.

Hunan and Jiangxi, the Red Army will arrive at places with consolidated independent régimes that cannot easily be wiped out by the enemy. The reasons are as follows:

1) The life-style of the Fourth Red Army is itself much marked by the habits of roving insurgents in the past. So the troops are extremely unwilling to stay in one place for a long time and to carry on the difficult work of the mass struggle. They are still much under the influence of the Red Army’s pernicious traditions of adventurism. Only after nearly a month of many-sided education to wash away these traits, and only because, at the same time, the masses in Yongxin and Ninggang xian have generally stood up, have the troops of the Fourth Red Army gradually given up this idea and begun to understand that the policy to build Ninggang as the general headquarters suggested last time by the Central Committee and the Hunan Provincial Committee is correct. If we suddenly change our policy now and ask the Fourth Red Army to return to its roving path, it would be even more difficult to transform this army. It is pointed out in the last letter from the Provincial Committee that the Fourth Red Army has already traveled thousands of miles and moved like roving insurgents. They should choose a place to rest, so that they can better transform themselves. This directive is extremely correct and should not be rashly changed just as it is being implemented.

2) On the enemy side, the troops of Hunan Province are very tough and have real military strength. They are not as easy to attack as the enemy troops in Jiangxi. The latter have been defeated four times in succession, and they are scared out of their wits. Besides, their soldiers’ morale is much shaken because of the impact of our practice of setting the captives free. The only troops that are able to fight are those of Wang Jun’s Seventh Division. The First Division and its First Regiment are stationed in Pingxiang, and its Second Regiment is in Jujiang and Nanchang. We judge that it will be difficult to move these troops to attack us. Even if they are sent here, we can also use appropriate strategies to defeat them. The situation is different for the enemy troops from Hunan. After five or six engagements with them, we could put only a small number of these troops to flight, without inflicting casualties on them, and they are as strong as they were before. It is, therefore, not appropriate to rush ahead toward southern Hunan if we are to avoid tough battles. Otherwise we may get deeply caught in the encirclement of the enemy troops and suffer the misfortune of losing our whole army. The enemy troops from southern Hunan now consist of two divisions of the Guangxi clique, the Twenty-first Army, one army of Shang Chengjie (three thousand rifles), one division of Xu Kexiang, and one army of Wu Shang.

2. Wang Jun (1891–1936), zi Zhiping, was a native of Yunnan, and received his military training there. In the fall of 1925, when the National Revolutionary Army was established, he was appointed commander of the Seventh Division of the Third Army. In September 1929, he became commander of the Third Army.

These troops are seven or eight times stronger than the enemy troops of Jiangxi. Even if our army can win battles against the troops of Shang Chengjie and Xu Kexiang, there is no way we can defeat the armies of Wu Shang and the Guangxi clique. As soon as we arrive there, we would be caught in the encirclement of Wu Shang, the Guangxi clique, Shang Chengjie, and Xu Kexiang and would face the danger of being wiped out immediately. It seems that the Provincial Committee has not taken this fact into consideration.

3) Ninggang can become the general headquarters for our military forces because it is located in a highly strategic position among the big, steep mountains, and its roads lead to the two provinces. If we are victorious, we can certainly defend it. If we lose, we can easily retreat. Moreover, there is absolutely no way for the enemy troops to encircle us. If you add to this the Party and mass base in the various xian, we can indeed engage in a protracted struggle against the enemy. If we now recklessly abandon Ninggang, then “a tiger on the plain may be attacked by a dog,” and the Fourth Red Army would be in very serious danger.

4) Our proposal by no means reflects conservative ideas. In the past the insurrections throughout the country were at one time very vigorous, but when one day the enemy troops launched counterattacks, they were easily swept away like water flushing the river bed. All this is the result of seeking only to build up the momentum of the insurrections without attempting to consolidate the bases. At present we are trying our best to correct this mistake by building a general headquarters for the military forces on the one hand, and by consolidating the bases on the other, to prepare the way for future uprisings in the two provinces of Hunan and Jiangxi. We are working hard in Yongxin and Ninggang and making progress every day. We are also moving toward Lianhua, Anfu, and the southwest of J’ian to deepen the agrarian revolution and to create local armed forces. After one more month’s work, we will be reasonably confident of winning a victory if the enemy troops come again to attack us.

5) From the economic standpoint, because the troops of the Fourth Army are so numerous, the daily cash allowance for meals, even practicing the utmost economy, is 700 yuan. Apart from burning and killing in the xian of southern Hunan, the local economy is bankrupt, and the local bullies have taken everything. After they arrived at Leiyang in February, the troops of Zhu De were not able to raise a single cash. They could keep alive only by selling opium. It is now absolutely impossible for them to go to southern Hunan to resolve their economic difficulties. Only in the Hunan-Jiangxi border area can the present economic difficulties truly be resolved.

6) Our wounded soldiers have increased in number to five hundred. If we rush forward toward southern Hunan [with the wounded soldiers], the soldiers’ morale will be shaken. But we cannot leave them behind either. This is also one of the most difficult problems.
On the basis of the above six practical reasons, we conclude that, before a new war among the warlords breaks out, we cannot leave Ninggang, Yongxin, and Lianhua for southern Hunan. As soon as the bases here are somewhat consolidated, and there are some good opportunities elsewhere, the Fourth Red Army can leave Chaling, Youxian, and Liuyang to take part in the general insurrection in Hunan. In the meantime, every effort must be made to maintain the network of communication with Hunan, so that the two sides can correspond with each other and cooperate to show our strength.

We beg the Provincial Committee to give further consideration to the above opinions and to make new decisions according to the present situation. Such is our hope. Please allow us to present the detailed reports about the army and the local situation later.

Border Area Special Committee
Army Committee of the Fourth Red Army
City of Yongxin, July 4

Letter of the Special Committee of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area to the Hunan Provincial Committee

(August 1928)

Hunan Provincial Committee:

1. Comrade Du [Xiuqing] has arrived and we have read the letter. The Army Committee here called an Enlarged Session on May 30, at which Comrade Du made a report on the political situation and read out the letter of the Provincial Committee. The Enlarged Session accepted the letter without reservation and attached great importance to Comrade Du’s report, which synthesizes the lessons of the actual struggle in various places. The things that are mentioned in the letter of the Provincial Committee and call for an explanation are as follows: A. Actual strength. . . . To pool the Red efforts in the south and east of Hunan and those in the west of Jiangxi by means of guerrilla warfare depends solely on strength, but a reconnaissance of the enemy situation should be made before arriving at a decision on the action to be taken. B. We also agree that it is a mistake to organize a small group of people with few arms into independent regiments or battalions, but this has never been practiced here. C. Our [forces] here consist of troops under Zhu and Mao and a peasant army from southern Hunan. Now the southern Hunan peasant army has gone to operate in its home area. Originally it was established as the X Division; afterward, this was changed to the X Regiment.1 Division headquarters have now been abolished, and army headquarters set up to exercise direct command.

2. The Provincial Committee points out that it is wrong to burn cities. We shall never commit this mistake again.

3. The Party has been formally organized throughout the army, the form of organization being modeled on that of the Party in the Guomindang Revolutionary Army.

4. In the past, the Southern Hunan Special Committee instructed us to orga-

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1. From the texts of October and November 1928 which follow, it is clear that the unit number, omitted here, was "Twenty-ninth."
nize the CY\(^2\) in the army. Our experience of the past few months shows that this is not convenient for our work. Then the Second CY Congress of the Fourth Army made a decision to merge the two,\(^3\) and this time the Enlarged Session again confirmed the necessity of the merger. But this cannot be done on a partial and local basis and necessarily calls for a final decision from the Provincial Committee. This position differs from that of the Liquidationists, as the CY maintains a secretariat which enables it to participate fully in the work.

5. We will make great efforts to transform the army and cleanse it of the lumpenproletariat.

6. We made a plan long ago to abolish the wage system for the soldiers, but in fact the life of the soldiers is very difficult. Soldiers who bear such hardships and stand such hard work are really hard to come by.

7. Please send a large number of Anyuan miners to serve in our army.

8. The Provincial Committee has nominated Zedong as chairman of the Army Committee which has just been established. This seems unnecessary, because local work here is in more urgent need of hands. The Army Committee has not been completely organized yet. The secretary is Comrade Chen Yi. This instruction has not been carried out.

9. The Southern Hunan Special Committee has moved with the army to Zixin and will go to Hengyang via Anren. The responsible person from Yichen has returned....

\[\text{Jinggangshan} \]

\textit{(To the Tune of "Moon over the West River")}\(^1\)

(Autumn 1928)

At the foot of the mountain, our flags and banners can be seen,  
At its peak our drums and bugles are heard to respond.  
The enemy troops besiege us thousands strong,  
We stand alone and will not be moved.

Already our defense was like a stern fortress,  
Now do our united wills form yet a stronger wall.  
The roar of gunfire rises from Huangyangjie,\(^2\)  
Announcing the enemy has fled in the night.

\(^2\) Communist Youth League. As already noted, it was common at the time to use the initials of English expressions as a shorthand or code in this way.

\(^3\) I.e., the Youth League and Party organizations in the army.

\(^1\) For the convention of "tune title" (cipay), see note 1 to Mao's 1927 poem, "Autumn Harvest Uprising."

\(^2\) A strategic access route to the Jinggangshan occupied by enemy forces in August 1928, from which they were driven after a decisive battle on August 30. For Mao's own account of this campaign, see below, Chapter III of his report of November 25, 1928.
Draft Resolution of the Second Congress of Xian Party Organizations in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area

(Buyunshan Mountain, Ninggang Xian, October 5, 1928)

I. Political Problems and Tasks of the Party Organizations in the Border Area

A. The Internal and External Political Situation

The present rule of the new warlords of the Guomindang remains the rule of the comprador class in the cities and the despotic gentry in the countryside. Abroad, it has capitulated to imperialism, and at home, it has replaced the old warlords by new ones, imposing even more savage economic exploitation and political oppression on the workers and peasants. The bourgeois-democratic revolution launched from Guangdong had gone only halfway when the compradors and despotic gentry seized the leadership and immediately shifted it to the road of counterrevolution. The workers, peasants, other common people, and even the bourgeoisie of the whole country are still subject to counterrevolutionary rule and have not secured the slightest bit of political or economic emancipation.

Before the capture of Beijing and Tianjin, the four cliques of new Guomindang warlords—Chiang Kaishhek, the Guangxi warlords,¹ Feng Yuxiang,³ and Yan Xishan⁴—had concluded a temporary alliance against Zhang Zuolin.⁵ As soon as these cities were captured, the alliance immediately broke up, giving way to a situation of acute struggle among the four cliques, and now a war is brewing between Chiang and the Guangxi clique.⁶ The contradictions and struggles among the various warlord cliques within China reflect the contradictions and struggles among the imperialist powers. Consequently,⁷ under no circumstances can there be a compromise, and all compromises can only be temporary. A temporary compromise today prepares the ground for a bigger war tomorrow.

China is in urgent need of a bourgeois-democratic revolution, and this revolution can be carried through only under the leadership of the proletariat. In the 1926⁸ revolution, which started from Guangdong and spread toward the Yangzi, because the proletariat failed to exercise its hegemony resolutely, and leadership was seized by the compradors and despotic gentry, there was a change in the nature of the revolution.⁹ As a result, the bourgeois-democratic revolution met with a historic¹⁰ defeat. Broadly speaking, this defeat was similar to that of the chief subordinates Huang Shaohong and Bai Chongxi, established control over the whole of Guangxi. In 1926, he rallied to the Guomindang, and his forces became part of the National Revolutionary Army. Li played a major role in the victories of the Northern Expedition, and in the final drive on Beijing in June 1928.

3. On Feng Yuxiang, see above, the note to the declaration of August 1, 1927.
4. Yan Xishan (1883–1960), zi Baichuan, was a native of Shanxi. After graduating from the Military Academy in Japan, he became an instructor in the New Army and participated in the 1911 revolution. After the death of Yuan Shikai, he established himself as the sole ruler of Shanxi, allying himself with the Anfu clique of Duan Qirui. In 1922 and 1924, he supported the Zhili faction of Cao Kun and Wu Peifu against Zhang Zuolin, but after Feng Yuxiang's coup in Beijing in 1924, Yan established good relations with him as well. In 1927, he announced his allegiance to the Guomindang, and in 1928 his forces led the drive on Beijing.

5. Zhang Zuolin (1875–1928), zi Yuting, was a native of Fengtian (now Liaoning). From 1919 until his assassination in 1928, he ruled the northeastern provinces as a virtually autonomous state. Volume II of our edition contains a number of discussions by Mao of Zhang's role and of his conflicts with Wu Peifu's Zhili faction. See, in particular, pp. 239–46, the text of November 27, 1925, "Propaganda Guidelines of the Chinese Guomindang in the War against the Fengtian Clique."

6. Although Li Zongren, Feng Yuxiang, and Yan Xishan had all supported Chiang's Northern Expedition against Zhang Zuolin's Fengtian faction, it is quite true that this did not signal the end of conflict among them. After the fall of Beijing and Tianjin in June 1928, Chiang, Li, Feng, and Yan met in July to discuss military reorganization, but failed to come to an agreement.

7. Here the words "as long as the situation persists in which China is divided among the imperialist powers" have been inserted in the Selected Works version.

8. 1926 → 1926–1927
9. There was a change in the nature of the revolution → Revolution was replaced by counterrevolution.
10. A historic → A temporary
Russian Revolution in 1905. The Chinese proletariat and peasantry suffered a heavy blow in this defeat, and the Chinese bourgeoisie (but not the compradors and despotic gentry) suffered similar blows. Yet in the last few months, organized strikes in the cities and uprisings in the countryside, by the workers and peasants under the leadership of the Communist Party, have developed both in the north and in the south. Hunger and cold are creating great unrest among the soldiers of the warlord armies. Meanwhile, the bourgeoisie, led by the clique of Wang Jingwei and Chen Gongbo, is promoting a campaign of considerable proportions in favor of nationalism and people's rights and against imperialism, warlords, and the compradors and despotic gentry, everywhere in coastal areas and along the Yangtze. This campaign is a new development; as regards its nature, it is part of the democratic revolution China urgently needs.

China's democratic revolution, according to the instructions from the International and the Central Committee, consists in overthrowing the rule of imperialism and its warlord tools in China, so as to complete the national revolution, and carrying out the agrarian revolution, thereby eliminating the feudal exploitation of the peasants by the despotic gentry. Such a revolutionary movement has been growing daily since the Jinan Massacre in May.

The situation in China has undergone tremendous changes in the last few months, and the same is true of the international situation. Since the two developments represented by Japan's invasion of China, and the signing of the naval treaty between Britain and France have taken place, America, on the one hand, and Britain, France, and Japan, on the other, have found themselves polarized in positions of irreconcilable opposition. The present international situation is that, on questions touching China and Europe, the United States has adopted a policy of active intervention, while Britain, France, and Japan have adopted a policy of passive resistance. Thus a world war is brewing, and its outbreak is merely a matter of time.

11. Led → Urged on
12. i.e., by the leaders of the former Left Guomindang régime. On Wang, see, above, the declaration of August 1, 1927. Chen Gongbo (1892–1946), a native of Guangdong, was a founding member of the Chinese Communist Party who participated in the First Congress, but he soon became disillusioned and gravitated toward the Guomindang. From 1927 onward, his political fortunes were linked to those of Wang Jingwei.
13. Campaign → Reformist movement
14. The massacre at Jinan (Tsinan in contemporary English-language sources) took place while Chiang Kaishek and his armies were passing through the city in the direction of Beijing, in the course of the Northern Expedition. Japan had sent troops there, ostensibly to protect her citizens residing in Jinan. Despite the conciliatory attitude of Chiang Kaishek, clashes occurred, and when an ultimatum from the Japanese commander was not immediately complied with, a Japanese offensive was launched on May 8. In three days of fighting, thousands of Chinese soldiers and civilians were killed, in what proved to be the first in a series of "incidents" leading to full-scale war between the two countries.

B. Reasons for the Emergence and Survival of Soviet 15
Political Power in Various Places in Present-Day China

The prolonged existence inside a country of one or more small areas under Red political power, surrounded on all sides by White political power, is something which has never occurred anywhere else in the world. There are special reasons for the emergence of this curious thing. Moreover, it can exist and develop only under certain conditions. First, it cannot occur in any imperialist country, or in any colony under direct imperialist rule. It necessarily takes place in economically backward and semicolonial China, which is under indirect imperialist rule. For this strange phenomenon can occur only in conjunction with another strange phenomenon, namely, war within the White régime. The most remarkable feature of semicolonial China consists in the incessant wars among the various factions of old and new warlords within the country, supported by the compradors and despotic gentry, since the very first year of the Republic. Such a phenomenon is not to be found in any of the imperialist countries, nor in any of the colonies under direct imperialist rule. It occurs solely in China, which is under indirect imperialist rule. There are two reasons for the emergence of this phenomenon: a localized agricultural economy (not a unified capitalist economy) and the policy of the imperialist forces to divide and exploit through spheres of influence. Because of the prolonged splits and wars among the White political forces, one or several small areas of Red political power have come into existence surrounded on all sides by White political power. The independent régime on the borders of Hunan and Jiangxi is one of many such small areas. In difficult and critical times, some comrades often have doubts as to the survival of such Red political power and manifest negative tendencies. This is because they fail to find the correct explanation for the development and existence of such Red political power. If only we know that splits and wars among the White political forces will continue without interruption, we will have no doubts about the emergence, survival, and daily growth of Red political power. Second, the places in China where small areas under Red political power have come into existence and lasted for a relatively long time are definitely not those unaffected by the democratic revolution, such as Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan, or the northern provinces, but only regions like Hunan, Guangdong, Hubei and Jiangxi, where

15. Here, and throughout this text, "Soviet political power" (suweitai zhouguan) has been replaced by "Red political power" (dongzhe zhouguan).
16. Compradors and despotic gentry → Imperialism and the compradors and despotic gentry within the country
17. One or several small areas of Red political power have come into existence surrounded on all sides by White political power. The conditions have been created for the emergence and survival of one or more small Red areas under the leadership of the Communist Party amid the encirclement of the White political power.
18. Negative tendencies → Pessimistic feelings
the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers rose in great numbers in the course of the bourgeois-democratic revolution two years ago. In many parts of these provinces, trade unions and peasant associations were organized on a wide scale, and many economic and political struggles were waged by the worker and peasant classes against the urban and rural bourgeoisie. As a result, an urban soviet régime lasting three days emerged in Guangzhou, while independent peasant régimes existed in Haifeng and Lufeng, in eastern and southern Hunan, in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, and in Huang’an, Hubei. As for the emergence of the present-day Red Army, it can only be a split-off from the National Revolutionary Army, which underwent democratic political training and came under the influence of the masses of the workers and peasants. Armies such as those of Yun Xishan and Zhang Zuolin, which have received no political training at all and have never come under the influence of the workers and peasants, cannot possibly give rise to elements that can serve to constitute a Red Army. Third, whether it is possible for the worker-peasant-soldier soviet political power in small areas to “survive for a long time” hinges on whether or not the nationwide revolutionary situation continues to move forward. If it does, then not only will the small areas under Red political power undoubtedly survive for a long time, but they will definitely become one of the many forces contributing to the seizure of overall political power. If the revolution does not continue to move forward in the country as a whole, but stagnates for a fairly long period of time, as in the case of Russia from 1905 to 1917, then long-term survival of the small areas under Red political power will be impossible. What, then, is the situation of the Chinese revolution? In reality, it is continuing to develop along with the continuous splits and wars within the ranks of the domestic bourgeoisie and the international bourgeoisie. Therefore not only will the small areas under Red political power undoubtedly last for a long time, but they will continue to develop and gradually approach the seizure of overall political power. Fourth, the existence of a regular Red Army of adequate strength is a necessary condition for the existence of Red political power. If we had only Red Guards of a local character, but no regular Red Army, we could deal only with the household militia, but not with the White armies. Consequently, even if there were the most excellent worker and peasant masses, without adequate armed forces, it would still be absolutely impossible to create an independent régime, let alone a durable and constantly developing independent régime. It follows that the idea of establishing independent régimes of the workers and peasants by armed force is an important one, that must be fully assimilated by the Communist Party, and by the masses of the workers and peasants in areas under the independent régimes. Fifth, in addition to the above-mentioned conditions, there is another important prerequisite for the long-term existence and development of the Red political power, namely, that the Communist Party’s organization must be strong, and its policy correct.

C. The Independent Régime in the Border Area and the August Defeat

The splits and wars among the warlords have weakened the ability of the White régime to rule. Thus opportunities have been provided for the rise of Red political power in small areas. But fighting among the warlords does not go on every day without ceasing. Whenever the White political power in one or more provinces enjoys temporary stability, the ruling class of one province, or an alliance of the ruling classes of several provinces, will surely exert every effort to destroy Red political power. In areas where all the conditions for Red political power are not completely met, it will assuredly be overthrown by them. That is why Red political régimes emerging at favorable moments before last April in many small areas such as Guangzhou, Hailufeng, the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, southern Hunan, Liling, and Huang’an, were crushed one after another by the White political power. From April onward, the independent régime in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area was confronted with a situation in which the ruling forces in the south were enjoying temporary stability. The troops sent by the two provinces of Hunan and Jiangxi to annihilate us were always more than eight or nine regiments, and at times as many as fifteen. Yet with a force of less than four regiments we fought the enemy for four long months, daily enlarging the territory under our independent régime, deepening the agrarian revolution, extending the soviet organizations, and strengthening the Red Army and the Red Guards. This was possible because the policies of the Party organizations (local and army) in the border area were correct. The policies of the Border Area Special Committee and the Army Committee of the Party at that time were as follows: Struggle resolutely against the enemy, set up political power in the middle section of the Luoxiao mountain range, and oppose escapism defeatism; deepen the agrarian revolution in areas under the independent régime; let the army Party organizations promote the development of local Party organizations, and let the regular army foster the development of local armed forces; concentrate the Red Army units so as to deal at opportune moments with the enemy confronting them, and oppose the division of forces to avoid being wiped out one by one; adopt

19. Two years ago → Of 1926 and 1927
20. Urban and rural bourgeoisie → The landlords and despotic gentry and the bourgeoisie
21. An urban soviet régime → A régime of the masses
22. Worker-peasant-soldier soviet political power → Political power of the popular masses
23. Domestic bourgeoisie → The compradors and despotic gentry within the country
24. On the “household militia” (aihunian), see the note to the text of June 18, 1928.
25. Armed forces → Regular armed forces
26. In areas where all the conditions for Red political power are not completely met, it will assuredly be overthrown by them → In areas where all the necessary conditions for its establishment and persistence are not fulfilled, Red political power is in danger of being overthrown by the enemy.
27. Fifteen → Eighteen
28. Wiped out → Wiped out by the enemy
the policy of expanding the area under the independent régime in a series of waves, and oppose adventurist tactics. Thanks to the appropriateness of these tactics, to a terrain in the border area which was favorable to our struggle, and to the inadequate coordination between the troops invading from Hunan and those from Jiangxi, we were able to win victory on so many occasions in the four months from April through July. The enemy, though many times stronger than we were, was not only unable to destroy our independent régime but also lent an impetus\textsuperscript{29} to its daily expansion, and our régime tended to exert an ever-growing influence on the two provinces of Hunan and Jiangxi. The August defeat resulted entirely from the failure to understand\textsuperscript{30} that the period was one of temporary stability for the ruling classes and from the adoption of a strategy suited to a time of political splits among the ruling classes, dividing our troops for a rash advance, and thus bringing about a defeat both in the border area and in southern Hunan. Comrade Du Xiujing, the representative of the Provincial Committee,\textsuperscript{31} did not investigate the actual situation and paid no attention to the resolution passed at the Joint Conference of the Special Committee, the Army Committee, and the Yongxin Xian Committee [on May 20, 1928]. He simply applied formally the orders from the Hunan Provincial Committee and fell in with the action\textsuperscript{32} of the Twenty-ninth Regiment, which wanted to evade struggle and return home. His error was truly a grave one.\textsuperscript{33}

\textbf{D. The Role of the Border-Area Independent Régime in the Worker-Peasant Insurrections in Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi Provinces}

The significance of the armed independent régime of the workers and peasants in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, with Ninggang as its center, is assuredly not confined to the few xian in the border area; this régime has a very great role to play in the process of worker and peasant insurrection to seize political power in Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi. To extend the influence of the agrarian revolution and of the soviet political power in the border area to the lower reaches of the rivers in Hunan and Jiangxi and even as far as Hubei; constantly to expand the Red Army and to enhance its quality through struggle, so that it will be able to carry out its necessary mission in the coming general insurrection in the three provinces; to enlarge the local armed forces in the various xian, that is, the Red Guards and the worker-peasant insurrection detachments, and improve their quality, so that they are able now to fight the household militia and small armed units and will be capable in future of safeguarding the political power of the border area; gradually to reduce the dependence of personnel\textsuperscript{34} on the assistance of Red Army workers, so that the border area will be completely self-reliant and will not only have its own personnel to take charge of work there but will even be able to provide personnel for the Red Army and the expanded territory of the independent régime—such are the tasks of extreme importance for the border area Party organizations, in connection with the insurrection unfolding in the three provinces of Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi.

\textbf{E. Economic Problems}

The shortage of daily necessities and cash has become a very serious problem\textsuperscript{35} inside the White encirclement. Because of the tight enemy blockade, daily necessities such as salt, cloth, and medicine have been very scarce and dear in the territory of the independent soviet régime in the border area throughout the whole of the past year. As a result, the lives of the masses of the workers, peasants, and petty bourgeoisie, as well as of the masses of the soldiers of the Red Army have been disrupted, sometimes to an extreme degree. The Red Army has to fight and provision itself at the same time. It even lacks funds to pay the daily food allowance of five cents per person;\textsuperscript{36} the soldiers are undernourished, many are ill, and the wounded in hospitals suffer even more. Such difficulties are, of course, unavoidable before the nationwide seizure of political power. It is, however, urgently necessary to overcome them to some degree, that is, to make life a little easier and, in particular, to secure more adequate supplies for the Red Army. Unless the Party in the border area can find appropriate methods for coping with the economic problems, the future of the independent régime will be filled with difficulties if the stability of the enemy forces lasts for a relatively long period. A proper solution of these economic problems truly deserves the attention of every Party member.

\textbf{F. The Problem of Military Bases}

There is yet another task facing the Party in the border area, namely, to consolidate the two military bases of Five Wells and Jiulong. Five Wells,\textsuperscript{37} at the juncture of the four xian of Yongxin, Lingxian, Ninggang, and Suichuan, and Jiulong,\textsuperscript{38} at the juncture of the four xian of Yongxin, Ninggang, Chaling, and Lianhua, both have topographical advantages; not only are they important military bases for the border area at present but they will remain \textit{among the import-}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{29} Lent an impetus → Was unable to prevent
  \item \textsuperscript{30} The failure to understand → The failure of some of the comrades to understand
  \item \textsuperscript{31} Provincial Committee → Hunan Provincial Committee
  \item \textsuperscript{32} Action → Views
  \item \textsuperscript{33} Here the \textit{Selected Works} text adds the following sentence: "The situation arising from this defeat was salvaged as a result of the corrective measures taken by the Special Committee and the Army Committee of the Party after September;"
  \item \textsuperscript{34} Personnel → Local personnel
  \item \textsuperscript{35} Serious problem → Serious problem for the army and the people
  \item \textsuperscript{36} Here the \textit{Selected Works} text adds: ";... which is provided in addition to grain."
  \item \textsuperscript{37} Five Wells → The Five Wells mountain district
  \item \textsuperscript{38} Jiulong → The Jiulong mountain district
\end{itemize}
II. The Transformation of the Party in the Xian of
the Border Area and Some Recommendations

The Special Committee of the Border Area was founded only four months ago. During this short period of time, it has done a great deal in leading the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army in tasks such as carrying out the “land revolution,” “establishing the Soviets,” and striking devastating blows at the old society. Nevertheless, because of the rural economic environment of the border area, because the history of the Party is very short, and because there have been very few independent struggles (since there is the Red Army to rely on), the tendency toward a peasant party marked by an opportunist heritage is frightfully apparent in every Party branch at all levels in the Border Area. It is an important responsibility of every Party branch from now on to point out all the past errors within the party, eliminate the evil legacy of opportunism within the Party, reform the Party branches at all levels, and cause the Party to take the road of true proletarian leadership.

The Party has not yet been set up in Youxian. The influence of the Party in the other xian can only reach most or part of those xian. Strong central districts have not been set up, nor has the Party extended its influence to the broad masses in every direction. Hence it is also an important responsibility of Party branches in the Border Area from now on to set up a Party branch in Youxian and strong central districts in every xian, and establish a foundation for the Party in every xian.

A. The Past Mistakes of the Party

1. In the past the evil legacy of opportunism has been excessively strong in the Party in every xian, and we have relied on the army rather than leading an independent struggle of the masses. This has been a very great error.

2. In the past, the Party in every xian had strongly marked characteristics of a peasant party, and showed a tendency to evolve toward non-proletarian leadership. The Party in Yongxin wanted to break away publicly from the special committee and set up an “independent kingdom.” The other xian, such as Ning’gang, Ling’xian, Lian’hua and so on also paid no attention to reporting to the Special Committee and thereby forming a connection with it. These were all serious organizational errors.

3. In the past, in the early period, the Party organs were all individual dictatorships, autocracies of the Party secretary; there was no collective leadership or democratic spirit whatsoever. For instance, Mao Zedong was the only member of the Special Committee, and Liu Zhen was the only member of the Party committee of Yongxin xian. In practice, this led to the error that the masses knew only the individual but not the Party. This is absolutely not a Bolshevik Party. Although this mistake was forcefully pointed out at the Emergency Conference, and there are always three Standing Committee members supervising the work of the Special Committee, it is still impossible to set up the various departments and the Secretariat because of the shortage of personnel. In addition, many people working for the Special Committee are ill. Politics is constantly changing, the relationship between the Party committees of the various xian and the Special Committee cannot become intimate, and as a result, the Special Committee itself opposes the instructions from the general headquarters at various levels, and has not tried its best to carry out the decisions of the Emergency Conference.

4. Most of the leading organs are headed by petty bourgeois intellectuals, and not enough attention is paid to promoting people of worker and peasant background to serve on the leading organs.

5. In the expansion of the Party organization in the past, attention was paid exclusively to quantitative development, rather than to improving the quality. Party and class were not clearly distinguished, and press-ganging was the only method of recruitment employed. This will ruin the Party organization, and as a result the Party will become incapable of struggle.

6. In the past the Party neglected the basic organization—the branch.

7. In the past, the Party’s method of work was wrong. The authority for dealing with every problem concerning the Party should be concentrated in the Standing Committee, and in the Organization Department, the Propaganda Department . . ., and so on, which are after all the technical departments of the Standing Committee. In the Party in the Border Area, however, not only is power not concentrated in the Standing Committee, but there is not even an organization department. It is merely a matter of the autocracy of the Party secretary.
After the Emergency Conference, things in the Special Committee itself and in
the Party committee of Yongxin xian improved a bit (all work is decided by the
standing committee). The Party organizations at various levels below the Special
Committee still suffer, however, from the same defects, and have not corrected
these errors at all.

8. In the past the Party in the various xian of the Border Area paid much too
little attention to secret work, to the point where quite a large number of Party
members did not understand secret work. When taking political power, they
made everything public; when they lost power, they would simply “lie in am-
bush.”

9. In our work in the past, the upper levels were always separated from the
lower levels, nor did the upper levels satisfactorily inspect and supervise the
lower levels. The Party only paid attention to the work in the various organs, and
committed the error of separating itself from the masses.

10. In the past the Party paid very little attention to the work in the urban
areas, and to the workers’ movement.

11. In the past the Special Committee only paid attention to military disposi-
tions, for example, to the work in the two xian of Ninggang and Yongxin. It did
not take account of the whole, to the extent that it became a subsidiary of the
army. If the army took a certain xian, it would begin to pay attention to the work
there; if the army did not reach a certain xian, the work in that xian would be
ignored.

12. In the past the Party slighted the work of the Youth League to an extreme
degree, or even displayed a tendency to eliminate the Youth League.

B. Transforming and Building the Party From Now on

1. The Party must be thoroughly transformed, starting with the transforma-
tion of the branches, eliminating opportunist leadership both in organization and
in policy.

2. The Special Committee and the xian committees should each have at
least four inspectors. They should regularly guide the work at the lower levels,
and aid in the transformation of Party organizations at all levels.

3. Do your utmost to promote as many worker comrades as possible to leading
organs. Executive committees and standing committees at every level should have
more than half worker and peasant comrades participating. In promoting worker and
peasant elements, we should pay special attention to the significance of education.

4. The party organs at every level must be fully organized, and individual
leadership must be opposed. All power should be concentrated in the standing
committee, while the various departments are the technical organs.

5. In the course of transforming the Party, we must adopt a completely
proletarian point of view. We must make the utmost efforts to pay attention to
discussing and carrying out the new policies of the Party. We must resolutely
[distance ourselves] from the petty-bourgeois, liberal, independent, and romantic
elements in the Party’s past, and be strictly on guard against the tendency to form
“independent kingdoms.”

6. The Party should extend democratization to the highest possible degree.
Every policy should be discussed enthusiastically and understood thoroughly by
the Party members, so that the mass of Party members will be able to establish
their work plans in accordance with the policies. The Party committee members
as well as the secretaries at every level should be chosen by the method of
elections.

7. Party members should consist of progressive, conscious, loyal, and coura-
geous poor workers and peasants; strict limits should be set on petty-bourgeois
elements, intellectuals, and rich peasants.

8. In the development of the Party, special attention should be paid to qual-
ity. When introducing Party members, the sponsors should do a lot of propa-
ganda work toward, and investigation work about, those being introduced.
Whenever a new comrade is introduced, he should be approved at a Party branch
meeting, and then endorsed by the district committee. We oppose the press-gang
method of recruiting Party members. We must make sure that every Party mem-
ber is a proletarian fighter. The Party organization must not seek to become
universal, but should pay special attention to creating the basis for a strong Party
in the central districts.

9. The Party should pay attention to its basic organization—the branch, and
put into practice the slogan “All of our work depends finally on the branch.” At
the same time, special attention should be paid to branch work in the urban areas,
and excellent worker comrades should also be promoted to become branch Party
secretaries and committee members in the rural areas, so as to increase the
leadership capacity of the workers and be strictly on guard against the tendency
toward a peasant party. We must choose progressive elements among the Party
members in the rural areas, and give them special training, so as to prepare them
to become the backbone of the Party.

10. The organization of the Party should be absolutely secret. Every Party
member in every Party organization at every level should make the utmost effort
to pay attention to secret work. We oppose relying on military and political
strength to organize the Party. The Party should be organized secretly within the
area controlled by the enemy group; fleeing and “lying in ambush” should be
opposed.

11. The Special Committee should pay the utmost attention to the soundness
of its own organization, as well as that of every xian committee. The Youxian
Xian Committee should be set up at once, and there should be overall arrange-
ments for the Party’s work in each and every one of the xian in the border area.

12. “Iron discipline” is the primary trait of a Bolshevik party. Only in this
way can we prevent the Party from taking a non-proletarian road. Only by
wiping out opportunists and eliminating corrupt elements who refuse to struggle
can we gather together the strength of the revolutionary progressive elements and unite them around the Party, so that the Party will be strongly fortified and march in step to become a powerful fighting organization. Only thus can we enhance the leadership capacity of the proletariat. Consequently, the strict application of discipline is an important task in transforming and building the Party center.

C. The Question of the Work in Every Xian

It is the responsibility of the Special Committee to discuss the detailed plan for the work in every xian.

D. The Question of the Struggle in the Rural Areas

1. In the past, the struggle in the rural areas did not carry out the “land revolution” at all resolutely. The so-called redistribution of the land wholly failed to satisfy the thoroughgoing demands of the impoverished farm laborers. Instead it was an equal distribution based on the compromising standpoint of the rich peasants, middle peasants, and poor peasants. This is a great mistake which has been made in the past.

2. In the past, while carrying out the “land revolution,” we entirely failed to impose a severe Red terror, and to massacre the landlords and despotist gentry as well as their running dogs (this was done somewhat better in Lianhua and Chaling).

3. In the past, under the Red political power in the rural areas, we largely neglected the class struggle between the rich peasants, the middle peasants and the poor peasants in the countryside. As a result there was no unity and strength of the poor peasants under the White terror, the rich peasants defected, and the middle peasants wavered.

4. Our overall strategy in the rural struggles from now on is: unite the poor peasants; pay attention to the middle peasants; plunge into the land revolution; strictly impose Red terror; massacre the landlords and the despotist gentry as well as their running dogs without the slightest compunction; threaten the rich peasants by means of the Red terror so that they will not dare to assist the landlord class.

5. On the basis of this strategy, we should immediately organize the following: (1) A farm laborers’ union (poor sharecroppers should join this organization), which will serve to unite the farm laborers, enhance their strength, and make them the backbone in the countryside. (2) Red execution teams or insurrection teams, which should be organized under the White terror from the bravest workers and peasants. Each Red execution team should consist of five to seven persons. They should carry out guerrilla attacks in the dead of night to create a Red terror in the countryside. When political power has been seized, the Red execution team can be changed into Red Guards. (3) Select the brave elements from among the workers and peasants, and organize them into insurrection teams to develop the insurrection in the countryside and seize political power there.

E. The Question of the Workers’ Movement

1. Workers are the vanguard of all the toiling masses, they are the leaders of all the toiling masses. In the past we paid no attention to the workers’ movement; let alone leadership by the workers. As a result, the tendency toward a peasant party emerged. This is a very serious crisis for the Party.

2. Our Party should make a great effort to organize unions among the handcraft workers in the countryside, as well as among the workers in the urban areas, lead the workers from fragmentary economic struggles to armed uprising, and correct our past mistake of ignoring the workers’ movement.

3. Party headquarters and soviets at every level should make great efforts to promote workers, so that they will be able to assume leadership positions and lead the struggle.

F. The Question of the Soldiers’ Movement

The reason the Chinese Communist Party advocates the policy of “armed uprising to seize political power” is that in carrying out this policy it is necessary to coordinate very well the three forces represented by the workers, peasants, and soldiers, for only then will a victorious uprising be possible. Because China’s “democratic revolution” has not yet been carried out, the warlords, despotist gentry, and comprador class are able to make use of feudal relationships to fool the workers and peasants and make mercenaries of them, claiming that [the warlord armies] are instruments for protecting them. As a result, the majority of those now serving as soldiers feel quite at ease living a hungry and bitter life under the command of their class enemies (some soldiers in the enemy armies have not received any pay for years). Before the Guomindang turned traitor, the National Revolutionary Army had, however, received some kind of propaganda regarding “class struggle.” As for those who gravitated to the military camps after the incident (employees of the peasants’ associations or the labor unions), they are naturally endowed with even more consciousness. Under great pressure and close watch from the reactionary officers, it is not easy for these conscious elements to find leaders, so they do not dare rashly to conduct propaganda and organizational work in the reactionary military camp. In reality, however, they are filled with revolutionary sentiments, and are very willing to defect. This serves to demonstrate that the possibility of a soldiers’ movement already exists objectively. Moreover, the success of this kind of movement has been proven a reality in Hunan, Guangdong, and other provinces. The present obstacle of reactionary force depends entirely on the several millions of as yet unawakened soldiers of the National Revolutionary Army. If we do a good job with our

43. Shibian, i.e., the rupture of the Guomindang with the Communist Party in the spring and summer of 1927.
soldiers' movement, reactionary rule will quickly collapse. If, on the other hand, we ignore the soldiers' movement and concentrate exclusively on work with the peasants instead, the Chinese revolution will never succeed.

The Party organizations at all levels in the Border Area have always paid little attention to work with the soldiers, and concentrated on the peasant movement alone. (Some Party organizations have nothing but peasant work.) We should bear in mind that many of our experiences of failure in the past can be attributed mainly to the absence of participation by the soldiers' movement in the insurrection. (The uprising in Guangdong at the end of last year, the repeated failure of uprisings in Hunan . . . [are examples of this].)44 If we continue to pay no attention to this, then future failures can be predicted. It is very evident that if we now rely solely on the subjective force in the Border Area, it will be impossible to entertain vain hopes of carving out a kingdom for ourselves, or to set up a bigger independent régime. Therefore Party organizations at all levels must make great efforts to develop the soldiers' movement. We must never forget that the policy of "an armed uprising to seize political power" can only be carried out if the three forces of the workers, peasants, and soldiers are coordinated.

1. At the present the soldiers' movement is as important as the workers' and peasants' movements. Every xian should select a large number of worker and peasant comrades, in a planned and organized way, and send them to the reactionary army to become soldiers, porters, cooks, and so on, and thus play a role within the enemy's forces. Special attention should be paid to this work in Yongxin, Chaling, Sichuan and other xians where large numbers of enemy troops are concentrated.

2. Strengthen the propaganda work directed toward the enemy soldiers.

3. Send some people to the interior of the enemy forces to organize the Party. Do not organize soldiers' committees, so as to avoid organizational complexities, and the risk of discovery by enemy officers.

4. Use inconspicuous comrades, and women in the rural areas, to conduct oral propaganda and agitation.

5. Spread rumors and instigate terror, in order to shake the morale of the enemy, thus leading to wavering and ultimately to collapse.

G. The Question of Propaganda

1. In the past the Party organizations in all the xians of the Border Area paid no attention at all to propaganda, imagining that they could establish a kingdom with nothing but a few rifles. They did not know that the Communist Party can overthrow the enemy only by holding propaganda pamphlets in its left hand and rifles and bullets in its right hand. Meanwhile in none of their work (such as organizing soviets and insurrection teams, redistributing the land, organizing the Party and so on) did they make propaganda about their methods and their significance. They made use only of military and political strength to force others to do things, [saying] "if you don't obey, we will kill you." This was an extremely serious mistake.

2. We must find a way to perfect propaganda departments in the Special Committee as well as in the xian Party committees. Every week, slogans and a propaganda outline should be sent out on time. The daily wall newspaper should also be distributed to the Party organizations at every level for them to copy and post. Whenever a guerrilla unit sets out on a guerrilla mission, there should be good propaganda (mass assembly—speeches in makeup, propaganda team, and individual propaganda).

3. In the future, the work reports of subordinate Party organizations to their superior Party organizations must include a report on propaganda work. When inspecting and investigating the work of lower levels, the higher levels should also pay attention to the inspection and examination of their propaganda work. The Special Committee as well as the xian Party committees should distribute their propaganda outlines to all lower-level Party organizations on a weekly basis.

4. For the present, we should try our best to make a political analysis of the internal clashes among the warlords, and pay attention to propaganda work directed against the chaotic struggles among warlords. At the same time, we should make extremely forceful propaganda about the great strength of the workers, the peasants, and the Communist Party, explaining that in the end the chaotic struggles among the warlords will be wiped out by a worker and peasant insurrection.

5. At present, our propaganda toward the worker and peasant masses as a whole should forcefully expose the policies of the warlords and despotic gentry for cheating the workers and peasants, and forcefully propagate the views of our Party.

6. The soviets, the agrarian revolution, communism, the Red Army, and the insurrection teams should all be the subject of specialized propaganda outlines. We should intensify this propaganda, and cause it to penetrate deeply into the minds of the masses.

7. Right now we should analyze in detail for our comrades and for the masses the political and economic contradictions and clashes within the ruling class. We should do our best to make propaganda about the strength of the workers and peasants themselves, as well as the forces of insurrection in various regions, and shatter the defeatist view that there is no hope of recovery. At the same time, we should also shatter among our comrades and the masses the passive view of relying solely on the army. (Of course we do not

44. The reference is to the Guangzhou commune of December 1927, the Autumn Harvest Uprising of September 1927 in Hunan, and the uprising in the spring of 1928 in southern Hunan. Mao may also have been thinking of events in the early summer of 1927 documented in Volume II of this edition.
deny the strength of the army in launching uprisings, and in assisting the workers and peasants to launch uprisings).

H. The Question of Training

1. In the past, the reason why the local Party organizations were not strong was that Party members lacked training, even to the extent that there was no ceremony of admission into the Party. Now every Party member must receive training in the basic theories of the Party.

2. The Special Committee will organize an education and propaganda committee, compile training materials, and plan the weekly training work.

3. The Special Committee should organize regular training classes. Every xian should also run as many short-term training classes as possible, in order to produce people qualified to be cadres.

4. At the Party organization meetings at various levels, and in the course of actual work, we should try our best to promote worker and peasant elements, and train these workers and peasants as people qualified to be cadres.

5. At present, basic training work should strive to eliminate the opportunist, feudal, and petty-bourgeois thought of the ordinary comrades, and establish among them the revolutionary outlook on life of the proletariat.

6. Raise the level of literacy and political education of our comrades. At the same time, we should also launch a literacy drive, so as to raise the “writing” and “reading” ability of our worker and peasant comrades.

I. The Question of the Soviets

1. In the past the politics of the soviet was really nothing but a metamorphosis of the peasant association, so its work was monopolized by the secretary general and chairman. Some of the governments were even controlled by rich peasants and became magistrate’s yamens. These so-called soviet governments should all without exception be reorganized.

2. The Special Committee should enact a law regarding soviet organization, and all xian, district, and township soviets should be organized according to this organization law.

3. The soviets must have workers, poor peasants, and revolutionary soldiers as their main force. They must oppose the control of rich peasant secretaries general, and put into practice “all political power to the Soviets.”

4. The government of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Region must once again be thoroughly transformed.

5. The relationship between Party organizations and soviets at all levels should be clarified, to eliminate the evil of equating the Party with the government. The Special Committee must issue a circular regarding the difference between the Party and the government, and the Party organizations at various levels should conduct extensive propaganda.

J. The Land Question. We Accept the Central Committee’s Circular Regarding the Land Question, and Will Hand It Over to the Special Committee for Discussion before Making a Final Decision.

K. The Question of the C.Y.

1. The Youth League is a political organization of the Party among the worker and peasant masses. In the past many of the League headquarters at various levels in the border region were unclear about the political tasks of the Youth League. In the various xian of the Border Area, the Youth League only carried out a few cultural movements intended to expand its influence. In reality it became a subordinate organ of the party, and this led to an even more serious mistake by the Party organizations at various levels in the Border Area—they advocated eliminating the League.

2. At present, all the xian of the Border Area should engage in the work of building the Youth League. Since, however, the strength of the League itself is deficient, and it can scarcely shoulder this responsibility alone, the Party organizations at various levels must set aside part of their strength [for this purpose], and constantly pay attention to Youth League work. They should help it to establish League branches in every xian in the Border Area, expand League organizations, and perfect the leading organs of the Youth League.

3. The budget of the League should be independent, so that it will be able to do what it wants as far as its operations are concerned, and avoid budgetary dependence of the Youth League on the Party.

4. Paying attention to the work of the Youth League is a responsibility which must be assumed by the Party organizations at all levels. From now on, the reports of Party organizations at all levels to their superiors must include a section entitled “the work of the Youth League.” While investigating the work at various levels, inspectors from higher levels must also pay attention to Youth League work.

5. Most of the Party organizations and League organizations at various levels have not understood the relationship between the Party and the League, and as a result, there has been a tendency for each to go its own way.
Report of the Jinggangshan Front Committee to the Central Committee

(November 25, 1928)

Hunan Provincial Party Committee: Please forward this report to the Central Committee.

I. About the Letter from the Central Committee

The June 4 letter from the Central Committee passed through the hands of the Jiangxi Provincial Committee and the Ji'an Xian Committee and did not reach the Jinggangshan till December 2. This is an excellent letter. It has corrected many of our mistakes and resolved many controversial issues here. As soon as it arrived, we sent copies to Party committees at all levels, both in the army and in the localities. Troops which had set out for Suichuan gathered in Jinggangshan on November 6, and the Special Committee called a meeting of over thirty people to discuss the letter from the Central Committee. Participants were Special Committee members and activists in the army and in the localities. (Those who attended included Zhu De, Chen Yi, He Tingying, He Changgong, Yuan Wencai, Wang Zuo, Tan Zhenlin, Deng Ganyuan, Li Quefei, Chen Zhengren, Wang Zuonong, Xiao Wanxia, Liu Huixiao, Xie Chunbiao, Liu Di, Xiong Shouqi, Yang Kaiming, Cao Shuo, Deng Jiuting, Mao Zedong, Song Qiaosheng, and Peng Gu. The representative of the Hunan Provincial Committee, Yuan Desheng, also participated.) It was recognized that, apart from one or two points relating to concrete circumstances (such as [the recommendations] that guerrilla warfare should be extended to an excessively wide area, and that the system of Party representatives should be abolished), all the principles and strategies embodied in the letter were extremely appropriate to the current situation, and we should act accordingly. A Front Committee was also immediately organized as the Party’s supreme organ [in the border area]. In accordance with the letter, the Front Committee now comes under the jurisdiction of the Jiangxi Provincial Committee, because it is in Jiangxi at the moment. When it moves to Hunan, it comes automatically under the jurisdiction of the Hunan Provincial Committee. At the same time, it can request direct instructions from the Central Committee through these two provincial committees. Unfortunately, of the four appendices to the letter from the Central Committee, we have decoded only two. The two that have been converted into plain texts are “Confiscate the Land and Establish the Soviets” and “The February Resolution of the International.” We are unable to decode two other documents, “Military Work” and “Organizational Problems.” We need them badly. Please send us as soon as possible the deciphering code, or send us another copy.

II. The Independent Régime in the Border Area and the August Defeat

The phenomenon of the emergence of one or more small areas under Red political power, surrounded on all sides by a White régime, is to be found only in China. When we analyze the reasons for its appearance, we find that they lie in the incessant splits and wars within the comprador and despotic gentry classes. So long as these splits and wars continue, the existence and development of the armed independent régime of workers and peasants will continue. Under such circumstances of splits and wars within the comprador and despotic gentry under Mao’s leadership in September 1927 and thereafter accompanied Mao to the Jinggangshan. He was one of the five members of the new Front Committee organized at the beginning of November 1928, following the receipt of the Central Committee’s June 4 letter.

4. The June 4, 1928, letter of the Central Committee stressed very heavily the importance of continued and rapid expansion of the area controlled by the forces of Zhu and Mao, by using the Red Army to mobilize the masses and bring about an insurrection patterned on that of Guangzhou. For Mao’s opinion about the Central Committee’s recommendation on the abolition of Party representatives in the army, see Section IVAS of this report.

5. I.e., at the meeting on November 6, in obedience to the direct order contained in the letter, the Special Committee was abolished and replaced by the Front Committee.

6. Is to be found → Is to be found in today’s world.
classes, the existence and growth of the independent soviet régime depend on the following concrete conditions: (1) excellent masses; (2) an excellent Party; (3) a fairly strong Red Army; (4) a favorable terrain for military operations; (5) sufficient economic strength to provide for subsistence. In addition, the independent régime has different strategies toward the ruling classes which surround them on all sides, depending on whether the ruling classes are stable or split up. For example, during the war between Li and Tang in Hunan and Hubei, and the war between Zhang and Li in Guangdong, we could adopt a comparatively adventurous strategy, and the area carved out by military means could be relatively extensive. We must, however, still take care to establish a firm foundation in the central districts, so that we shall have something secure to rely on when the White terror comes. When the ruling classes are stable (relatively speaking), as was the case in the southern provinces after April of this year, our strategy must definitely be one of gradual advance. In military affairs, the thing most to be avoided is to divide our forces in reckless advances; in mass work (such as land distribution, the establishment of soviets, organizing the Party, and organizing local militia), the thing to be avoided most is scattering our personnel and neglecting to establish a solid foundation in the central districts. The defeats of many small Red régimes in localities all over China have resulted either from the absence of objective prerequisites or from subjective mistakes in tactics. Subjective mistakes in tactics have been made solely because of failure to distinguish clearly between periods of temporary stability and periods of splits in the political power of the ruling class. In a period of temporary stability, some comrades advocated in military affairs dividing up our forces for an adventurous advance and even proposed using the Red Guards as the sole force to defend large areas of the independent soviet régime, as though quite unaware of the fact that the enemy could attack not only with the household militia, but even in concentrated operations with regular troops. In mass work, they utterly neglected to issue instructions to lay a solid foundation in the central districts and sought boundless expansion without taking account of the limitations on our subjective capacities. Anyone who called for a policy of gradual expansion in the military domain, and for concentrating our manpower in mass work on laying a solid

foundation in the central districts, so as to secure an invincible position, they labeled a "conservative." This is the root cause of the August defeat in the border area and the simultaneous defeat of the Red Army in Hunan. Work in the border area began in October of last year. At the outset, Party organizations no longer existed in any of the xian. The local armed forces consisted only of the two units under Wang and Yuan in the vicinity of the Jinggangshan, each having sixty rifles in bad repair. The arms of the peasants' self-defense corps in Yong, Lian, Cha, and Ling xian had all been handed over to the despotic gentry, and the revolutionary sentiments of the masses had already been completely repressed. By February of this year, xian committees had been established in Ninggang, Yongxin, Chaling, and Suichuan, Lingxian had a special district, and in Lianhua xian, there were the beginnings of a Party organization, which had begun to establish connections with the Wan'an xian committee. All xian except Lingxian had a few local armed units. In Ninggang, Chaling, Suichuan, and Yongxian xian, especially in the latter two, there were a good many guerrilla uprisings to massacre the despotic gentry and mobilize the masses; they did a great deal of work, and did it fairly well. During that period, nothing at all was done to deepen the agrarian revolution. The organs of political power were called the "Assembly of Workers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Representatives," or the "People's Committee," or Government of the Workers, Peasants, and Soldiers for short. The term "soviet" was not used as yet. Soldiers' Committees were set up in the army, and the system of soldiering for pay was abolished. When guerrilla units went on missions, action committees were set up to direct them. These simple methods were partly the product of our own invention and were partly copied from reports of the December 11 uprising in Guangzhou as we had read about it in the newspapers (for example, People's Committees). This was because all communication with the Provincial Committee had been cut off since late November, and we knew nothing at all about the Party's positions and policies. The resolution of the November Enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee, which is of momentous significance in the history of the Chinese

7. Soviet régime → Armed régime of the workers and peasants
8. Stable → Temporarily stable
9. Li and Tang → Li Zongren and Tang Shengzhi
10. Zhang and Li → Zhang Fakui and Li Jiachen
11. Ruling classes → Régime of the ruling classes
12. Mass work → Local work
13. Soviets → Political power
14. Organizing → Expanding
15. Anyone → If they encountered anyone
16. Manpower → Strength
17. Mass work → Local work

18. This is their wrong ideas were
19. The Red Army in Hunan → The Fourth Red Army in southern Hunan
20. Border area → Hunan-Jiangxi border area
22. Yong, Lian, Cha, and Ling → Yongxin, Lianhua, Chaling, and Lingxian
23. Xian committees → Xian Party committees
24. Special district → Special district committee
25. Massacre → Overthrow
26. They did a great deal of work, and did it fairly well → All were fairly successful.
27. Nothing at all was done → Nothing was done as yet
28. Missions → Separate missions
29. I.e., the "Guangzhou Commune" of 1927.
revolution,30 exerted an influence on Party organizations in the border area only after Comrade Zhu De and others brought a copy from Hunan this April. At this time, the leading organ31 was the Front Committee (with Mao Zedong as secretary), which had been appointed by the Hunan Provincial Committee during the Autumn Harvest uprising. The Front Committee was abolished in early March at the suggestion32 of the Southern Hunan Special Committee and reorganized as the Divisional Committee (with He Tingying as secretary). It thus became an organ responsible for Party affairs in the army alone, with no influence over local party organizations. This had great drawbacks. Moreover, at the suggestion33 of the Southern Hunan Special Committee, Mao’s men were transferred to Hunan.34 As a result, the border area was abandoned35 for more than a month. At the end of March came the defeat in Hunan,36 and in April, the forces of Zhu and Mao, together with the Southern Hunan Peasants’ Army, withdrew to Ninggang and began to re-establish the independent régime in the border area.

From April onward, when the independent régime in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area was confronted with the temporary stability of the ruling forces in the south, the number of regiments sent by the two provinces of Hunan and Jiangxi to suppress us37 was at least eight or nine, and at times reached eighteen. Nevertheless, with a force of less than four regiments, we fought the enemy for four whole months, daily expanding the territory of the independent régime, deepening the agrarian revolution, extending the soviet organization,38 and expanding the Red Army and the Red Guards. All this was possible because the policies of the Party (the Party organizations in the army and in the localities) in the border area were correct. The policies of the Special Committee39 (with Mao Zedong as secretary) and the Army Committee (with Chen Yi as secretary) were as follows:

Fight the enemy resolutely, create a political power in the middle section of the Luoxiao mountain range, and oppose flightism in the case of defeat;

Deepen the agrarian revolution in regions controlled by the independent régime;

Let the army Party organizations help promote the development of the local armed forces;

Party organization, and let the army help promote the development of the local armed forces;

Be on the defensive against Hunan, with its comparatively strong ruling power, and take the offensive against Jiangxi, with its comparatively weak ruling power;

Devote great efforts to building up Yongxin, create an independent régime of the popular masses, and make arrangements for a long-term struggle;

Concentrate the Red Army to fight the enemy, confronting them when the time is opportune, and oppose the division of forces so as to avoid being destroyed one by one;

In expanding the area under the independent régime, adopt the policy of advancing in a series of waves, and oppose the policy of rash advance.

It is only thanks to the appropriateness of these tactics, as well as to the terrain of the border area, which was advantageous to our struggle, and to the imperfect coordination of the invading forces from Hunan and Jiangxi, that we were able to win all the victories during the four months from April to July and expand the independent régime of the popular masses. Although the enemy was several times our superior in numbers, he was not only unable to destroy our independent régime but created a situation in which it grew day by day.40 The influence of the independent régime on Hunan and Jiangxi provinces was also constantly increasing. The August defeat resulted entirely from the failure41 to understand that the period was one of stability42 for the ruling classes, and the adoption, on the contrary, of a policy suited to a period of splits within the ruling classes, dividing our forces for an adventurous advance toward southern Hunan, thus leading to defeat both in the border area and in southern Hunan. The representative of the Hunan Provincial Committee, Du Xiujiing, and the secretary of the Special Committee43 appointed by the Provincial Committee, Yang Kaiming,44 took advantage of the fact that Mao Zedong, Wan Xixian, and other strong dissenters were far away in Yongxin. Without examining the actual situation at the time, or taking into account the resolution of the Joint Conference of the Army Committee, the Special Committee, and the Yongxin Xuan Committee expressing opposition to the views of the Hunan Provincial Committee, they

30. As noted in the Introduction to this volume, the Plenum of November 1927 adopted a radical leftist line of “permanent revolution” and removed Mao Zedong from the Politburo because of his “military deviation.”
31. Leading organ → Highest organ of the Party
32. Suggestion → Demand
33. Suggestion → Demand
34. Hunan → Southern Hunan
35. Abandoned → Occupied by the enemy
36. Hunan → Southern Hunan
37. To suppress us → The reactionary troops sent to “suppress” us
38. Soviet organization → Political power of the popular masses
39. Special Committee → Border Area Special Committee
40. Created a situation in which it grew day by day → Could not prevent it from developing
41. Failure → Failure of some of the comrades
42. Stability → Temporary stability
43. Special Committee → Border Area Special Committee
44. Yang Kaiming (1905–1930), a native of Changsha, had received a mandate from the Hunan Provincial Committee to supplant Mao as secretary of the Special Committee for the border area. See below, Mao’s account of changes in the Special Committee in Section IVD6 of this report.
could think of nothing better than mechanically to apply the order of the Hunan Provincial Committee to march to southern Hunan, and fell in with the action of the Twenty-ninth Regiment (made up of peasants from Yizhang) who fled, and wanted to return home. The result was defeat both in the border area and in southern Hunan. This was truly an extremely great error.

In mid-July, the Eighth Army invaded the Jiangxi border area, but retreated without achieving anything. The main force of the Red Army, which was attacking Ling and Cha, changed its plans and turned toward southern Hunan. Forces from Jiangxi, amounting to eleven regiments in all (five regiments commanded by Wang Jun and Jin Handing, and six regiments of the Sixth Army commanded by Hu Wendou), launched an offensive against Yongxin. At this point, our army had only one regiment (led by Mao Zedong) in Yongxin. Under the cover provided by the great Red masses, it pinned down these eleven regiments within a radius of thirty li of the xian town for twenty-five days, by means of guerrilla attacks from every direction. In the end, because the enemy had learned our real situation, and launched a fierce assault, we lost Yongxin, and then Lianhua and Ningglang. At that moment, internal dissensions flared up suddenly within the Sixth Army; it hurriedly withdrew and engaged Wang Jun's Third Army at Zhingshu. The remaining five Jiangxi regiments then hastily withdrew to the xian town of Yongxin. If our main force had not gone to southern Hunan, there is no doubt whatsoever that, aided by the power of the masses, we could have put this enemy force to flight and extended the territory of the independent régime to include Ji'an, Anfu, and Pingxiang and link it up with Pingjiang and Liuyang. As the main force was away, and the one regiment we had was utterly exhausted, we decided to leave part of these men to defend the Jinggangshan in cooperation with the two units under Yuan Wencai and Wang Zuo, and Mao Zedong was ordered to lead one battalion to Guidong to meet the main force and invite it back. By that time the main force bound for

55. The main force bound for southern Hunan had already suffered defeat and was retreating to Guidong, and on August 23 we joined forces there.
56. When they reached Linxian, they arrived in Linxian in mid-July.
57. Suffering from homesickness, the officers and men of the Twenty-ninth Regiment, who were warring politically
58. They moved toward Yizhang; part of it was annihilated by Hu Fengzhang at Lechang, and the remainder was scattered in the Chenzhou-Yizhang area, and no one knows what has become of it. Only about one hundred rifles were mustered that evening. Fortunately, our main force suffered only small losses, and on August 18, it occupied Guidong. When they were joined by Mao Zedong and others from the Jinggangshan on the 23rd, it was resolved to return to Ningglang. In the afternoon of the same day, two regiments under Wu
Shang in Lingxian launched a sudden fierce attack on Guidong. The ferocious battle lasted for half a day and resumed the next morning. Casualties on our side were rather heavy (the enemy’s losses were even greater), so we retreated into Jiangxi. While the army was marching from Miandsu to southern Hunan, the original Army Committee was disbanded and was replaced by the Front Committee appointed by the Hunan Provincial Committee, with Chen Yi as secretary. After we were defeated and evacuated Guidong, the Front Committee was dissolved, and an Action Committee was organized to take command, with Mao Zedong as secretary. The army arrived at the foot of the Jinggangshan on September 8, after passing through Chongyi, Shangyou, and Suichuan. There were six factors that led to the failure of our assault on Chenzhou: (1) Some soldiers and officers were so homesick that they lost their combat capability; it was also against the inclination of some of the officers and soldiers to go to southern Hunan, against the sentiments of the masses. (2) The soldiers got tired on long expeditions in the summer heat. (3) The army advanced recklessly for several hundred li from Lingxian, thus cutting itself off from the border area, and becoming an isolated force. (4) The worker and peasant masses in southern Hunan had not yet been aroused, so our action constituted a mere military expedition. (5) We did not know the enemy’s situation. (6) Preparations were inadequate, and the officers and men did not understand the significance of the campaign.

When the campaign failed,68 Battalion Commander Yuan Chongquan defected with an infantry company and an artillery company. Although the two companies were subsequently brought back, Regimental Commander Wang Erzhuo lost his life in this action, and the significance of this loss was considerable. On August 30, units of the Hunan army under Wu Shang and units of the Jiangxi army under Wang Jun, four regiments in all,69 seized the opportunity offered by the fact that our forces had been defeated in Guidong and were seeking to return but had not yet reached their destination to launch a fierce assault on our Jinggangshan. We had less than a battalion of soldiers, but we fought back, taking advantage of the favorable terrain at Huangyangjie (the route leading from Ninggang to the Jinggangshan), and repulsed the enemy after fighting from noon till night. The enemies suffered very great casualties. This battle saved our last base,70 and struck a blow at the morale of our enemies. Since then, they have not dared to look down upon the Communist Army any more. This battle has become one of the best-known encounters in the border area.

While in Hunan, the Army (the Front Committee) organized xian Party Committees in Guidong and Rucheng, which it passed through going and coming. A Special Committee was also set up to take charge of the existing xian committees in Zixing and Chenzhou. Du Xiujing was the secretary, and the address was Gate 12, Longxia, Zixing. Eighty guns were distributed to arm the newly established Red Guards in Zixing, Guidong, and Rucheng xian. In Chenzhou there were Red Guards at Yuqing, with forty to fifty guns. Things were unclear in xian such as Leiyang and Yongxing. The Tihtrieth and Thirty-third Regiments of the Peasants’ Army, which returned to southern Hunan in May, have long since been dispersed, and the enemy has captured most of the three to four hundred guns. The broad masses in southern Hunan, who were mobilized by the Red Army in the spring, had been totally repressed by the enemy. On this occasion, the Red Army again mobilized part of the local masses while passing through Zixing, Rucheng, and Guidong xian, organized soviets, and divided up the land in Shatian in Guidong. We do not know what conditions have been created there at present. Because of the communications blockade, we have received no correspondence as yet from the recently organized Southern Hunan Special Committee.

III. The Independent Régime from September to the Present71

Since April of this year, the area under the independent régime72 has been gradually extended. On June 23, in the battle of Longyuankou (on the border of Yongxin and Ninggang) we defeated the enemy troops from Jiangxi for the fourth time. After this, the independent régime reached the peak of its development, embracing the whole of Ninggang, Yongxin, and Lianhua xian, small portions of Ji’an and Anfu, the northern part of Suichuan, and the southeastern part of Lingxian. Most of the land73 had already been distributed, and the remainder was in the process of distribution. Soviets74 were set up everywhere in the districts and townships. Ninggang, Yongxin, and Suichuan had xian soviets,75 and a border area soviet76 was established. Everywhere in the villages, workers’ and peasants’ insurrectionary detachments, armed with spears, were organized, and at the district and xian levels, Red Guards, armed with rifles, were organized. In July the Jiangxi enemy launched an attack, and in August the Hunan and Jiangxi enemy forces jointly attacked Huangyangjie.77 All the xian towns and the plains in the border area were occupied by the enemy. Abetting the evildoers, the peace preservation corps (armed with rifles) and the household militia (armed with spears) ran amuck, infringing White terror throughout the

68. When the campaign failed
69. Units of the Hunan army under Wu Shang and units of the Jiangxi army under Wang Jun, four regiments in all
70. Our last base
71. The Independent Régime from September to the Present → The Current Situation in the Area under the Independent Régime
72. Area under the independent régime → Red area
73. Most of the land → In the Red areas, most of the land
74. Soviets → Organs of political power
75. Soviets → Governments
76. Soviet → Government
77. Huangyangjie → The Jinggangshan
towns and the countryside. The majority of the Party and government organizations collapsed. The rich peasants and the opportunist in the Party went over to the enemy in droves. It was not until the battle of Huangyangjie on August 30 that the enemy realized there was no hope of overcoming the natural barrier of the Jinggangshan, and the enemy troops from Hunan retreated to Lingxian, while the enemy troops from Jiangxi continued to occupy all the xian seats, and the towns and villages in the plains area. From beginning to end, however, the enemy could not seize certain places: the western and northern districts of Ninggang; the Tianlong, Xiaoxi, and Nannianxian districts in the northern, western, and southern sections of Yongxin, respectively; Shangxi district in Lianhua; Jinggangshan district in Suichuan; and the Qinshigang and Dayuan districts in Lingxian. During the two months of July and August, the Red Army (about a regiment) and the Red Guards of the various xian fought scores of battles, large and small. Although they were defeated, they lost no more than about thirty guns, before retreating finally into the mountainous areas. The enemy went all out to invade and finally launched an offensive against our Jinggangshan base with the combined forces of the two provincial armies. They were not successful in a single encounter and finally gave up and retreated. We triumphed over combined forces sent to suppress us at Huangyangjie on August 30. Our army returned to the Jinggangshan on September 9 after its campaigns in the south, and this marked the beginning of the new phase from September onward.

As our army was marching back to the Jinggangshan via Chongyi, Shangyou, and Suichuan, the Independent Seventh Division under Liu Shiyi from western Jiangxi, taking advantage of the fact that we were the remnants of a defeated army, pursued us with five battalions all the way to Suichuan. On September 13, we launched an attack on Liu Shiyi with four battalions and defeated him at the town of Suichuan, capturing two hundred fifty rifles. We also took prisoners, including one battalion and one company commander, three or five platoon leaders, and some two hundred soldiers. The Action Committee (with Mao Zedong as secretary) commanding the army and the Suichuan Xian Committee jointly administered the affairs of the masses of Suichuan and provided for the maintenance of the army. The army sent columns in four directions toward four townships to wage guerrilla warfare, each branch setting up its own Action Committee to take command. The branch heading east pushed as far as Wan'an

and established liaison with the Wan'an Xian Committee. On September 24, Li Wenbin's regiment of the Jiangxi army arrived from Taihe, and the Independent Seventh Division arrived from Gangzhou and attacked the town of Suichuan. Our forces were not concentrated, and we could commit only two battalions to the battle. Although we could not sustain the fight and withdrew, the morale of the soldiers remained intact. Our troops returned to the Jinggangshan on September 26. On October 1 at Ninggang, we engaged the Twenty-seventh Regiment of Zhou Hunyuan's brigade, which was part of Xiong Shihui's army. We captured one battalion commander, one company commander, two platoon leaders, one hundred soldiers, and a hundred and ten rifles. We drove the remaining enemies to Yongxin and recovered the whole of Ninggang xian. Li Wenbin's regiment thought that we would attack Ninggang. Consequently, it left Suichuan, taking an indirect route through Taihe and Yongxin to bring reinforcements. Suichuan was left in the hands of the Independent Seventh Division (the weakest in manpower) alone. Since we expected that the masses in Suichuan would be very highly mobilized, and since our army was hard pressed for supplies, we recaptured Suichuan on October 13. The Independent Seventh Division fled without firing a shot. The Suichuan Action Committee in command of the troops (with Zhu De as secretary) joined the Suichuan Xian Committee in planning the work in Suichuan. They decided to establish five guerrilla columns, distribute the land, establish a soviet, expand the Party organization, and raise funds. At that time, 126 soldiers of the Third Division of the Eighth Army under Yan Zhongxing stationed in Guidong came over to us. They were formed into a special task battalion, with Bi Zhanyun (who had served under Xiang Chengjie before being placed under Yan Zhongxing) as commander. On November 2, two regiments of the Twenty-first Brigade of the Jiangxi enemy (commanded by Li Wenbin), together with a segment of the Independent Seventh Division, launched a new offensive against us at Suichuan. In order to avoid a direct clash, our army gave up Suichuan, intending to fall on the enemy with the suddenness of a thunderbolt at Ninggang and Yongxin, where his forces were relatively weak, thus breaking the siege. On November 9, we routed the Twenty-seventh Regiment of Zhou's brigade at the xian town of Ninggang and at Longyuankou. We captured 160 guns, killed one enemy battalion commander and several dozen enemy soldiers, and took prisoner two deputy battalion commanders, one company commander, one platoon leader, and over one hundred soldiers. On the morning of the next day, we launched an attack on Yongxin to fight the

78. Huangyangjie → The Jinggangshan
79. The towns and villages → Most of the villages
80. Certain places → The mountain areas
81. Nannianxian → Wanshan
82. Western → Southern
83. On September 13, we launched an attack on Liu Shiyi with four battalions and defeated him at the town of Suichuan, capturing two hundred fifty rifles → On September 13, we defeated Liu Shiyi, captured several hundred rifles, and took Suichuan.

84. Xiong Shihui (1893–1974), a native of Jiangxi, had participated in the Northern Expedition. He had been commander of the Fifth Division of the Guomindang armies since August 1928.
85. Third Division of the Eighth Army → Hunan enemy forces
86. The Twenty-seventh Regiment → One regiment
87. We launched an attack on Yongxin → We advanced and occupied Yongxin, but withdrew to Ninggang shortly afterward.
Twenty-eighth Regiment of Zhou’s brigade and the remnants of the Twenty-seventh Regiment. It was not until three o’clock in the afternoon that we forced the enemy to retreat, and our vanguard occupied the town of Yongxin. Unexpectedly, the enemy was reinforced by the Thirty-fifth Brigade from Hongtianhe (between Ji’an and Yongxin), so we retreated toward Ninggang for fear of a disadvantageous battle. Although the enemy suffered heavy casualties that day, we, too, had over a hundred casualties. This was the biggest battle after we returned to the border areas. The Red Guards and the Insurrection Teams participated in both these campaigns, although their strength was not very great. Present circumstances in the border area are as follows: the Fourteenth Brigade of Zhou Hunyuan and the Fifteenth Brigade of Liu Shiyi are stationed on the Jiangxi border. Both have already been defeated by us and are in the process of reorganization. The Twenty-first Brigade of Li Wenbin and the Thirty-fifth Brigade (commander unknown) are our most powerful opponents. Wu Shang’s Eighth Army is still occupying Chaling, Lingxian, and Guidong xian on the Hunan border. At present, the area of the Red Independent Régime extending from the southern slopes of the Jinggangshan to the border of Lianhua xian in the north, embraces the whole of Ninggang, parts of Suichuan, Lingxian, and Yongxin, forming a narrow unbroken stretch from north to south. In addition, there are also regions such as the Shangxi district of Lianhua, and the Tianlong and Wannianshan districts of Yongxin, which are not firmly linked with this unbroken stretch, but are controlled by the Red Independent Régime. The enemy is attempting to encircle the entire territory of the independent régime, and by military attacks and economic blockade to eradicate this “den of Communist bandits.” The difficulty and intensity of the struggle are going to increase with every passing day. We cannot afford a moment’s repose.

IV. Existing Problems

A. Military Problems

1. The Military Period. The struggle in the border area is almost purely military. Consequently, the Party and the masses must both be militarized. How to deal with the enemy and how to wage war have become important items on the daily agenda of the army, and of the local Party organizations at all levels, and fighting has come to constitute our daily life. What we call an independent

régime must be armed. Wherever such an area may be located, if it is unarmed or insufficiently armed, or if, although it has arms, wrong tactics are used in dealing with the enemy, the White armed forces (the White army, the peace preservation corps, and the household militia) will immediately snatch away our territory. As the struggle is getting fiercer every day, our problems have become extremely complex and serious.

2. Origins of the Red Army. Broadly speaking, the soldiers may be divided into the following six categories: (a) troops formerly under Ye and He in Chaohzhou and Shantou; (b) the Wuchang Guards Regiment; (C) the Peasants’ Army from Liuyang and Pingjiang; (d) the Peasants’ Army from southern Hunan and workers from Shuikoushan; (e) soldiers we have captured from the armies of Xu Kexiang, Tang Shengzhi, Bai Chongxi, Zhu Peide, Wu Shang, and Xiong Shihui; (f) workers and peasants from various xian in the border area. The first four groups form the backbone of the Red Army. After more than a year of endless battles, however, the troops formerly under He and Ye, the Guards Regiment, and the Peasants’ Army from Liuyang and Pingjiang have lost two-thirds of their men and have been reduced to only one-third of their original strength. Even the Red Army from southern Hunan has suffered heavy losses in killed and wounded in the eight-month struggle in the border area. Consequently, although the first four groups, because of their superior quality, constitute the mainstay of the Fourth Red Army, their number is much smaller than that of the last two categories. Of the last two groups, prisoners of war are most numerous. If we were deprived of reinforcements from this source, we would have serious problems finding soldiers for the Fourth Army. Despite the existence of these reinforcements, of which the quality is inferior to the former groups (though quite a few among them are good soldiers), enlistment still cannot keep up with the increase in rifles. The rifles, once their number has increased, are seldom lost; soldiers may be lost at any time through casualties, sicknesses, and desertion. (A few soldiers desert every time we are defeated.) Moreover, few of the peasants in the border area are willing to serve as soldiers. As soon as the land is divided up, everyone goes to till it. Now the soldiers of peasant or working-class origin in the Fourth Army in the border area constitute an extreme minority. Thus the problem is still very great. The Hunan Provincial Committee promised to send us workers from Anyuan, and we hope this will be done very soon.

88. The area of the Red Independent Régime → Our area
89. This “den of Communist bandits.” → Our base area, and we are now preparing to defeat his attacks.
90. This heading is missing in the revised version, as are subheadings nos. 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, and 13 below. We have therefore set the whole of these heading in italics. Changes in the other eight headings of this group are indicated by notes and italics in the usual way.
91. Our daily life → The central problem in our daily life
3. Composition.97 One part consists of workers and peasants, and the other of vagrants.98 (So it is not true to say, as the Hunan Provincial Committee does, that they are all vagrants). It is urgently necessary to replace this contingent of vagrants by workers and peasants, but workers and peasants are hard to come by. On the one hand,99 fighting is going on every day, and the vagrants are after all particularly good fighters. At the same time, casualties continue to mount. Consequently, not only can we not diminish the vagrants now in our ranks but it is difficult to find more for reinforcements. Under the circumstances, the only solution is to intensify political training, so as to effect a qualitative change in these elements.

4. Nature. The majority100 of the soldiers are men from the mercenary armies who have been transformed. Once they join the Red Army, the mercenary system is abolished.101 Hitherto, there has been no system of regular pay, but only an allowance for food and pocket money.102 As for the distribution of land, the officers and soldiers of the Red Army,103 apart from those from the various xian of the border area, whose families have been allotted land according to the regulations, it is rather difficult to allot land to those from distant places. First of all, the independent régime is small, and much of it is mountainous, so local peasants themselves barely have enough land to share, and there is no surplus. Secondly, the outcome of battles is unpredictable, and the independent régime does not have a stable territory. Yesterday, the land was distributed by the Red power, but today the White power seizes it back and demands that the peasants pay the rent to the landlords. Consequently, not only do the officers and soldiers of the Red Army have no notion of sharing out the land themselves but many, even among the peasants, do not consider the distribution of the land as necessarily final. This is the result of the overwhelming strength of the White Power and of the incessant and fierce struggles between Red and White. It is, however, our unwavering principle that the Red Army soldiers should get land, and we are continuing to discuss methods for implementing this principle.

5. Political training.104 In general, the Red Army soldiers are all endowed with class consciousness. They have acquired basic political knowledge about such things as land distribution, establishing soviets,105 and arming the workers and peasants. They already know that they are fighting for themselves, and for the workers and peasants. Consequently, they can endure even this miserable life and these fierce struggles106 without complaint. Soldiers’ Committees have been organized in companies, battalions, and regiments. The function of the committees is to supervise the officers, to represent the soldiers’ interests, and to participate in army administration. They also carry out political training in the army, and mass movements107 outside the army. Once the Soldiers’ Committee has been fully established, the Political Department can be abolished. Its staff members can all be taken into the Soldiers’ Committee and work there. This would be better than having a separate Political Department. Before April this year, all the armies here had Political Departments. Then they were abolished because of the unfavorable influence they exerted. Whenever there is a Political Department, the officers and soldiers, as well as the masses, are led to think that political work rests only with the few people in the Department, and that the job of all the rest is merely to fight. Only if we abolish the Political Department, so that everyone will have to fight and everyone will also have to do political work (political training and mass movement), can the purely military mentality be smashed. The system of Party representatives108 has developed from experience, and in our opinion it cannot be abolished yet. Party representatives at the army and divisional levels (here there is no such thing as a division; the regiment is directly subordinated to the army) can be abolished. At the regimental, battalion, and company levels, especially in the company, they must not be abolished now. Because Party branches are organized on a company basis, the company Party representative109 has to supervise the soldiers’ committee of the whole company in carrying out political training and guiding the movement of the popular masses. He is, at the same time, secretary of the Party branch. Experience demonstrates that companies which have a relatively good Party representative are somewhat sounder than the others.110 Because casualties among the lower cadres are heavy at present, soldiers captured from the enemy are often made platoon leaders or even company commanders overnight. Some of those captured in February and March this year are already battalion commanders. It is a gross error to imagine that we no longer need Party representatives simply because our army is now called the Red Army. Zhu’s forces111 abolished Party representatives in southern Hunan at one time, but later felt this was not a good idea and could not be maintained. When they reached the border area, they

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97. Composition → Composition of the Red Army
98. Here the Selected Works version adds the parenthetical remark: (Of course it is inadvisable to have too many of the latter.)
99. On the one hand → But because
100. The majority → The majority of the Red Army soldiers
101. Is abolished → Is abolished, making the men feel they are fighting for themselves and for the people and not for somebody else
102. An allowance for food and pocket money → Grain, money for cooking oil, salt, firewood and vegetables, and a little pocket money
103. Red Army → Red Army, land has been allotted to all those who are natives of the border area
104. Political training → After receiving political education
105. Soviets → Political power
106. Miserable life and fierce struggles → Bitter struggle
107. Mass movements → Mass work
108. The system of Party representatives → Experience has demonstrated that the system of Party representatives
109. Representative → Representative is particularly important, and
110. Others → Others, and that the company commander can hardly play this important political role
111. Zhu’s forces → The Twenty-eighth Regiment
restored the system. If we change the name to political instructor, this would lead
to confusion with the Guomindang political instructors, who are sincerely hated
by most captives. In addition, to change the name does not change the nature of
the system. Therefore, we have decided to make no change. Casualties among
Party representatives are very heavy, and while we have started training classes,
we hope that the Central Committee and the two Provincial Committees will send us
at least thirty men capable of serving as Party representatives.

6. Military training. Other people’s soldiers need six months’ to a year’s
training before they go into battle. Our soldiers, recruited only yesterday, have to
fight today with virtually no training. Consequently, part of the middle- and
lower-ranking cadres, as well as many soldiers, know very little about the art of
war and rely only on their bravery. This is very dangerous. Since it is impossible
to have long periods of rest and training, the only thing to do is to see whether
we can avoid battle, and thus obtain time for rest and training. As for training
lower-level officers, we now have an instructional corps of 150, and we intend to
continue this on a regular basis. We hope the Central Committee and the two
 Provincial Committees will send a minimum of thirty officers, from platoon
leader and company commander upwards, to the border area.

7. Problems of Supply. The Hunan Provincial Committee has asked us to pay
attention to the material life of the soldiers and to make it at least better than
that of the average worker or peasant. At present, the very reverse is the case; no
doubt few people’s lives are so miserable as that of the Red Army soldiers.
Because of the shortage of funds, each man gets only five cents a day for food,
apart from rice (which is supplied by local sources), and often even this rate is
hard to maintain. The common saying of the soldiers, “Overthrow the capitalists,
and eat pumpkin every day,” reflects their misery. Probably there are not many
in this world who suffer more bitterly than the Fourth Army. The monthly cost of
food alone, other items being provided for by the provincial committee, is
more than 10,000 yuan, which is obtained entirely from expropriating the local
bullies. But first of all, you can expropriate only once in a given locality; after-
ward, there would be nothing to take. Second, we are tightly surrounded by the
enemy, and in order to get at the local tyrants, they often have to break through
the enemy’s lines, so we cannot go too far. Third, the hostile armies must be
taken seriously, and one or two battalions would not be able to raise funds on
their own. We need many soldiers in order to raise funds, so the problem is not a
simple one. We now have cotton padding enough to make winter clothing for
the whole army of five thousand men (the regular Red Army), but we still do not
have the cloth, and we do not know when this problem can be resolved. Cold as
the weather is, many of the soldiers are still wearing only two layers of thin
clothing. Fortunately, we are accustomed to hardship. Besides, everybody puts
up with the same hardship: from the army commander to the cook, everyone has
five cents for food. And when pocket money is dispensed, no one gets more
than the other: everyone has his twenty or forty cents. Everybody realizes that he
is “suffering on behalf of the proletariat,” so there is no animosity toward
anyone. Despite this, financial problems have been and remain very serious.

8. Problems of the sick and wounded. After every engagement there are
wounded. Because of malnutrition, cold and other factors, many are ill. We
have founded a Red Army hospital on the Jinggangshan, which employs both
Chinese and Western medicine for diagnosis and treatment, but we are short of
both medicine and doctors, and the problem is very serious. In September, we
had over two hundred sick and wounded soldiers, and after the recent battle at
Yongxin, the number increased. At present, the number of people in the hospital
(including staff) is over eight hundred. If we do not take care of the sick and the
wounded, the morale of the army will be shaken. If we want to take good care of
them, we face truly great difficulties getting medical equipment and supplies.
The Hunan Provincial Committee promised us drugs a long time ago, but we
have still not seen any. We still hope the Central Committee and the two Provincial
Committees will send us a few Western doctors, and some iodine tablets.

9. Democracy in the Army. Apart from the role played by the Party, the
reason why the Red Army can hold out despite such miserable material condi-
tions and continuous fierce battles lies in its thorough implementation of democ-

117. Food → Food, apart from rice
118. Many → Many officers and soldiers
119. Here Mao employs to convey the idea of democracy the term minguanzhuyi, derived from minguan or “people’s rights,” the second of Sun Yat-sen’s “Three People’s Principles.” As can be seen from many of the texts in Volume II of this edition, this usage was common on Mao’s part in the 1920s.
120. Throughout this paragraph, the term minguanzhuyi has been replaced in the Selected Works by minzhuzuyi.
121. The camp of today and the camp of yesterday → Our army and the Guomindang army
materially they are worse off in the Red Army than in the White army, spiritually they have been liberated. Therefore, they are reasonably content. The fact that the same soldier fights more bravely in the Red Army today than he did for the enemy army yesterday reflects the influence of this democracy. The Red Army is like a furnace, in which all captured soldiers are melted down and transformed the moment they come over; that is a fact. In China, not only do the masses of workers and peasants need democracy, but the army needs it too, even more urgently. The thorough implementation of democracy in the army will, in future, be an important policy for destroying the feudal mercenary army in China. For the life of a soldier in the feudal mercenary army is simply more than any human being can bear.

10. The Party in the army. At present, it comprises four levels, the company branch, the battalion committee, the regimental committee, and the army committee. There is a branch in the company, with a small group in each squad. An extremely important reason why the Fourth Army is still able to hold together after many difficult battles is precisely that “The Party branch is organized on a company basis.” Two years ago, our organizations within the Guomindang armies wholly failed to take hold among the soldiers. Even among Ye Ting’s troops there was only one branch to each regiment, a truly preposterous situation. At present, the proportion of Party members to nonmembers in the army is about one to three, or an average of one Party member to every four soldiers. Recently, it was decided to recruit more Party members among the combat soldiers, so as to reach the goal of a fifty-fifty ratio. At present, the company branches are short of good secretaries, so we ask the Central Committee to send us a number of activists from among those who can no longer function where they are now, to serve as Party representatives in the companies. Party workers from southern Hunan are almost all doing Party work in the army and political work at the same time. Some of them were scattered to a certain extent during the retreat in southern Hunan last August, so we have no people to spare at present. In the seven months since the armywide conference of representatives last April elected the Army Committee (Party Committee in the Army), we have held in all six armywide representatives’ conferences. The Sixth Congress was held on November 14 and 15, after we received the letter from the Central Committee. Decisions were reached on political, military, organizational, and propaganda matters, which all represented progress as compared to the previous five conferences. A twenty-three-member Army Committee was set up, with Zhu De as secretary (as designated by the Central Committee).

Within [the army] it serves as the highest organ of Party power in the army and is subordinate to the Front Committee. Outside [the army] it serves as the Army Committee of the border area sovet, in command of the Red Army and the local militia. The model of the Party within the army has broadly taken shape already. Some of the Party members are resolute in their revolutionary outlook, but the majority still lack a good education, and in the future we must pay attention to this.

11. Local armed forces. They are divided into the Red Guards and the worker and peasant insurrectionary detachments. The insurrectionary detachments are armed with spears and shotguns. They are organized on a township basis, with one detachment to every township, its strength being proportional to the size of the township. Their task is to suppress the counterrevolution, to defend the township government, and to assist both the Red Army or the Red Guards in combat when the enemy comes. The insurrectionary detachments started in Yongxin, and originally they were secret organizations for carrying out the uprising. After we seized power in the whole xian, they came out into the open. Subsequently, this system spread to the whole of the border area, but the name was not changed. The Red Guards use five-shot, nine-shot, and single-shot guns, mostly five-shot. The number of guns in the various xian is roughly as follows: 140 in Ninggang, 220 in Yongxin, 43 in Lianhua, 50 in Chaling, 90 in Lingxian, 130 in Suichuan, and 10 in Wan’an, totaling 683. Most of these have been supplied by the Red Army, but a few were captured from the enemy by [the Red Guards] themselves. Most of the Red Guards from the various xian are constantly fighting with the armed forces of the despotic gentry, the peace preservation corps, and the household militia, and as a result their marksmanship and ability to fight are increasing all the time. Before the Horse Day Incident, the peasants’ self-defense corps had 300 guns in Youxian, 300 in Chaling, 60 in Lingxian, 50 in Suichuan, 80 in Yongxin, 60 in Lianhua, 60 in Ninggang (Yuan Wencai’s men), and 60 on the Jinggangshan (Wang [Zuo’s] men), totaling 970. After the Horse Day Incident, apart from Yuan and Wang’s men, who kept their arms, only six guns were retained in Suichuan, and one in Lianhua, all the rest having been seized by the despotic gentry. The fact that they had no control at all over the situation was entirely the result of the actions of the former opportunist Party. Even now the Red Guards of the various xian still have far too few rifles. The despotic gentry have more guns than the Red Guards, so the Red Army must continue to help the xian with arms. So long as this effort does not damage the Red Army itself, it must do everything possible to assist the local

122. Masses of workers and peasants → People
123. The Party in the army → The Party organization
124. Fourth Army → Red Army
125. A truly preposterous situation → That is why we could not stand up to any serious test

126. Regarding the “Horse Day Massacre” of May 21, 1927, see above, the note to the declaration of August 1, 1927, regarding Xu Kexiang.
127. The peasants’ self-defense corps → All the xian in the border area had peasants’ self-defense corps, whose rifles numbered
128. Actions of the former opportunist Party → Opportunist line
129. Damage the Red Army itself → Lower the Red Army’s fighting capacity
100 MAO’S ROAD TO POWER

armed forces and to make them stronger every day. It has been laid down by the armywide conference that the Red Army should adopt a four-company system, with seventy-five rifles to every company. (Adding to this the rifles of the special task company, machine-gun company, mortar company, regimental headquarters, and battalion headquarters, each regiment will have 1,075 rifles.) Additional guns captured in action should be used as much as possible to arm the local workers and peasants. The commanders of the Red Guards should be people who have been sent from the xian to the Red Army training corps and have finished their training. The number of people sent by the Red Army from outside areas to command local forces should be gradually reduced. Zhu Peiye is also stepping up greatly his effort to arm the peace preservation corps and the household militia. The armed forces of the despotic gentry in the various xian of the border area are of considerable size and fighting capacity. Consequently, it is extremely urgent to expand our local Red armed forces in the border area.

12. The Strategy of the Red Army and the Red Guards. Besides adhering to the principles laid down (annihilate small enemy forces swiftly with our main forces; make use of the masses to combat large enemy forces; do not launch foolhardy attacks), the principle for the Red Army should be concentration, while for the Red Guards should be dispersion. At the present time, when the bourgeois political power is stable, and the enemy is capable of massing huge forces to attack the Red Army, dispersion is extremely disadvantageous for the Red Army, while concentration is advantageous. In our experience, the dispersion of our forces has led almost every time to defeat, while concentrating our forces to attack smaller, equal, or even slightly larger enemy forces has frequently led to victory. The Central Committee has instructed us to wage guerrilla warfare in an area extending several thousand li in all directions. This is much too vast, probably because of an overestimation of our strength. (The Hunan Provincial Committee is already informed regarding the number of guns in the possession of the Fourth Army. Comrade Yuan Desheng has been asked to brief you on this in person, so it is excluded from this report.) As for the strategy of the Red Guards, dispersion is most advantageous, and they are all using this method in their operations in all the xian.

13. Regarding organization. At present, we are still following the old methods of organization of the Guomindang. We are unable to decode the Central Committee’s “Resolution on Military Work” and are unable to guess at the organization of the army of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. Please prepare another copy of the document and send it to us, so as to facilitate discussion.

14. Propaganda aimed at the enemy forces. The two most effective methods are releasing captured soldiers, and giving medical care to wounded enemy soldiers. When we capture enemy soldiers, battalion and company commanders, and platoon leaders, we conduct propaganda among them, and then divide them into those who want to go and those who want to stay. Those who want to leave are given money for their traveling expenses and set free. This concrete propaganda immediately knocks the bottom out of the enemy propaganda that “The Communist bandits kill everyone and anyone on sight.” No wonder Yang Chisheng’s Ninth Division Ten-Day Review exclaimed, regarding this method, “How insidious!” The Red Army soldiers are extremely enthusiastic in welcoming and comforting the prisoners, and the prisoners reciprocate with warm gratitude in their speeches at every “Farewell Meeting for New Brothers.” Giving medical care to the wounded enemy soldiers also has a very great effect. Some of the more intelligent among our enemies (such as Li Wenbin) are copying our methods. They stopped killing our prisoners and started to treat our wounded. But after staying in the enemy camp when captured or wounded, our soldiers returned nevertheless, guns and all. This has happened twice already. Very few Red Army soldiers have been captured by the enemy, since the Red Army has suffered few defeats in the border area. We are also doing our utmost to carry out written propaganda, for example, by painting slogans. We cover the walls with slogans wherever we go. We are, however, lacking in people skilled in painting, and we request the Central Committee and the two Provincial Committees to send us a few.

15. Military bases: Our first base is the Jinggangshan, situated at the junction of Ninggang, Lingxian, Suichuan, and Yongxian xian. At its northern foot lies Maoping in Ninggang; at its southern foot lies Huang’ao in Suichuan. The distance between the two points is 90 li. At its eastern foot lies Nashan in Yongxian; at its western foot lies Shuikou in Lingxian. The distance between the two is 180 li. The circumference measures 550 li, stretching from Nashan to Longyuankou (both in Yongxian xian), Xincheng, Maoping, Dalong (all in Ninggang), Shidu, Shuikou, Xiacun (all in Lingxian), Yingpanxu, Daijiau,

which (as Mao himself indicates here) was modeled on the Guomindang, establish a Political Department (zhengzhibu), and apply the “Taiping Heavenly Kingdom pattern of organization.” Directive No. 51 of the Central Committee, entitled “Outline of Military Work,” May 25, 1928 (presumably the one Mao had been unable to decode), spelled out this point. It recommended adapting the organization of the Red Army to the available arms, including old-fashioned guns, swords, and so on. The “three-five system” was to be used: twelve men to a squad, three squads to a platoon, five platoons to a company, five companies to a regiment, and five regiments to a division, each division to have 4,500 men. “This system,” asserted the directive, “adopts the spirit of the Taiping system and seeks to adapt it to the needs of guerrilla warfare.” See Central Committee Documents (1928), pp. 222–38, especially p. 233.

135. Welcoming and comforting → Comforting and sending on their way
136. 180 → 80

130. Assist the local armed forces → Arm the people
131. The Red Army → Each battalion of the Red Army
132. Bourgeois → Reactionary
133. Stable → Temporarily stable
134. The letter of June 4 declared that the forces of Zhu and Mao were “still a Guomindang-type army,” which needed to be transformed from a mercenary to a volunteer basis. They were instructed to abolish the system of Party representatives in the army,
Dafen, Duiziqian, Huang’a’o, Wudoujiang, Che’ao (all in Suichuan), and back to
Nashan. In the mountains there are paddy fields and villages at Dajing, Xiaojing, Shangjing, Zhongjing, Xianjing.137 Ciping, Xiazhuang, Xizhou, Caopings, Bainihu, and Luofu. Formerly, all these places were dens of bandits and deserters.138 The population is, however, under two thousand, and the rice production is less than 10,000 shi. All the grain required by the army must be supplied from Ninggang, Yongxin, and Suichuan xian. All the strategic passes in the mountains are strongly fortified. The Red Army Hospital, bedding and clothing workshops, ordnance department, and regimental rear offices are all up here. At present, grain is being transported to the mountains from Ninggang. Provided that we have sufficient supplies (grain and money, the most important being money), the enemy can never break in. There is a Defense Committee in the camp, in charge of defense, with Wang Zuo as chairman. The second base is Jiulong.139 At the juncture of Ninggang, Yongxin, Lianhua, and Chaling xian. It is less important than the Jinggangshan, but serves as the rearmost base for the local armed forces of the four xian, and has also been fortified. Since the Red régime is surrounded on all sides by the White régime, a military base in the mountains is indispensable.140 Because the enemy is present on all four sides, and we must defend ourselves on all four sides, it would be extremely difficult for the Red Independent Régime to survive for long when the bourgeois political power is stable without taking advantage of the natural barriers to make up for occasional deficiencies in manpower (for instance, when the enemy’s overwhelming numbers present grave dangers).

B. The Land Problem

1. The Land Situation in the Border Areas. Broadly speaking, over 60 percent of the land was in the hands of the landlords, and less than 40 percent in the hands of the peasants. If we distinguish among the different cases, in the border areas of Jiangxi, Sichuan showed the highest concentration, with about 80 percent of the land belonging to the landlords. Yongxin came next, with the landlords owning about 70 percent. There were more owner-peasants in Wan’an, Ninggang, and Lianhua. Apart from Wan’an, for which we do not have the results of any direct investigations, there are a fair number of owner-peasants in Ninggang and Lianhua, but nevertheless the landlords held the greater part of the land, the proportion being about 60 to 40. The situation in Chaling and Lingxian

xian in the Hunan border area was rather similar, with the landlords holding some 70 percent of the land.

2. The Problem of the Intermediate Class. Under the circumstances outlined above, we can win the support of the majority of people for confiscating and redistributing all land. Roughly speaking, there are three classes in the country-side: the despotic gentry class, who are big or middle landlords, the intermediate class of small landlords and owner-peasants,141 and also the class of the poor peasants.142 Within the intermediate class, the interests of the owner-peasants143 are often interwoven with those of the small landlords. The owner-peasants144 account for a small proportion of the total land, but when their holdings are combined with the land held by small landlords, the total is considerable. This is probably more or less the case throughout the country. The policy in the border area is to confiscate all land, and redistribute it thoroughly, so that in the areas of Red political power, the class of the despotic gentry and the intermediate class are both under attack. Such is our policy, but in applying it we have encountered considerable obstruction from the intermediate classes. In the initial stage of the revolution, the intermediate classes pretended to capitulate to the poor peasant class, but in reality they were plotting to take advantage of their former social status and clan influence to spread rumors and to intimidate the poor peasants, so as to delay the distribution of the land. When higher-level political authorities put pressure on them until they could no longer delay things, they either concealed their actual holdings or retained the good land and gave up the poor land to others. During this period, the poor peasants, having long been trampled down, and because145 the victory of the revolution was not assured, were often tricked by the intermediate classes and did not dare to act resolutely. Vigorous action is taken against the intermediate classes in the countryside only when the revolution is on the upsurge, for example, when political power has been seized in one or several xian, when the reactionary armies have suffered several defeats, and when the Red Army has repeatedly demonstrated its prowess. For example, it is in the southern section of Yongxin xian, where the intermediate classes are most numerous, that delays in distributing the land and cheating in reporting land-holding were most flagrant. Only after the Red Army won its great victory at Longyuankou on June 23, and only after the district government killed146 several people for delaying distribution, was land actually distributed there. But since the feudal family system is widespread in every xian, and all the families in a village or group of villages often have the same surname, a fairly long time will be required for class polarization to take place in the villages and for clan

137. The preceding five place names mean, respectively, Big Well, Small Well, Upper Well, Middle Well, and Lower Well.
138. Bandits and deserters → Bandits and deserters, but they have now been turned into our base area
139. Jiulong → The Jiulong Mountains
140. A military base in the mountains is indispensable → It is essential to make use of the strategic advantages offered by mountains
141. Owner-peasants → Rich peasants
142. Poor peasants → Middle and poor peasants
143. Owner-peasants → Rich peasants
144. Owner-peasants → Rich peasants
145. Because → Because they felt that
146. Killed → Dealt with
ideology to be overcome. In the countryside, where clan organizations prevail, the most troublesome are not the despotic gentry, but the intermediate classes. This is the biggest problem.

3. The Defection of the Intermediate Classes under the White terror: The intermediate classes had been under attack during the high tide of revolution, so they defected as soon as the White terror arrived. It was none other than the small landlords and owner-peasants\(^{147}\) in the two xian of Yongxin and Ninggang who led the reactionary army to burn the homes of the revolutionary peasants there. They were very bold about burning down houses and arresting people at the direction of the counterrevolutionaries. When the Red Army returned to the area around Ninggang (in September), Xincheng, Gucheng, and Longshi, several thousand peasants who had heard and believed the reactionary propaganda that the Communists would kill them fled with the counterrevolutionaries to Yongxin. Only after we had conducted propaganda to the effect that “Peasant defectors will not be killed,” and “Peasant defectors are welcome to come back to harvest their crops,” did some of these peasants slowly return.

4. When the revolution is at low ebb in the country as a whole, the most difficult problem in the areas ruled by the independent régime is keeping a firm grip on the intermediate class. This class rebels mainly because it has received excessively heavy blows from the revolution. When there is a revolutionary upsurge in the country as a whole, the poor peasant class has something to rely on and becomes bolder, while the intermediate class has something to fear and dares not create a disturbance. When the war between Li Zongren and Tang Shengzhi spread to Hunan,\(^{148}\) the small landlords in Chaling sought to placate the peasants. Some of them gave pork to the peasants as a New Year’s gift (at that time the Red Army had withdrawn from Chaling toward Suichuan). But when the war was over, nothing was heard of such things again. Now that there is a high tide of counterrevolution in the whole country, the intermediate classes which have suffered our blows have gone over almost completely to the despotic gentry, and the poor peasant class has become isolated. This is truly a serious problem.

5. The Pressure of Daily Life as a Cause of the Defection of the Intermediate Class: The Red independent régime and the White areas are now facing each other like two countries at war. As a result of the enemy’s tight blockade, and our unduly harsh treatment of the petty bourgeoisie, trade between the two areas has almost entirely ceased. Necessities such as salt, cloth, and medicines are scarce and costly, and agricultural products such as timber, tea, and oil cannot be shipped out. As a result, cash income\(^{149}\) is cut off, and the people as a whole are affected. The poor peasant class is better able to bear such hardships. The intermediate class, when it can bear them no longer, will go over to the despotic gentry. This economic problem is extremely serious. Unless the splits and wars within the despotic gentry and among the warlords in China continue, and unless a nationwide revolutionary situation develops, the small fragmentary Red régimes will come under extreme economic pressure, and their long-term existence will be called into question. For not only is such economic pressure unbearable for the intermediate classes but a time may well come when even the worker and peasant classes\(^{150}\) and the Red Army will not be able to endure it. In Yongxin and Ninggang xian there was no salt for cooking, and supplies of cloth and medicines were completely cut off, not to mention other commodities. Now, because it is not the extreme high tide [of counterrevolution], salt can be had again, but it is extremely expensive. Cloth and medicines are still unattainable. Timber and tea-oil, which are produced abundantly in Ninggang, the western part of Yongxin, and the northern part of Suichuan (all currently part of our areas) still cannot be shipped out. The shortage of cash is extremely acute. If the captured despotic gentry do not send us money, we have no money to use. All this poses an enormous problem.

6. Criteria for Land Redistribution: In a given region, the township serves as the unit for distribution. In mountainous areas where arable land is scarce, such as Xiaojiang District in Yongxin, three or four villages were sometimes taken as a single unit for land distribution, but such cases were very rare. The human criterion used to be that everyone, male or female, old or young, got an equal share. Now we have switched to the method of the Central Committee, which takes labor power as the criterion. The able-bodied get twice as much as those who cannot work.

7. The Question of Concessions to the Owner-peasants: As yet, this has not been discussed in detail. The rich peasants among the owner-peasants have put forward the demand that productive capacity should be taken as the criterion, so that those with more manpower and capital (farm implements, etc.) would get more land. The rich peasants feel that neither equal distribution nor distribution according to labor power are advantageous to them. Their idea is that, as regards manpower, they are willing to work harder, and that if, in addition, account is taken of their capital, they can raise bigger crops. If they receive the same allocation as everyone else, and their special efforts and extra capital are ignored (left unused), they will not like it. Here we are still applying the method of the Central Committee. But this question must be discussed further, and when conclusions have been reached, we will submit another report. On the one hand, we request the Central Committee and the two Provincial Committees to instruct us

\(^{147}\) Owner-peasants → Rich peasants

\(^{148}\) In September 1927, Tang Shengzhi opposed the formation of a Central Special Committee to function as an interim government, with the aim of reconciling the Nanjing and Wuhan factions of the Guomindang. Thereupon, Nanjing launched a punitive expedition against him in October 1927, with Li Zongren as commander-in-chief. Tang was obliged to abandon Wuhan, and Li came to control both Hubei and Hunan.

\(^{149}\) Cash income → The peasants’ cash income

\(^{150}\) Worker and peasant classes → Workers and poor peasants
as soon as possible regarding the methods (the concrete methods, not merely the broad policy used by Soviet Russia in dealing with the rich peasants, especially during the democratic revolution, when the Soviet government was surrounded by the White régime. As for not confiscating the land of owner-peasants, the whole of it has already been confiscated on the territory of the independent régime in the border area, so of course the problem will not arise again. When opening up new territories, we will adopt a no-confiscation policy in the initial stage. In this way, we can make use of the strength of the owner-peasants to support the poor peasants, and to attack the despotic gentry.

8. The Land Tax. The rate in Ninggang is 20 percent, or 5 percent more than that set by the Central Committee. Since the tax is already being collected, we cannot very well make a change now, but the rate will be reduced next year. Apart from this, there are portions of Sichuan, Lingxian, and Yongxin under the independent régime which are situated in mountainous areas where the peasants are so poverty-stricken that they should not be taxed at all. For the expenses of the government and of the Red Guards we rely on expropriating the despotic gentry in the White areas. As for the provisioning of the Red Army, rice is obtained for the time being from the land tax in Ninggang, but in this case too, cash is obtained entirely from expropriating the despotic gentry. During our guerrilla operations in Sichuan in October, we collected more than ten thousand yuan. This will last for some time; we will give the matter more thought when it has been spent.

C. The Problem of the Soviets

1. Soviets in the Border Area at the Xian, District, and Township Levels. Soviets have been organized everywhere at each of these levels, but more in name than in reality. The majority of the worker and peasant masses, and even of Party members, have not yet understood the idea of a soviet. In many places, there is no such thing as the council of workers’, peasants’, and soldiers’ representatives. The executive committees of the soviets at township, district, or even xian level have all been elected by the masses. But mass meetings called on the spur of the moment can neither discuss questions nor offer political training, and they can be easily manipulated by intellectuals or opportunists. The greatest error regarding the organs of political power in many localities in the border area consists in ignorance of what is meant by a soviet, ignorance of the fact that the council of workers’, peasants’, and soldiers’ representatives is the supreme permanent organ of power, and the executive committee is merely

151. The Soviets → Political Power
152. Soviets → People’s political power
153. Soviets → Governments
154. By the masses → At a mass meeting
155. Training → Training for the masses

the organ in charge of day-to-day affairs when the council is not in session. Some places do have a council, but it is regarded as nothing more than a temporary body for electing the executive committee. Once the election is over, all power is monopolized by the committee, and the council is never mentioned again. It is not at all the case that there are no soviet organizations worthy of the name; it is simply that there are very few of them. The reason lies in the great lack of propaganda and education regarding this new political system called the soviets. The evil habits of the arbitrary despotism of the feudal era are deeply ingrained in the minds of the masses, and even of ordinary Party members, and cannot be eradicated all at once. When something happens, they seek the most convenient solution and have no liking for this troublesome democratic system. Democratic centralism can be widely and genuinely established in mass organizations only when its efficacy is demonstrated in the revolutionary struggle, and the masses understand that it is the best method for mobilizing their forces and is extremely advantageous for their struggle. We are presently engaged in drafting a detailed law (based on Central Committee’s outline) for the organization of the soviets at all levels, in order gradually to correct previous mistakes. Soldiers’ soviets (conferences of soldiers’ representatives at all levels) are now being established in the Red Army on a permanent basis, so as to correct the previous mistake of having only permanent soldiers’ committees, and not permanent conferences of soldiers’ representatives.

2. Executive Committees at All Levels. At present, the masses of the people are all familiar with the "soviet government of the workers, peasants, and soldiers" at various levels. In Ninggang, the popular masses call it the "ai government" for short (In the dialect of settlers from other provinces we use the same character; the ai government means "our government"). In some other places, it is known in a truncated form as the "su government." What they call by this name is actually the executive committee, because they are still unaware of the powers of the council and think that the executive committee alone is the real power. Such an attitude is not universal. An executive committee without a council of representatives, or a properly constituted council of representatives, behind it, often deals with matters without taking account of the views of the masses. Everywhere there are instances of hesitation and compromise on the confiscation and redistribution of land, of squandering or embezzling funds, and of recolling before the White forces or fighting only half-heartedly. In addition, the committee seldom meets in full session, all business being decided and handled by its standing committee. In the district and township governments

156. Soviet organizations → Councils of workers’, peasants’, and soldiers’ deputies
157. Soviets → Councils
158. Soviets → Councils
159. In other words, they refer to it by the third of the characters su-wei-ai used in the Chinese phonetic transcription of the word "soviet."
even the standing committee rarely meets, and business is decided and handled separately by the four individuals who work in the office, namely the chairman, secretary, treasurer, and commander of the Red Guards (or insurrectionary detachment). Thus democratic centralism has not become a regular practice even in the work of the government.

3. The Problem of Petty Bourgeois Control of Government Committees. In the early period, small landlords, rich peasants, and intellectuals vied with one another to get on the government committees, especially at the township level. Wearing red arm sashes and feigning great enthusiasm, they wormed their way into the government committees by trickery and seized control of everything, relegating the poor peasants to a supporting role. They can be thoroughly cleared out only when they are unmasked in the course of struggle, and the poor peasant class rises up. Although such a state of affairs is not universal, it has occurred in a number of places.

4. The Relationship between the Party and the Government Organs. Although the Party does not order the government organs around, neither does it realize the importance of respecting the independence of government organs. The Party enjoys extremely great prestige and authority among Party members and the masses, the government much less. The reason is that, for the sake of convenience, the Party handles many things directly and brushes the government organs aside. This is a common mistake in many places. In some places, there are no Party or Youth League leading groups; in other places, they exist, but are not functioning properly. In the future, the Party must act as back-stage boss.160
With the exception of propaganda, the Party’s policies and the measures it recommends must be carried out through the mass organizations. We need to avoid the Guomindang’s error of running the government directly.

5. The Supreme Soviet. We proclaimed “The Soviet Government of Workers, Peasants, and Soldiers in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area” as early as May, but because of the pressure of time, it was far from perfect. We have now decided to reshuffle the border soviet and its committee, which will be the highest organ of political power in the border area.

D. The Present State of the Party in the Border Area162

1. The Course of the Struggle against Opportunism. It may be said that around the time of the Horse Day Incident,163 the Party organizations in every xian of the border area were entirely opportunist.164 As a result, when counter-

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160. Act as back-stage boss → Carry out its task of leading the government
161. Mass → Government
162. The Present State of the Party in the Border Area → Questions of Party Organization
163. Regarding the “Horse Day Incident” of May 21, 1927, see the note to section IVA11.
164. Opportunist → Dominated by opportunism

... revolution set in, there was very little resolute struggle. In October of last year, when the Red Army (the First Regiment of the First Division of the First Army of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Revolutionary Army) arrived in the xian of the border area, only a few individual Party members who had gone into hiding were left, and the Party organization had been entirely destroyed. The four months from November of last year to April of this year were a period of rebuilding the Party. The period since May has been one of rapid expansion. During the past year, manifestations of opportunism have been widespread within the Party. Some Party members have no stomach for fighting and have turned into ambushists (when the enemy comes, they hide in the remote mountains, calling this lying in ambush). Others are filled with activism, but have turned into idealist insurrectionists.165 Both tendencies are the result of petty bourgeois consciousness.166 This situation has finally changed only after a long period of tempering in practice and inner-Party struggle.167 During the same period, this kind of stupidity resulting from petty bourgeois consciousness168 has existed for a long time in the Red Army as well. When the enemy comes, they advocate either desperate resistance or flight. This sort of desperation or flight is often existed side by side in the views put forward by the same individual regarding a given situation.169 This opportunist ideology has been gradually corrected through prolonged inner-Party struggle and through lessons learned from actual events, for instance, from the losses incurred in reckless battle and the reverses suffered during precipitate flight.

2. Localism. The economy in the border area is not only agricultural, it is still in the age of the mortar and pestle. (In the mountainous areas, mortar and pestle are still in general use for husking rice, while in the plains there are many treadle-operated stone pestles.) Everywhere the unit of social organization is the clan organization, consisting of people with the same surname. As regards Party organizations in the villages, because of the way people live together, Party members with the same surname often make up a branch, and the branch meeting is simply a clan meeting. In these circumstances, it is very difficult indeed to build a “militant Bolshevik Party.” Such people do not really understand that
the Communist Party does not distinguish between countries and provinces, nor
do they understand that a sharp line should not be drawn between xian, districts,
and townships. Localism exists to a serious extent in the relations between xian,
and it is deeply rooted also in the relations between districts and townships
within the same xian. In modifying such localism, subjective reasoning alone can
at best produce only limited results. For the most part, it takes White oppression,
which is by no means localized (such as joint suppression campaigns by the two
provinces), in which people share a common lot in the course of their struggles,
gradually to induce them to abandon their localism. Amid many such objective
lessons, localism is gradually weakened.

3. The Problem of the Native Inhabitants and the Settlers. There is another
peculiar feature in the border area, namely the division between the native
inhabitants and the settlers. A profound gulf has long existed between the native
inhabitants and those who came here as colonists from Guangdong and Fujian
hundreds of years ago. Their traditional feuds are deep-seated, sometimes erupting
in violent “national” struggles. From the Guangdong174 border, all the way
along the border areas of Hunan and Jiangxi, up to southern Hubei, there are
probably several millions of such settlers. These settlers occupy the mountainous
areas, are oppressed by the native inhabitants who live in the plains, and have
never had any political rights. They all, without exception, welcomed the na-
tional revolution of last year and the year before, thinking that the day had come
for them to raise their heads. But unexpectedly the revolution turned into a coun-
terrevolution, and the settlers continue to be oppressed by the native
inhabitants as before. Within our independent border area, the problem of the
native inhabitants and the settlers exists in Ninggang, Suichuan, Lingxian, and
Chaling, but it is in Ninggang that it is most serious. Last year and the year
before, the revolutionaries among the native inhabitants joined together with the
settlers, under the leadership of the Communist Party, overthrew the political
power of the native despotic gentry, and took control of the whole xian. Last
June, the government of Zhu Peide turned counterrevolutionary. In September,
the despotic gentry served as guides for Zhu Peide’s army in its suppression

172. Mao refers here to the “native inhabitants” and “settlers” respectively as tujii and
kejii. These designations correspond to hendi and kejia, commonly represented in English-
language sources by their Cantonese transcriptions, Punti and Hakka. A convenient survey
of the relations between these two ethnic groups since the nineteenth century can be found
1949.

173. Colonists from Guangdong and Fujian → Migrants from the north

174. Guangdong → Guangdong and Fujian

175. Turned into a counterrevolution → Failed

campaign against Ninggang, in a war which still continues.176 In theory, this kind
of schism should not extend to the oppressed workers and peasants, let alone to
the Party. In reality, however, by force of long historical tradition, the division
between the native inhabitants and the settlers still leaves considerable traces.177
For example, after the August defeat in the border area, when the native despotic
gentry returned to Ninggang, bringing the troops178 with them, they conducted
large-scale propaganda claiming that the settlers were going to massacre the
native inhabitants. As a result, most of the native peasants deserted, put on white
ribbons, and led the army179 to burn down houses and comb the mountains. And
when, in October and November, the Red Army twice defeated the White army, the
native peasants fled with them, and the settlers hastened to confiscate the pigs, cattle,
clothes, and other property of the native peasants. When reflected in the Party, this
sort of historical residue180 takes the form of pointless arguments.181 The way to
settle this is to proclaim to the masses that “peasants who have defected will not be
killed” and that “peasants who have defected will also get their share of land when
they return,” thus leading them to shake off the influence of the despotic gentry,
and return home without misgivings. (Many of them have already done so.) At the same
time, the xian soviet182 must compel the settlers to return confiscated cattle and
property to the original owners, and notices must be posted stating that native
peasants will be protected. Within the Party, the causes of differences should be
eliminated, and education should be intensified in order to achieve unity.

4. The Defection of the Opportunists. During the revolutionary upsurge (in
June), many opportunists took advantage of open recruitment to make their way
into the Party. In a very short time, the number of Party members in the border
area jumped to more than ten thousand. Branch leaders, and even district com-
mittee leaders were mostly new Party members, who had not been able to receive
a good inner-Party education. As soon as the White Terror struck, the careerists
defected. In many places, they led the reactionaries to hunt down our comrades. As a
result, the majority of Party organizations in White territory collapsed.

Since September, the Party has carried out a drastic purge and has set strict
class qualifications for membership. Party organizations in Yongxin and Ninggang xian were completely dissolved, and re-registration was carried out.
Re-registration has been completed in Yongxin, and Ninggang will soon follow.
Although the number of Party members has been greatly reduced, the Party’s

176. In a war which still continues → And once again stirred up the conflict between
the native inhabitants and the settlers

177. Still leaves considerable traces → Still exists

178. Troops → Reactionary troops

179. Army → White army

180. Historical residue → Situation

181. Arguments → Struggles

182. Soviet → Government
fighting capacity has, on the contrary, increased. Formerly, the Party’s organization relied on open political power,\(^{183}\) almost completely neglecting the importance of secret work. Since September, we have carried out the work of building\(^{184}\) a complete underground organization.\(^{185}\) At the same time, we have made every effort to penetrate deeply into the White regions, in order to exercise an influence in the enemy camp. In some areas, this has begun to show some results. In the towns,\(^{186}\) however, we still have no foundation at all. The reasons are, first, that the enemy is relatively strong in the towns, and second, we had harmed the interests of the petty bourgeoisie in the cities too much, business is slow, the craftsmen have ceased to work, and as a result we can scarcely find a foothold. We are now correcting our former mistakes and striving to establish our organizations in the cities, but so far with but little success.

6. Leadership Organs\(^{187}\) at All Levels. The branch executive council has been renamed the branch committee. The branch is under the district committee, and the district committee is under the xian committee. Where there are special circumstances, a special district committee has been organized between the district committee and the xian committee. Cases in point are Beixiang Special District and Southeast Special District in Yongxin xian. In the border area there are five xian committees in all: Ninggang, Yongxin, Lianhua, Suichuan, and Lingxian. There used to be a xian committee in Chaling, but because the work there did not take root, most of the organizations established last winter and spring were smashed by the powerful White forces. For the past six months, we have been able to work only in a narrow band of mountainous territory in the vicinity of Ninggang and Yongxin, so the xian committee was changed to a special district committee. We have sent people to Youxian and Anren, both of which can be reached only via Chaling, but they have returned without accomplishing anything. The Wan’an Xian Committee was cut off for more than six months after the joint meeting with the former Front Committee\(^{188}\) in Suichuan in January. It was not until September, when the Red Army reached Wan’an in a guerrilla operation, that we resumed contact. According to a letter from the Wan’an Xian Committee, it lost its previous nine district committees and all its 120 guns. At present, our organizations exist only in the Guards Regiment. Our comrades there have taken some of the guns. One battalion of the Red Army guerrilla forces reached a point close to the Wan’an xian town, and then returned, after the responses previously arranged from within the city and from other places totally failed to materialize. Eighty revolutionary peasants followed

\(^{183}\) Relied on open political power → Was entirely open
\(^{184}\) Carried out the work of building → Built
\(^{185}\) Organization → Organization, so as to prepare the Party for carrying on its activities when the reactionaries come
\(^{186}\) Towns → Nearby towns
\(^{187}\) Leadership organs → Organs of Party leadership
\(^{188}\) The former Front Committee → Us

[our troops] to the foot of the Jinggangshan and were organized into a detachment of Wan’an Red Guards, with ten guns. There is no Party organization in Anfu. J’ian borders on Yongxin, but for all this time our independent régime has been in existence, the J’ian Xian Committee has been in touch with us only twice and has given us no help at all. This is truly strange. In the Shatian area of Guidong, land distribution was carried out twice, in March and August. Party organizations have been established and are currently under the jurisdiction of the Southern Hunan Special Committee, with its center at Shiertong in Longxi. All the xian committees are placed under the Special Committee of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area. On May 20, the First Party Congress of the border area was held at Maoping in Ninggang and elected twenty-three people as members of the First Special Committee, with Mao Zedong as secretary. In July, the Hunan Provincial Committee sent Yang Kaiming here, and he became acting secretary.\(^{189}\) In September, Yang fell ill, and Tan Zhenlin took his place. In August, when the main force of the Red Army went to southern Hunan, and the White forces were pressing hard on the border area, an emergency meeting was held in Yongxin. In October, after the Red Army returned to Ninggang, the Second Congress of the border area was called together, once again at Maoping. The congress started on October 4\(^{190}\) and lasted for three days. It adopted resolutions on political problems, the tasks of the Party in the border area, problems of organization, problems of propaganda, and the land problem. It also elected nineteen people as members of the Second Special Committee (Tan Zhenlin, Zhi De, Chen Yi, Long Chaoqiong, Zhu Changkai,\(^{191}\) Liu Tianqian, Yuan Panzhu, Tan Sicong, Tan Jing, Li Quefei, Song Yiuye, Yuan Wencai, Wan Zuonong, Chen Zhengren, Mao Zedong, Wan Xixian, Wang Zuo, Yang Kaiming, He Tingyin), and five standing committee members, with Tan Zhenlin (a worker)\(^{192}\) as secretary and Chen Zhengren (an intellectual) as deputy secretary. On November 14, the Sixth Party Congress of the Red Army elected twenty-three people to constitute the Army Committee, with a five-member standing committee and Zhu De as secretary. The Special Committee and the Army Committee are both subordinated to the Front Committee. In accordance with the directives of the Central Committee, the Front Committee was set up\(^{193}\) on November 6 and consisted of five members: Mao Zedong, Zhi De, the local Party secretary (Tan Zhenlin), a worker comrade (Song Qiaosheng), and a peasant comrade (Mao Kewen), with Mao Zedong as secretary. For the time being, the Front Committee has set up a secretariat, a propaganda section, an organization section, a labor movement committee, and a

\(^{189}\) I.e., as noted above, he replaced Mao.
\(^{190}\) 4 → 14. According to Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 254, the date of October 4 is correct.
\(^{191}\) Zhu Changkai → Zhu Changjie
\(^{192}\) Tan had had only three years’ schooling and had worked briefly in the labor movement in 1926.
\(^{193}\) Set up → Reorganized
military affairs commission (i.e., the one elected by the Red Army Congress mentioned above). Now that it has been established, the Front Committee will supervise local party organizations in every xian. The Special Committee still has its raison d’être, since the Front Committee is often on the move. The problem of the leading role of proletarian consciousness in the Party is extremely important. It can almost be said that the Party organization in all the xian of the border area is entirely a peasant party. If they do not receive leadership from the urban proletariat, they are bound to develop erroneous tendencies. Besides correcting previous mistakes and paying active attention to the workers’ movement in the xian seats and in other large towns in the countryside, it is also extremely necessary to increase worker representation in the Soviets and to have Party members from among the workers, poor peasants, and soldiers join all levels of leadership in local Party and military organs. We have paid attention to this point during the past year, and the proportion of workers and peasants in local Party leadership has gradually increased. Soldier participation in Red Army organs at all levels is also relatively satisfactory. The only thing we need to do is further to increase their quantity and pay attention to their quality, so that they may take “real control,” and gradually divest themselves of petty bourgeois consciousness, becoming truly pure.

E. The Problem of the Character of Revolution

1. We agree completely with the International’s resolution on China: at present, China is definitely still at the stage of bourgeois-democratic revolution. Carrying through a thoroughgoing democratic revolution in China comprises, externally, the overthrow of imperialist privileges, in order to achieve complete national liberation and unification; internally, it comprises the elimination of the power and influence of the comprador class in the cities, the abolition of feudal relationships in the countryside, the completion of the agrarian revolution, and the overthrow of the warlord system, which is a metamorphosed form of the political organization of the despotic gentry. Only in the process of such a democratic revolution can a genuine foundation for workers’ political power be formed, so as to advance to the socialist revolution. In the past year we have fought in many places and are acutely aware that the revolutionary tide is ebbing daily in the country as a whole. Although Red political power has been established in a few tiny spots, ordinary democratic rights do not yet exist throughout

the country as a whole. Neither workers, nor peasants, nor even the democratic faction among the bourgeoisie have freedom of speech or assembly. The Communist Party is the most heinous crime. Wherever the Red Army goes, people are cold and aloof, and only after we have conducted propaganda do the masses gradually come forth. Whatever enemy units we face, they all fight stubbornly, and there are hardly any cases of mutiny or desertion to our side. This holds true even for the Sixth Army, which recruited the greatest number of “rebels” after the Horse Day Incident. This cannot be called an insurrection, it is merely contending for the country. This method of contending for the country cannot succeed. The reason for this is that there is absolutely no revolutionary high tide in the country as a whole. The whole country is suffering the ruthless feudal domination of the despotic gentry, and the vast forces of the oppressed classes have not yet been set in motion. So we are reduced to contending for the country in this cold atmosphere. We have an acute sense of our isolation, which we keep hoping will end. Only by launching and carrying through a democratic revolution in the political and economic domains, with the participation of the petty bourgeoisie, can we turn the revolution into a soothing high tide that will engulf the entire country. Consequently, the resolution of the International is entirely correct.

2. Policy toward the Petty Bourgeoisie. Up to February of this year, this matter was handled well in the border area. In March, the representative of the Southern Hunan Special Committee, Zhou Lu, arrived in the border area. He criticized us for not burning and killing enough, for not carrying out the policy of “turning the petty bourgeoisie into proletarians and then forcing them to make revolution.” Thereupon, the policy underwent a transformation. In April, after the whole of our army arrived in the border area, there was still not much burning and killing, but the expropriation of the middle merchants in the towns and the collection of compulsory contributions from the small landlords and rich peasants in the countryside were rigorously enforced. The slogan of “All factories to the workers,” put forward by the Southern Hunan Special Committee, was also given wide publicity. This excessive policy of attacking the petty bourgeoisie drove most of them to the side of the despotic gentry, with the result that

201. The Communist Party → Joining the Communist Party
202. Come forth → Arise
203. Da jiangshan, literally “fighting for the rivers and mountains” (i.e., for the land of China). The use of this expression implies an attempt to conquer the country in an old-fashioned way, like the aspirants to the imperial throne who set out in the past from a limited territorial base.
204. Revolution → Struggle
205. Petty bourgeoisie → Urban petty bourgeoisie
206. Criticized us → Criticized us for being too rightist
207. Thereupon → Thereupon, the original leadership of the Front Committee was changed, and
208. Excessive → Ultraleftist
battles, having been built up for more than a year—a rare achievement. With the support of the Fourth Red Army, they will prove indestructible in the face of any enemy force. (4) We have an excellent military base in Jinggangshan, and every xian has its own local military bases. (5) The middle section can exert influence on both provinces and on the lower valleys of their rivers. This endows it with much more political importance than that possessed by southern Hunan or southern Jiangxi, each of which can influence only its own province or at most the upper river valley and the hinterland of its own province. The defect of the middle section is that, since it has long been under the independent régime, and faces large enemy encirclement and suppression forces, its economic problems, especially the shortage of cash, are extremely difficult.

Within a few weeks in June and July, the Southern Hunan Special Committee changed its mind three times about the policy; we should adopt here. First Yuan Desheng brought a letter and approved the plan to establish political power in the middle section. Then Du Xiujing and Yang Kaiming came with a letter advocating that the Red Army move toward southern Hunan without the slightest hesitation, leaving only two hundred rifles to defend the border area, together with the Red Guards. They stated, moreover, that this was an “absolutely correct” policy. The third time Yuan Desheng came again, barely ten days later, carrying a letter which, apart from abusing us at great length, proposed that the Red Army go to eastern Hunan. Once again, it was stated that this was the “absolutely correct” policy and should be carried out “without the slightest hesitation.” These rigid directives put us in a truly difficult position, because failure to comply would verge on insubordination, while we knew very clearly that compliance would mean defeat. When the second letter arrived, the Army Committee, the Special Committee, and the Yongxin Xian Committee held a joint meeting. Considering that it would be dangerous to move toward southern Hunan, they decided not to carry out the Provincial Committee’s instructions. A few days later, however, Du Xiujing and Yang Kaiming, holding to the views of the Provincial Committee, and taking advantage of the homesickness of the Twenty-ninth Regiment, which in turn used the Provincial directive as an excuse, dragged the Red Army off to attack Chenzhou, thus bringing defeat both to the border area and to the Red Army. The Red Army lost about half its fighting strength. Countless houses were burned down, and countless people were killed in the border area. One xian after another fell to the enemy, and some of them have not been recovered even now. As for going to eastern Hunan, it was certainly not advisable for the main force of the Red Army to do so at a time

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209. Has already changed → Is correct
210. The peasants and small merchants are all in favor of it → When we crushed the Pacification Guards and abolished these tolls, we won the support of all the peasants as well as of the small and middle merchants.
211. Independent régime → Armed independent régime
212. Party → Party organizations
when there was as yet no split within the political power of the despotic gentry class in Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi. Had we not advanced on southern Hunan in July, we would not only have avoided the August defeat in the border area; we could have taken advantage of the fighting at Zhangshu between Cheng Qian's Sixth Army and Wan Jun, routed the enemy troops in Yongxin, and swept through Ji'an and Anfu, thus enabling our vanguard to reach Pingxiang and make contact with the Fifth Army in the northern section. Even if all that had happened, the proper place for our general headquarters would still have been Ninggang, and only guerrilla forces should have been sent to eastern Hunan. Since war had not broken out among the despotic gentry, and powerful enemy forces were still present in Pingxiang, Chaling, and Youxian on the Hunan border, if the main force had moved north, the enemy would certainly have taken advantage of it. The Central Committee told us to go to eastern or to southern Hunan, but either course was very dangerous. Although the decision to go to eastern Hunan was not carried out, we do have the experience of southern Hunan. One false move, and the whole chess game is lost. The Fifth Army suffered defeat for lack of contact between the border area in southern Hunan and Pingxiang and Linyang. Anyuan also suffered setbacks. We should always remember this painful experience.

We are now in a period when the despotic gentry class is not yet split, and the suppression forces of the enemy deployed around the border area number more than ten regiments. If we can continue to find ways of getting cash (food and clothing no longer constitute a big problem), then with the foundations for our work established in the border area, we shall be able to cope with these enemy forces, or even with larger ones. As far as the border area is concerned, it would at once suffer devastation, just as it did in August, if the Red Army moved away. Although not all our Red Guards would be wiped out, the Party and our mass base would receive a crippling blow. Apart from bandit-style bases in the mountains, of which the independent régime could still maintain a few, in the plains we would all have to go underground as we did in August and September. If the Red Army remains, it can expand gradually in all directions from its current base, and the prospects will be very bright. If we want to enlarge the Red Army, the only tactic is to engage the enemy in a prolonged struggle in the vicinity of the Jinggangshan (that is to say, in the four xian of Ninggang, Yongxin, Linqian, and Suichuan), where we have a good mass base. We must take advantage in this struggle of the conflicting interests of the enemy troops from Hunan and Jiangxi, and of their inability to concentrate their forces because they must defend themselves on all sides, and wage a long-term struggle against the enemy. We must employ advantageous tactics, fight no battle unless we can win it, be victorious every time we fight, capture arms and men, and thus gradually expand the Red Army. Considering the preparatory work that had already been done among the masses of the border area between April and June, there is not the slightest doubt that the Red Army could have been enlarged in August if its main force had not gone off to southern Hunan. Despite that mistake, the Red Army has returned to the border area, where the terrain is favorable and the people well disposed, and our prospects are still not bad. In a place like the border area, it is only by being resolved to fight, and by fighting with indomitable courage, that the Red Army can expand its arsenal and train good soldiers; apart from this, there is no other effective method. The red flag has already been flying in the border area for a year now. Although it has incurred the bitter hatred of the despotic gentry class in Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi, and indeed in the whole country, it has gradually aroused hope among the workers, peasants, and soldiers of the neighboring provinces. As regards the soldiers, the warlords are treating "bandit suppression" as a matter of major importance and are putting out propaganda favorable to us such as "a year has been spent and a million yuan used up in the effort to eradicate the bandits" (Lu Diping), or even "they have twenty thousand men and five thousand guns" (Wang Jun). Because of this propaganda favorable to us, the attention of enemy soldiers and of junior officers with no prospects is gradually being drawn to us, and more and more of them will defect to our side, thus providing another source of recruitment for the Red Army. The uninterrupted presence of the Red flag on the border is an indication not only of the strength of the Communist Party but also of the bankruptcy of the ruling class, and is of great nationwide political significance. Therefore, our contingent plan to use "southern Jiangxi as a retreat" will not be put into effect unless our economic situation worsens to such a degree that southern Jiangxi becomes the only place where we could survive. We might have to go there some time; but it would be entirely for economic rather than political reasons. Politically speaking, we have held from the very beginning that the strategy of creating and expanding political power in the middle section of the Luoxiao mountain range is absolutely necessary and correct.

G. Communications and Other Matters

1. It is of crucial importance to establish an organ in charge of communication. Two hundred yuan (four liang of gold) has been entrusted to Comrades Yuan and Xiao, who will be in full charge of establishing this organ. Necessary expenses will be met by us. The organ will be located in Pingxiang. Another such organ is also required in the Ji'an area; the Jiangxi Provincial Committee will be responsible for it.

2. When we had almost finished writing this letter, we received a letter from the Central Committee. The copy from Hunan includes Notice No. 47 (on secret organizations), although it still does not contain the resolution on military affairs. In addition, there is also Comrade Runxian's August 15 letter, stating that a

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217. Zhangshu → Zhangshu in Jiangxi Province
218. Cheng Qian’s → The Guomindang's
219. Advantageous → Correct

220. One liang or Chinese ounce (sometimes referred to as a tael) is equivalent to approximately 1.3 ounces avoidupois.
messenger had been sent to deliver the Central Committee’s letter and notice, but we have never received either of them. We did not receive the three poems either.221

3. We have ready access to newspapers now. We are a lot happier than before, when we could not get hold of a paper for two or three months at a stretch. We still hope, however, that you will regularly send us analyses of the political situation.

4. The August southern expedition army held a representatives’ conference on arrival at Shatian in Guidong. It resolved to ask the Provincial Committee to punish Du Xiujing for his mistakes, since he is the representative of the Provincial Committee.

5. The Front Committee approves completely Mao Zedong’s long letter of August to the Provincial Committee, which is to be forwarded to the Central Committee.222 Comrade Yuan will again be the messenger.

6. It is only now that Comrade Yuan Desheng is returning to the Provincial Committee, because he was waiting for the completion of the discussion of the letter from the Central Committee and our reply.

7. We earnestly request that future directives from higher levels223 should be based on our reports, rather than on inspectors’ biased reports.224 The inspector who came here in June, Du Xiujing, made his report to the Provincial Committee from a completely false standpoint (two hundred guns plus the Red Guards were enough to defend the independent régime in the border area; the Red Army at that time was conservative, and so on), and since the Provincial Committee decided to act in accordance with that kind of report, defeat was sure to follow. In addition, future directives from higher levels regarding military action must, above all, not be too rigid. The Central Committee’s letter is the most appropriate and leaves us room for maneuver, as it orders us to take independent decisions based on current situations. Even more disastrous was that the Hunan Provincial Committee and Southern Hunan Special Committee believed in the

r Rumors spread by Su Xianjun (a regimental commander expelled from the Party by us, who was a criminal army deserter and informer who later arrested Guo Liang) and He Jie (chief of staff, responsible for the burning and massacre at Chenzhou). Please do not listen to any more irresponsible words in the future.

8. Yang Kaiming is seriously ill. Wan Xixian is kept here by important tasks and cannot come to southern Hunan.

9. The Special Committee of the Youth League will report to the Provincial Committee regarding the state of the Youth League. We will not weary you with it here.

10. There are three copies of this letter. The Hunan Provincial Committee is to forward one to the Central Committee and one to the Jiangxi Provincial Committee. The Ji’an Xian Committee is to forward one copy to the Jiangxi Provincial Committee, which is to forward it to the Central Committee. Thus one copy should certainly arrive.

Front Committee
Mao Zedong, Secretary

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221. The letter of August 15 from “Comrade Runxian” (code name for the Hunan Provincial Committee), and the three poems mentioned here, are not included in the available documentary collections. Circular No. 47, on reorganization of the Party under the White terror and developing secret work, can be found in Central Committee Documents (1928), pp. 200–208. It stresses that secret work is carried out, not to shield the Party from danger, but to enable it to fulfill more effectively its mission of leading the masses. More than 80 percent of Party members in the countryside should be farm laborers, sharecroppers, and handicraftsmen. Owner-peasants and intellectuals should be kept under observation.

222. This letter appears above, in this volume.

223. The Chinese term xiongche, literally “elder-brother department,” was commonly used at the time for any hierarchical superior; here, the reference is in the first instance to the Central Committee.

224. In fact, by the time Mao produced this report, the Central Committee had already sent, in September or October 1928, another letter to him and Zhu De asserting that, despite some errors of detail, the instructions of the Hunan Provincial Committee, including the order to march to southern Hunan, had all been “extremely correct.” For further text, see Central Committee Documents (1928), pp. 661–81.
Resolutions of the Sixth Congress of Party Representatives from the Fourth Red Army

(December 6, 1928)

I) Minutes of the Congress:

Six months of hard struggles have gone by since the Fifth Congress of the Fourth Army, which was held in May of this year in Ninggang New City. The Preparatory Meeting for the Sixth Congress took place on November 13. The congress met officially on November 14 and adjourned on the 15th. Seventy-nine representatives were present. All the army branches were represented except for one battalion of the Thirty-second Regiment, which was stationed at Yongxin and could not send its delegation in time. The delegations had brought with them over thirty motions. After the initial sorting of these motions, they were put into seventeen categories. During the congress, we discussed various important political, military, and party-related questions. In particular, a long time was devoted to the discussion of the nature of the Chinese revolution. This was a characteristic of the Sixth Congress. As far as the various motions are concerned, since all the representatives had important responsibilities and needed to get back to their posts as soon as possible, we could not go over each of them during the congress.

In the end, we decided that they would be discussed and executed by the new Army Committee. In the election of this committee, a list of forty-nine candidates was initially put forward by the congress presidium, and of these twenty-three were selected by the congress as members of the Sixth Army Committee. Their task was to form an Executive Committee and to carry out all the work. The congress was adjourned on the 15th. Since all the resolutions of this congress have an extremely important bearing on the future of the Red Army, and on the development of the border area, they are recorded briefly below.

Editor, New City
December 1928

II) Political Resolutions:

1) On the Nature of the Chinese Revolution. In accordance with the February resolution of the International on the Chinese revolution, we consider that the Chinese revolution is still in the bourgeois-democratic phase.1 The leader of this revolution is the proletariat; as regards external affairs,2 its content consists in overthrowing the warlords and completing the agrarian revolution, in order to demolish the relations of feudal exploitation and bring democracy and freedom to the oppressed masses of China. Only then can there be a socialist future for the Chinese revolution. If we deny this democratic phase of the revolution, thinking that the Chinese revolution has already entered the phase of socialist revolution, this misunderstanding will be extremely harmful to the Chinese revolution. The correctness of this view of the International has been demonstrated in the course of our past struggles. Ever since the Guangzhou uprising,3 the widespread arson and random killing which have taken place everywhere display a total incomprehension of the nature of the Chinese revolution. The Fourth Red Army in ... bitter experience. Our action from now on will be to lead the worker-peasant-soldier masses and the petty bourgeoisie, to enlarge the movement for democratic revolution, to deepen the agrarian revolution, and to overthrow the extremely reactionary situation prevailing at present. The Red Army must proclaim a concrete political program for the cities and act forcefully to correct the former policy of unrestricted confiscation of military supplies.

2) The World Situation. Ever since the revival of German and Austrian capitalism, the Franco-British naval agreement, the American war treaties, Italy’s assertion of its rights over the Mediterranean Sea, Japan’s invasion of China, America’s conclusion of a unilateral treaty with China, and so on, the conflicts within international imperialism have intensified day by day. This is an opportune moment for a forward surge of the world revolution!

3) The Domestic Situation. Recently the various factions of warlords within the Guomindang have formed a united government. On the surface, they advocate perpetual peace, but in reality, it is the dictatorship of Chiang Kai-shek’s faction trying to bring others together to gain some temporary peace. From the standpoints of military-political, financial, and party affairs, there are extremely complicated rivalries within the Guomindang. The weakness of this “united gov-

1. The first sentence of the “Resolution on the Chinese Question” adopted by the Ninth Plenum of the Executive Committee of Comintern on February 25, 1928, reads: “The current period of the Chinese revolution is a period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution...” The term for “democratic” used in the official Chinese translation of this resolution is Sun Yatsen’s minquan, which Mao consistently employed at this time. See Central Committee Documents (1928), pp. 757–63.

2. The only available text reads here dui wai, or “toward the outside.” The editors of the Tokyo edition have queried this, and it is obviously an error. Presumably it should read dui nei, or “as regards internal affairs.” The first paragraph of the Comintern resolution, which Mao and his comrades take as their text, says that “in the economic domain, the democratic revolution has not yet been completed (the agrarian revolution and the elimination of feudal relations)...”

3. I.e., the Canton or Guangzhou Commune of December 1927, already mentioned several times in earlier texts.
government” can be seen in particular from the bandit disasters in the north and the worker-peasant-soldier insurrections in the south. China is a semicolon, and her ruler is international imperialism. Because international imperialism is not united, the warlord government under its protection is naturally coming apart. Therefore the relative tranquillity of China’s current political situation is merely the lull before a large-scale, complicated war among the warlords.

4) The Birth and Existence of the Soviet Government. One of the characteristics of the Chinese revolution is that a soviet régime can be brought forth in China under White rule, and the situation permits it to survive. Because China is a semicolon, and the ruling class of a semicolon is basically split and cannot be unified, a soviet régime can be born and develop in the midst of these divisions. So long as these splits within the ruling class continue, the soviet régime can continue to exist. The truth of this statement is attested by the emergence of the Soviets everywhere during the past year. The independent régime in the border area during the past year also demonstrates that in order for a soviet régime to survive, the following four conditions must be fulfilled: (1) A Communist Party capable of resolute struggle; (2) large and organized masses of workers and peasants; (3) relatively strong and well-armed Red Army and Red Guard Units; and (4) a strategic terrain which enables a smaller force to defeat a larger one.

5) Our Immediate Political Tasks. Within the territory of China, Hunan and Jiangxi have gone through extremely turbulent revolutionary currents in the past, and therefore there is a relatively deep foundation among the masses. The independent régimes in the border area are, moreover, destined to influence the revolutionary movement in these two provinces. Thus the task of the Party in the Fourth Red Army is to establish a Bolshevik Party, to lead the masses in expanding the movement for the democratic revolution, to deepen the agrarian revolution in the areas the Red Army has entered, and to carry out an effort everywhere to accelerate the crumbling of the ruling class.

III) Resolutions Concerning Party Affairs:

1) It is not appropriate for Party organizations at all levels in the Red Army to deal openly with matters of all kinds. Efforts should be made to restore conditions of secrecy. Party organs can be established within the Soldiers’ Committees at all levels. Responsible Party comrades should concurrently be staff members of the Soldiers’ Committees. Outwardly the power of the Soldiers’ Committees should be strengthened, and a Party body should be established to exercise leadership over them. Military organs should also be strengthened, so they will have the capacity to exercise the Party’s revolutionary leadership over military affairs. We need to correct the previous mistake of direct intervention by the Party organization in day-to-day affairs and of regarding the military organs and Soldiers’ Committees as nothing but empty shells.

2) The Fifth Army Committee decided to strengthen each regimental com-
mittee. Since the Army Committee is responsible only for political supervision, it has no understanding of the conditions at lower levels. The various regimental committees also exercise independent authority, so it is getting harder and harder to maintain coordination. From now on, we should strengthen the Army Committee, which should frequently check on the work of the branches.

3) Since the Red Army has experienced large-scale warfare, many cadres of the Party Committees have been almost wiped out by casualties. From now on, the Army Committee must hold periodic training programs to prepare people for Party work.

4) We must recruit Party members among the combat soldiers. The proportion should be at least one-half.

5) The Company Branch Executive Committee should be called the Company Branch Committee. The number of committee members should be increased so that a majority of comrades may take part in the supervisory work. We should effectively make the Company Branch Committees the core of the Red Army. The number of the committee members should be five to seven.

6) Since the Company Branch Committees are the core of the Party’s work in the Red Army, the Party representatives should be in charge of this core and, at the same time, assume as their open task the planning and supervision of political work. In reality, the current system of Party representatives should not be abolished.

IV) Military Resolutions:

1) Establishing Military Bases. (a) Build strong fortifications in the big and small Five Wells districts; (b) Accumulate food supplies in the bases; and (c) build hospitals, barracks, and Red Army memorial halls.

2) The Military Establishment. Each company is given seventy-five long-barreled guns. There should be four companies in a battalion. Each regiment should have a special task company which will be allotted the same number of long-barreled guns as an infantry company. Each regiment may have machine-gun companies and mortar companies. Each of these companies may have forty long-barreled guns. The regiment dispatch platoon may be allotted eight long-barreled guns and the battalion headquarters, four. The army headquarters may establish special task battalions, which will be organized the same way as the regular battalions.

3) All the guns and bullets belong to the army headquarters. The regiments, battalions, and companies may not acquire them at will.

4) Each company may be allotted no more than six handguns; each battalion, no more than three; each regiment, no more than five; and the army headquarters, no more than six.

5) The tactics of the Red Army are: when encountering a small enemy force, eliminate it quickly with our main forces. When encountering a large enemy force, make use of the masses to surround them on all sides, tire them out, and
then eliminate them with our main forces. The Red Army should make the
greatest efforts to avoid hard-fought battles.

6) Military skills need to be strengthened. Moreover, attention should be
paid to the ways and means used to supervise the lower-ranking cadres in order
to strengthen the fighting capacity of the Red Army.

7) Within the military organizations, scout units, medical units, and
stretcher units should be strengthened. In each battalion, there should be a
stretcher platoon. New accounting methods should be adopted in financial man-
agement and reporting.

8) A history of the Red Army and biographical sketches of fallen comrades
should be compiled. Their wills and belongings left behind should be collected
as souvenirs.

9) In Red Army political training, the following points need to be consid-
ered: (a) strengthening the Soldiers' Committees so that they may truly represent
the soldiers, participate in the management of the army, preserve army disci-
pline, promote the soldiers' political education, and be involved in the mass
movement outside the army; (b) conducting literacy classes periodically for the
soldiers; (c) arousing the soldiers' class consciousness so that they may under-
stand the main issues involved in the revolution and be equipped with general
knowledge in politics; (d) organizing entertainment and encouraging the soldiers
to play an active role in it, so that they may enjoy the arts; (e) establishing in
every company a propaganda unit composed of at least three members who are
dedicated to propaganda full-time whether in war or in peace; (f) posters and
slogans should be regulated and issued by the Military Committee so that they
are coordinated and do not cause confusion.

10) Party organs at all levels should be constantly engaged in planning work
and work aimed at destroying the enemy.

11) In order to expand the Red Army, we need to recruit workers, peasants,
and revolutionary elements.

12) The Army Committee should begin to build up the first battalion of the
Thirty-second Regiment.

V) Resolution on Economic Problems:

The supplies office of the army headquarters and the impedimenta units of the
regiments need to submit detailed monthly economic reports to the Committee of
Soldiers' Representatives for examination and approval and later making public

Economic matters concerning the Red Army must be completely open.

VI) Resolution on the Problem of Discipline:

During the Red Army's campaigns in New City and Yongxin on November 10,
the Ninggang No. 4 district Red Guard unit and some peasants, instead of going
to the front to engage in fighting, seizing the enemy's guns, and assisting in
transportation, first aid, and searching the mountains, and other such activities,
were busy confiscating oxen and other odds and ends. Such conduct violated
revolutionary discipline and encroached on the peasants' interests. This congress
should call the Ninggang Xian Committee and the xian government to account. It
is hoped that nothing like this will happen again in the future. As for the oxen
that have been taken away, they should all be returned, and a public statement
should be made to explain these mistakes to the masses.

VII) Motions Brought up at the Congress:

1. To strengthen the stretcher units;
2. To strengthen the reconnaissance troops;
3. To strengthen military political schools;
4. To give preferential treatment to the enemy forces;
5. To recruit new privates;
6. To purchase ammunition and Western medicines;
7. To dispatch personnel to contact the Fifth Army;
8. To strengthen discipline both in the army and in the Party;
9. To accumulate food supplies in the rear;
10. To proclaim the political program of the democratic revolution;
11. To forbid random arson and killing;
12. To protect middle-level and petty merchants' interests;
13. To restore the Luoxiao Range régime and to expand northward;
14. The Red Army should copy the military organization of the Taiping Hea-

Only Kingdom;
15. To tabulate the Red Army personnel and weapons immediately;
16. No private trading is allowed in the army;
17. To strengthen the Soldiers' Committees.

Because it was necessary to adjourn the congress earlier than planned, the
above seventeen motions were not discussed thoroughly at the congress. They
have been given to the new Army Committee for discussion and execution.

Issued on December 6, 1928
**Jinggangshan Land Law**

(Adopted in December 1928 on the Jinggangshan)

1. Confiscate all land, and turn ownership over to the soviet government, which should use the following three methods to redistribute it:
   a) distribution to the peasants for them to cultivate individually;
   b) distribution to the peasants for them to cultivate in common;
   c) organization by the soviet government of model farms to cultivate the land.

Of the above three methods, the first is to be the primary one. Under special circumstances, or when the soviet government is strong, the second and third methods may also be employed.

2. The sale and purchase of all land, once it has been confiscated and redistributed by the soviet government, are to be prohibited.

3. After the land is redistributed, except for the old, the young, and the sick, who are unable to till the land, and except for those performing public service, the rest of the population must be compelled to work.

4. The quantitative criteria for land redistribution are:
   a) using the number of people as the criterion and redistributing an equal amount of land to men, women, the old, and the young;
   b) using labor power as the criterion and giving twice as much land to those who can work as to those who cannot.

Of the above two criteria, the first is to be the primary one. In places where special circumstances prevail, the second criterion may be applied. The reasons for adopting the first criterion are:

i) before the facilities for caring for old people and children are in place, the old and the young, if they are given too little land, will certainly not be able to make a living;

ii) it is relatively simple and convenient to use the number of people as the criterion for land redistribution;

iii) very few families do not have old people or children. At the same time, although the old and the young are not capable of tilling the land, local governments should, after land redistribution, also assign them appropriate public services to perform, such as communication duties.

5. The administrative criteria for land redistribution are:
   a) using the township as the unit for land redistribution;
   b) using several townships as the unit for land redistribution (as was done in Xiaojiang District in Yongxin [xian];
   c) using the district as the unit for land redistribution (as was done in Huang’ao District in Suichuan [xian]).

Of the above three criteria, the first is to be the primary one. Under special circumstances, the second and third criteria may be used.

6. The methods of redistributing wooded and hilly lands are:
   a) Hills where tea-oil plants\(^1\) are grown and firewood-producing hills are to be redistributed according to the same method used for the land, taking the township as the unit; they are to be redistributed equally for cultivation and use;
   b) Bamboo forests shall become the property of the soviet government. Peasants may, however, enjoy the use of the bamboo after obtaining permission from the soviet government. Permission for [cutting] fewer than fifty stalks of bamboo should be obtained from the township soviet; for fewer than a hundred stalks, permission must be obtained from the district soviet government; for more than a hundred stalks, permission must be obtained from the xian soviet government.
   c) All bamboo is to be sold by the xian soviet government; the proceeds from such sales will be allocated by the soviet government at a higher level.

7. The collection of land tax:
   a) Three rates of land taxes are set according to production conditions: (a) 15 percent; (b) 10 percent; (c) 5 percent. Of the above three rates, the first is to be the primary one. Under special circumstances and after permission is obtained from the soviet government at a higher level, the second and third rates may be used.
   b) In the event of natural disasters or other special circumstances, exemption from land tax may be granted after petitioning to and obtaining approval from the soviet government at a higher level.

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1. Chashan, literally “tea mountains,” refers to hills where the plant producing chayou, or “tea-oil,” was grown. This oil was in fact pressed from the seeds of the camellia. It was an important item in the rural economy of Jiangxi, as attested by Mao’s “Xunwu Investigation” of May 1930, which appears below.
c) Land tax is to be collected by the xian soviet governments and turned over to higher-level soviet governments for allocation.

8. Rural artisans, if they themselves wish to receive redistributed land, may each get half the amount of land given to every peasant.

9. Officers and soldiers of the Red Army and the Red Guards, as well as all those serving in the government or in other public agencies, should all receive the same amount of redistributed land as given to peasants. The soviet government will hire people to cultivate it for them.

Note: This land law was enacted in the winter of 1928 on the Jinggangshan (the soviet border region of Hunan and Jiangxi). This was the summary of the experience of the land struggle during one whole year, from the winter of 1927 to the winter of 1928. Before this, there had been no experience whatsoever. This land law contained several mistakes: (1) confiscation of all land, instead of only the land of landlords; (2) the ownership of the land was vested in the government, rather than in the peasants, who had only the right of use; (3) sale and purchase of the land were prohibited. These were all mistakes of principle and were later corrected. As for why it was declared that cultivation in common, and using labor power as the criterion for land redistribution should not be used as the primary methods, but that private farming and using the number of people as the criterion for land redistribution should be used as the primary methods, the reason is that at the time, although it was felt that the former method was inappropriate, quite a few comrades advocated it. A decision was therefore taken in this sense, but afterward this was changed and only the latter method was used. The practice of hiring people to farm the land of Red Army personnel was later changed to mobilizing the peasants to farm for them.

2. This note was added by Mao Zedong himself when the text was first published in the 1941 edition of Rural Investigations.
Manifesto of the Communist Party

(January 1929)

At present, the Chinese revolution remains at the stage of democratic revolution. The democratic revolution aims at overthrowing the two biggest enemies, namely, foreign imperialism and the domestic landlord class. For several decades, China has suffered the invasion of various imperialist countries such as Britain, the United States, France, and Japan. They bring foreign goods into China and ship Chinese agricultural products overseas, causing the Chinese peasants to suffer great losses; they open factories, exploiting Chinese workers; they operate banks, absorbing Chinese capital; they manage the customs, dominating China’s lifeline; they establish churches, rearing running dogs for themselves; using the concessions as bases, they deploy their gunboats around the important coastal and river ports—Shanghai, Hankou, Tianjin, and Guangzhou—and station their armies in Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai. They have quite simply turned China into their colony. Given such oppression by the imperialists, the hundreds of millions of Chinese workers, peasants, soldiers, and petty bourgeoisie have no choice but to rise up and resist. Still less does the Communist Party have any alternative but to stand in front of the masses and lead them in courageous battle. Moreover, the Guomindang, which represents the despotic gentry and the capitalist class, has turned traitor halfway. Not only has it abolished the slogan “Down With the Imperialists” but it has colluded with the imperialists, betraying the country and fawning on foreign powers in the manner of Wu Peifu and Sun Chuanfang. Since the bourgeoisie Guomindang has turned against the revolution, the workers, peasants, soldiers, and petty bourgeoisie have no choice but to shoulder the responsibility of overthrowing imperialism. Only when imperialism is overthrown can China be unified, industry be expanded, and the whole Chinese people be liberated. This is the number one responsibility of the Chinese Communist Party. China’s present system of land ownership is a semifeudal system. The peasants are exploited by high rents, high

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 3, pp. 13–15, which has taken it from two documentary collections published in China, one in 1979 and one in 1982. No earlier version is known to exist.

1. As noted in the Introduction to this volume, the decisions of the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party of June 1928 had reached the base area only at the beginning of January 1929. This manifesto, drafted by Mao around January 10, was intended to convey the line of the Sixth Congress, as Mao and his comrades understood it.
interest, and high taxes, and the land is concentrated in the hands of the landlords. In nearly every xian within China's borders, seven-tenths of the land is in the hands of landlords, and the peasants have very little land. Out of a hundred households in a given village, seventy are poor peasants without adequate food and clothing, no more than twenty are middle peasants with just enough food and clothing, and no more than ten are rich peasants with surplus money and food. The vast majority of people in the villages have a very hard life; only a few local bullies who collect rents in grain and collect interest enjoy prosperity. The bureaucrats and warlords in the towns are simply representatives of the local bullies. On one hand, they exact heavy taxes and levies, exploiting the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie; on the other hand, they collude with the imperialists in their exploitation of China. Land revolution is the main content of the Chinese democratic revolution. If the landlords, bureaucrats, and warlords are not eliminated, the Chinese peasants will be unable to obtain land, and the democratic revolution cannot be considered successful. Therefore, the second responsibility of the Chinese Communist Party is to overthrow feudal exploitation and solve the land problem. As stated above, the two main goals of the democratic revolution are to eliminate imperialism and to overthrow feudal exploitation. But the Guomindang has already betrayed the democratic revolution. The new warlord factions such as Chiang, the Guangxi clique, Feng, Yan, and the Fengtian clique have become representatives of the landlord class and lackeys of imperialism. Therefore, in order to wipe out imperialism and overthrow feudal exploitation, it is indispensable to overthrow the warlord Guomindang government and establish a worker-peasant-soldier representative (soviet) government. This is the third responsibility of the Chinese Communist Party. The tasks that the Red Army, led by the Chinese Communist Party, has come here to carry out at this time are the three tasks mentioned above. At the same time, the tasks that the Chinese Communist Party has led the worker-peasant-soldier masses to carry out all over the country are these same three tasks as well. In order to implement these three tasks, and in accordance with the directives of the Sixth Chinese Communist Party Congress, we proclaim a political program with the following ten points:

1) Overthrow imperialist rule in China;
2) Confiscate all factories, stores, ships, mines, and banks set up with foreign capital;
3) Unify China and acknowledge the right to self-determination of the Manchu, Hui, Tibetan, Miao, and Yao nationalities;
4) Overthrow the warlord Guomindang government;
5) Establish a government of councils of worker-peasant-soldier representatives;
6) Establish an eight-hour work day for workers, and increase their wages and benefits such as unemployment assistance, social security, and so on;
7) Confiscate the land of the entire landlord class and distribute it among the peasants who have no land or very little land;
8) Improve the living conditions of soldiers, and give them land and work;
9) Abolish all taxes and levies exacted by the [central] government, the warlords, and the local governments, and adopt a system of uniform, progressive taxation;
10) Unite with the proletariat of the whole world, and with Soviet Russia.

These ten points of the political program are concrete measures to achieve the three goals. Workers, peasants, soldiers, all the impoverished masses, and all oppressed members of the petty bourgeoisie, let us quickly unite under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party to struggle against the imperialists, the landlord class, and the Guomindang new warlords!

Fourth Army Headquarters of the Red Army of the Chinese Communist Party

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2. The reference is to Chiang Kaishek, Li Zongren, Feng Yuxiang, Yan Xishan, and Zhang Xueliang. Regarding Li, Feng, and Yan see the notes to the resolution of October 5, 1928. Zhang Xueliang had become leader of the Fengtian faction following the assassination of his father, Zhang Zuolin, in June 1928.
Notice Issued by the Fourth Army
Headquarters of the Red Army

(January 1929)

The aim of the Red Army is democratic revolution,
Our western Jiangxi First Army’s reputation has spread far
and wide.
The present plan is to move forward by divisions.
Be they officers or foot soldiers,
All must obey commands.
Be fair in dealings with the people,
Thus proving ourselves trustworthy.
Wanton burning and killing
Must be strictly forbidden.
All over the nation,
Oppression is unbearable.
The workers and the peasants
Endure bitter sufferings.
Local bullies and bad gentry
Are tyrannizing over villages and towns.
High interest and heavy taxes
Rouse everyone’s anger.
White Army soldiers
Go hungry and cold.
The petty bourgeoisie
Pays extremely heavy taxes.
The more imported goods there are,
The harder it is to sell domestic ones.
As for imperialism,
Who is there that doesn’t hate it?

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 52–53, where it has been reproduced from a lithographed copy in the Party archives. No such contemporary text is available to us.

1. This notice or proclamation, drafted by Mao, was issued sometime in the second half of January, after the main force of the Red Army began its descent from the Jinggangshan toward southern Jiangxi on January 14. To enhance its popular appeal and make it easy to remember, it is cast in the form of a poem with four-character lines.

2. A reference to the four major factions within the Guomindang at this time. Chiang refers to Chiang Kai-shek and his supporters; Gui to the Guangxi warlords, Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi; Feng to Feng Yuxiang and his National People’s Army; and Yan to the Shansi warlord Yan Xishan. The other three had all supported Chiang’s Northern Expedition against Zhang Zuolin’s Fengtian faction, which ended with the fall of Beijing and Tianjin in June 1928. This did not, however, mark the end of conflict and rivalry among the various military leaders.
The treatment meted out to foreigners
Must be exceedingly strict.
Their factories and their banks
Must be confiscated and taken over.
Foreign investments and foreign debts
All are declared null and void.
Foreign troops and foreign ships
Are not allowed to enter our borders.
Overthrowing the big powers
Will bring joy to everyone's heart.
Overthrowing the warlords
Means a thorough purging of evil.
Unifying the whole of China
Is reason for the nation to rejoice.
As for Manchus, Mongols, Hui, and Tibetans,
They will determine their own statutes.
The Guomindang government
Is nothing but a pack of scoundrels.
Uniting to get rid of them,
We thoroughly purge the corrupt régime.
The workers and peasants of the entire nation
Are swift as the wind and powerful as thunder.
The day when we will seize political power
Is not far away.
The success of revolution
Depends on the popular masses alone.
Let this be proclaimed on every hand,
And everyone be roused to action.

Commander of the Army: Zhu De
Party Representative: Mao Zedong

An Official Fund-Raising Letter
(February 13, 1929)

The Red Army is an army that strives for the well-being of the workers and peasants. It also makes every effort to protect the merchants. It exercises strict discipline and does not encroach upon anyone. Because of the current shortage of food supplies, we are writing to you now to request that you kindly collect on our behalf 5,000 big foreign dollars for the soldiers' pay, 7,000 pairs of straw sandals and 7,000 pairs of socks, 300 bolts of white cloth, and 200 laborers. It is urgent that these be delivered to our headquarters before eight o'clock this evening. We hope that you will do as we request without delay. If you ignore our requests, it will be proof that the Ningdu merchants are collaborating with the reactionaries and are out to make things difficult for the Red Army. In that case we will be obliged to burn down all the reactionary shops in Ningdu as a warning against your treachery. Do not say that we have not forewarned you. The above message is communicated to all the gentlemen in charge of the Ningdu Xian Reception Center.

Fourth Red Army
Zhu De, Commander-in-Chief
Mao Zedong, Party Representative

We have translated this document from a brief article by Xue Feng in Wenwu tianshi, no. 3, 1983, p. 4, which includes a barely legible reproduction of the original manuscript. The article transcribes verbatim the greater part of the text, and explains the circumstances in which the letter was written. The version which appears in Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 9, p. 325, has been excerpted from this source.

1. In Xue Feng's article, the text of the letter is introduced by the following passage:

   In mid-January 1929, Comrades Mao Zedong, Zhu De and Chen Yi led the main forces of the Fourth Red Army in its march from the Jinggangshan to southern Jiangxi. They reached the Ningdu xian capital on February 13. The local people welcomed the arrival of the Red Army enthusiastically, and even the bigwigs of the chamber of commerce had set up a “Ningdu Reception Center.”

   That afternoon, the Political Department of the Fourth Red Army delivered an official fund-raising letter to the Ningdu Reception Center. Its contents were as follows:

2. The last sentence of the text of the letter, the signatures, and the date have been added on the basis of the facsimile of the handwritten original which accompanies the article in Wenwu tianshi. After transcribing the letter, Xue Feng adds: “Before eight o’clock in the evening, the staff of the Reception Center delivered the funds and laborers to the military supply section of the Fourth Red Army Headquarters. This fund-raising task was thereby successfully completed.” The author also notes that beginning in 1931, when the soviet areas were better established, contributions were replaced by taxation as the method for obtaining funds from merchants.
Notice to Merchants and Intellectuals

(March 16, 1929)

Fellow-merchants:
Fellow-intellectuals:

1) The Red Army led by the Communist Party has come to where you are. How is the Communist Party going to deal with you? How are you going to deal with the Communist Party? How are you going to deal with the revolution?

2) The revolution led by the Communist Party at the present time is called the democratic revolution. It aims to overthrow three counterrevolutionary things. The first aim is to overthrow imperialism. Foreigners should not be allowed to perpetrate violence in China. China should be managed by Chinese, and foreigners should not be allowed to control it. The second aim is to overthrow the landlord class. The rent collection system should be abolished, and land should be fairly distributed among the peasants. The third aim is to overthrow the Guomindang government and establish a worker-peasant-soldier government. These are the three great tasks in the struggle the Communist Party is now leading.

3) You should not be terrified at the enunciation of these three tasks. Not only should you not be terrified but you should welcome them wholeheartedly. The worker and peasant classes long for the accomplishment of these three tasks, and you will derive great benefit from it as well. Do you understand your position? You are the petty bourgeoisie in a semicolonial. Imperialism is oppressing China, and foreign goods are constantly imported, so that Chinese industry and commerce have been unable to develop. Can you imagine how great the benefits to you will be when the imperialists are overthrown? The land has been concentrated in the hands of the semifeudal class who exact heavy rents and interest, so that the peasants are extremely poor and the people in the countryside do not have money to buy goods in the city. Consequently, the industries and businesses in the city cannot develop fully. If the landlord class is overthrown, and the tenancy system eliminated, the peasants will have the entire harvest, and their buying power will be greatly increased. Just think, won’t business in the cities enjoy great development? The Guomindang and its government are lackeys of the imperialists, and they represent the landlord class. If the Guomindang and its government are overthrown, the imperialists will lose their running dogs, and the landlord class will have no one to represent them. When the worker-peasant-soldier government seizes political power, then there will be hope for the success of the democratic revolution (the revolution that eliminates imperialists and the landlord class). Don’t you think this would benefit you?

4) The Communist Party’s policy on the cities is to abolish exorbitant taxes and levies and protect the commercial dealings of the merchants. During the revolution, only the big merchants, not the small merchants, will be requested to help raise funds to provide military supplies. The possessions of the reactionaries in the cities (the running dogs of the warlords, the corrupt bureaucrats, leading Guomindang officials, scabs, and renegade peasants and students) will be confiscated. The same thing will happen to local bullies who exact rents and heavy interest in the countryside while they themselves reside in the cities. As for ordinary merchants and the petty bourgeoisie, their possessions will remain untouched. But these ordinary merchants and the petty bourgeoisie in general should support the worker-peasant revolution, accept the leadership of the worker and peasant classes, and strive together to accomplish the three great tasks of overthrowing imperialism, the landlord class, and the Guomindang government. Do not be two-faced, paying lip service but harboring enmity within. You must know that the democratic revolution led by the Communist Party is bound to succeed and will succeed quickly. If you disobey now, you will embark on the counterrevolutionary path and will assuredly have no place to stand in the future.

5) The only way out for intellectuals is also to join the worker-peasant revolution. If the intellectuals are willing to take part in the revolution, the worker-peasant classes will always accept them, and they will be given more or less important work, in accordance with their talents. The Red Army Political Department is recruiting a great number of political workers. Those students, teachers, and staff members who are willing to endure hardships and dare to struggle may all join the Red Army and do political work.

6) War between Chiang Kaishek and the Guangxi faction has already broken out in Hunan and Hubei. The new nationwide war among the warlords has already been initiated. The Guomindang, which deceives the popular masses, has incompletely disintegrated. The Three Principles of the People are absolute rubbish, and the unification of the whole country is stinking talk. The running dogs of the Americans, the Chiang and Feng [Yuxiang] factions, the running dogs of the British, the Guangxi faction, and the running dogs of the Japanese, the Soviet, and the Chinese factions, have begun a confused struggle against one another.

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1. Gongzei, nongzei, xuezei. The first of these three terms is the standard expression for scab or strikebreaker. The other two compounds are not commonly used, but obviously have the same sense of renegade, traitor to one’s class, and so on.

2. Goupi, literally, “dog fart.”
another purely for selfish gains. The collapse and defeat of the Guomindang national government and the new warlords of various factions is imminent. The revolutionary régime of the workers and peasants will soon emerge everywhere in the country to take the place of the counterrevolutionary régime. Merchants and students, all you of the oppressed petty bourgeoisie, rise quickly and help the worker and peasant classes to engage in this historic revolutionary struggle!

Let the merchants arise and help the worker and peasant classes!
Let the students arise and help the worker and peasant classes!

In order to accelerate the development of business, the merchants cannot but support the land revolution so as to increase the peasants' productivity and buying power!
In order to accelerate the development of business, the merchants cannot but overthrow imperialism and stop the import of foreign goods!
In order to accelerate the development of business, the merchants cannot but overthrow the Guomindang government and support the worker-peasant-soldier government!

As long as the merchants support the revolution, the Communist Party will not confiscate their property and will protect their freedom of trade.
Let the revolutionary intellectuals join the ranks of the worker-peasant revolution!
Let the revolutionary intellectuals join the Red Army’s Political Department!
Long live the democratic revolution!
Long live the liberation of the oppressed classes of the whole country!

Army Party Department
Fourth Army of the Communist Party Red Army

A Letter to Our Brother Soldiers
Throughout the Country
(March 16, 1929)

Dear Brother Soldiers All Over China:

We have seven things to tell you. Please think them over carefully after you have read them.

First, soldiers come from poor worker and peasant families. Who among us soldiers is not of worker or peasant origin? Where can we find a soldier who is the son of a landlord or a capitalist? Back home, if we were tillers, we had no land to till, and if we were workers, we had no work to do. Even if we did have land to till, the harvest wasn’t enough for us to pay rent to the landlords and taxes to the officials. So we had to borrow money, but with interest added to interest, we were unable to pay back our debts. No longer able to live at home, then, we had no choice but to become soldiers. Some of us were workers fired by factory owners or shopowners. Unable to make a living, and with nowhere to turn, we had to sell our own lives for a few dollars a month.

Second, to be a soldier in the White army is to undergo extreme misery and suffer much oppression. We didn’t know at first what life would be like in the army. We just followed the rich and the powerful, only thinking to join the army to become soldiers and be able to pick up a gun and kill to our hearts’ content and wreak vengeance on our enemies. We didn’t know that we had gone wrong and had walked into the camp of this thing called the National Revolutionary Army. The primary target of their revolution seems to be us soldiers. Haven’t they treated us harshly, severely cursed us, beat us up, and even shot some of us? If we make even a minor mistake, we are rewarded with blows from truncheons or whips, slaps in the face, or kicks. This has become commonplace. As for pay, they just say they have no money, and sometimes we go for seven or eight months without pay. Every so often they get generous and give us a little money, with some government bonds thrown in. But as for the regimental and divisional commanders, if you looked into it you would find that they have at least a few thousand, or tens of thousands, or hundreds of thousands of silver dollars in the

Our source for this letter is Mao Zhuxi, Bujuan, Vol. 3, pp. 21–25, which has taken it from two documentary collections, one published in 1979 and the other in 1982. No contemporary text appears to be available.
bank. What about the new warlord, Chiang Kai-shek? He has even more. The money he has sent to the United States alone amounts to tens of millions of yuan. He has his Western-style house built in the concessions. According to the newspapers, it cost his wife, Song Meiling, 30,000 yuan to have a coat tailor-made by a big company in Shanghai. But what about us? What kind of housing are we living in and what kind of clothing do we wear? Even among those regimental and divisional commanders, does any of them lack a Western-style house in which to live? You live in either thatched huts or dilapidated houses. How about the officers' clothes compared with your ragged military uniforms? They enjoy feasts and choice foods at western restaurants. How about your food? Don't you get six dollars' worth of food each month? Don't you only have one dish at each meal? After several years of fighting, many officers have been promoted and accumulated great wealth. How about you? Many of our brother soldiers have been killed in strange places thousands of miles from home, and alas, some of their mothers and wives haven't even been told of their deaths. Some of them hadn't even been able to get married!

Third, we soldiers ought to be clear about who are our friends and brothers and who are our foes and enemies. We should not help our foes and enemies to kill our friends and brothers. Let's all take a look. Are the local bullies and bad gentry, landlords, and capitalists truly our "friends"? Absolutely not. They are our mortal foes and archenemies. How about the workers who make tools and build houses, and the peasants who provide us with food and clothing? Are they our enemies? Absolutely not. They are our friends and brethren. Among the workers and peasants, many are actually our own fathers, uncles, brothers, and relatives. Can we kill our own relatives and friends at the command of our enemies? No, we cannot and we should not. But many of our brother soldiers have not realized this. They have been deceived by the new warlord Guomindang, and go around killing their own friends and brothers for the local bullies and bad gentry, landlords, and capitalists. How distressing this is! Do you not believe it? Chiang Kai-shek claims to be most "revolutionary," but during the first Northern Expedition, when he arrived in Jiangxi he killed the head of the General Workers' Union in Ganzhou; when he went to Shanghai, he disarmed the workers' inspection corps, which had opened Shanghai to him and helped him to force Sun Chuanfang out, and he shot to death a large number of workers. The number of workers and peasants killed by Xu Kexiang in Hunan, He Jian in Hubei, and Li Jishen in Guangdong totaled several hundreds of thousands. Don't they all talk about "making revolution"? Upon whose lives are they actually making revolution? Those of the workers and peasants. But aren't we ourselves, the soldiers, the ones who have been deceived and used by them to kill the workers and peasants? So many soldiers were killed during the two Eastern Campaigns and two Northern Expeditions and the war between Chiang Kai-shek and the Guangxi faction! The result was a new emperor, Chiang Kai-shek. How much blood have we soldiers shed only to fatten these man-eating beasts? How many of our soldiers' corpses have been cast aside only to build a throne for the new warlord? Enough! We've had enough deception from them! Brother soldiers in the Guomindang armies! Come to your senses right now! You ought to know for sure who our enemies are. Don't be deceived by them any more! They have deceived you with [the slogan] "No fear of death and no need for money," but they hide themselves in the rear, raking in piles and piles of money. You are the only ones who end up dead! They "love the country and love the people," but sold the Ji'nan Massacre to Japan and aviation rights to the United States. Hundreds of thousands of slaughtered workers and peasants have been "loved" by them this way. All the nation's rights have been sold out because of their love. Who can deny it? Brother soldiers, wake up!

Fourth, let's ask ourselves, what have we got after several years of fighting? Ever since Chiang Kai-shek betrayed the revolution, the warlords have been fighting against one another for territories and privileges. As far as they are concerned, no matter who wins and who loses, they can still be promoted and get rich. All we can do is scale mountains and ford streams, endure the hardships of arduous journeys, and be sent to the battlefields to die. Even the small amount of compensation has gone into the officers' pockets. Those who didn't die are disabled and can no longer run around for the warlord, so they are laid off in batches and sent off to repair roads. Those who cannot work on the roads have no recourse but to beg. Across numerous mountains and countless rivers, without any money to their names, how can any of them make it home? And, because of incessant fighting between the warlords, taxes and levies have grown heavier and the rents and interest exacted by the local tyrants have steadily increased so that our parents, wives, and brothers are dying of hunger and exposure. In short, the soldiers fight for the warlords, the warlords keep getting promoted and getting rich, and the soldiers who don't get killed end up being dismissed!

Fifth, the Red Army soldiers fight for their own liberation. Brother soldiers! If you want to find a way out, to make a living, to avoid suffering, to be rescued from slavery, to gain benefits for your families, the only way is to come to your senses, to unite and kill the counterrevolutionary warlord officers, to replace them with officers elected among yourselves, to set up a Soldiers' Committee to take part in managing the armies, to unite with the workers and peasants to overthrow the local bullies and bad gentry who have oppressed us, to confiscate the land from the landlord class and distribute it among the peasants. Only then can we be assured of a bright future. Only when we have overthrown the Guomindang government and established our own government of the councils of worker-peasant-soldier deputies will we have true and long-lasting happiness. Our Red Army is our soldiers' own army and the workers' and peasants' army. It is also an army led by the Communist Party. It is not subject to oppression and...

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1. Regarding the Ji'nan Massacre, see above, the relevant note to the text of October 5, 1928.
exploitation by officers; officers and soldiers receive equal pay; they wear the
same clothes and eat the same food, and the army is managed by the Soldiers’
Committee. It is authorized also to shoot counterrevolutionary officers, to wipe
out local tyrants and distribute their land, to overthrow the Guomindang govern-
ment, to set up a worker-peasant-soldier government, to eliminate the warlords,
and to expel imperialist forces from China. This is a true revolutionary army.

Sixth, the Fourth Red Army has struggled with the counterrevolutionaries for
several years now and has eliminated many despotic gentry and warlords. On
August 1 two years ago, Chiang Kaishik had defected to imperialism and started
protecting local bullies, bad gentry and capitalists; workers and peasants were
being killed, and he wanted us to protect our enemies and kill our own brothers,
the workers and peasants. At that time, therefore, we of the Fourth Red Army did
not forget the revolution and would not be deceived by him into killing our own
brothers and friends. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, an insurrec-
tion erupted in Nanchang, and we started fighting against the counterrevolution-
ary warlords. For the last two years, we have been moving and fighting in
Hunan, Jiangxi, Fujian, and Guangdong provinces and have overthrown many
local bullies and bad gentry, eliminated many new warlords, and set up many
worker-peasant-soldier governments.

Seventh, soldiers in the Red Army welcome White army soldiers to join the
Red Army and take part in the revolution. Brother soldiers, let us all unite and
jointly attack our class enemies! Wake up! We welcome you. Brothers, arise. Let
us raise the bright Red banner and loudly shout, “Comrades! Come quickly and
build our working people’s Republic. The working class must be the masters of
the world, only then will mankind enter into the Great Harmony. We are the
revolutionary vanguard of the workers and the peasants. We are the revolu-
tionary vanguard of the workers and the peasants.” Finally, let us loudly shout:

1. Brother soldiers all over the country, turn your guns around and kill the
counterrevolutionary officers!
2. Let soldiers throughout the land rise up in rebellion and eliminate the new
and old warlords!
3. Let soldiers throughout the land rise up to organize their own Red Army!
4. Workers, peasants, and soldiers, unite!
5. Strike at the local bullies and distribute the land!
6. Overthrow the Guomindang government.
7. Down with imperialism.
10. Long live the success of the world revolution.

Soldiers’ Committee, Fourth Red Army

Letter from the Fourth Red
Army Front Committee to the
Central Committee

(March 20, 1929)

To the Fujian Provincial Committee, and to be forwarded to the Central
Committee:

1) We (the Fourth Red Army) captured Tingzhou on March 14.1 Guo
Fengming (commander of the Second Fujian Brigade) was killed, and his
body exposed in Ting City for three days.2 We have captured about five
hundred rifles (the single-shot ones and nine-shot ones are of no use to the
soviet Red Army), seven or eight carbines, three mortars, and several hun-
dred rounds of shells. The remnants of Guo’s brigade retreated toward Shang-
hai and Hangzhou.

2) The Tingzhou masses are excellent. After we had distributed the grain and
property of the local bullies and the reactionaries and carried out extensive
propaganda, the workers, and the peasants from the vicinity of the town, rose up
in a big way. In the ensuing days we have been carrying out basic organizing
work for peasant associations and workers’ unions (both underground and open).
Within a day or two a provisional organ of political power, the revolutionary
committee, will be set up. For the present,3 the political department will replace
the organ of political power.

3) In view of developments in the current situation (we have read the March
3 Shanghai newspaper, the March 13 . . ., and the Zhangzhou and Chaohou
newspapers), as for western Fujian and southern Jiangxi, we hope that the Cen-

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 53–57, which cites
a handwritten copy in the Party archives. This report also appears in Mao Zedong ji.
Bujuan, Vol. 3, pp. 31–35, where it has been taken from a documentary collection
published in 1982. No earlier text appears to be available.

1. Tingzhou (now known as Changting) is located in southwestern Fujian, just across
the border from Ruijin in Jiangxi.
2. Guo Fengming (1892–1929), a native of Fujian, had been commander of the Sec-
ond Fujian Brigade since 1928. As indicated by Mao, he was killed in battle on March 14,
1929.
3. Taking zixia to be a typographical error for maxia.
remnant troops from the Jinggangshan) and is stationed at the intersection of Yudu and Xin Feng. On March 7, Peng’s unit attacked the remnants of Liu Shyi’s unit and captured over a hundred rifles, one water and one land machine gun, and seven Dun6 of bullets. For about the next ten days, the Red Fourth Army will operate on the Fujian border; afterward, it will wage guerrilla warfare around Ruijin and Ningdu on the Jiangxi border. At that time, the action to be taken will be determined with reference to the battle situation in Hunan and Jiangxi, according to the best interests of the development of the Red Army and the development of the worker-peasant masses. We will either return to the Fujian border, or conduct guerrilla warfare in southern Jiangxi for a longer period, or move closer to the Guomindang battle zone near J’ian. The only plan that certainly must be carried out is to mobilize the masses within the regions of western Fujian and southern Jiangxi to the point of publicly establishing an independent régime. This plan should not be discarded, as it is the basis for progress.

7) The Fujian Provincial Committee should immediately send a special commissioner for western Fujian to supervise the work concerning the eight xian belonging to Tziangzhou. The Tziangzhou Party units are extremely weak and are incapable of assuming the responsibility for establishing political power. The principal tasks at present are to expand the Party organization and the mass organizations, to establish organs of political power, and to build up the western Jiangxi Red Army (at this time there is still no one to collect the guns). We hope that the Provincial Committee will pay special attention to our needs.

8) The armed forces of the ruling class throughout Fujian and Zhejiang, and in eastern and southern Jiangxi, are exceptionally weak (compared to those in the country as a whole). We wonder whether or not the Central Committee has already discussed plans to target these three localities for the open establishment of separate régimes. Since the ruling forces in these three places are relatively weak, and they are all near the sea, they are worthy of our attention.

9) We left the Jinggangshan on January 14, mainly because we had no way out economically. On the 20th, we were defeated in a battle at Dayu with Li Wenbin,5 so we walked around Nanxiong on the Guangdong border and into southern Jiangxi. We encountered pursuing troops three times, at Xin Feng, An Yuan, and Xin Wu, retracing as we fought. On February 1, we arrived at the

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4. Two weeks after sending this report, Mao and his comrades received the Central Committee’s letter of February 7, 1929. As will be seen from Mao’s reply of April 5, 1929, translated below, this long-awaited communication was scarcely welcome when it finally arrived.

5. These two units had originally been local forces from Donggu and elsewhere in Ji’an xian, put together by Communist Party cadres from bandit gangs, remnants of peasant associations, and miscellaneous other elements. Li Wenlin (1900–1932), original name Zhou Jiantang, was a native of Jishui xian in Jiangxi. (See above, the note to the Introduction regarding him.) In September 1928, as representative of the West Jiangxi Special Committee, he had been responsible for forming the Second Independent Regiment, and had become its commander and political commissar, with Duan Yuequan as executive officer. Duan Yuequan (more commonly known as Duan Qifeng), a former farm laborer and martial arts master, was an influential leader of the Three Dots Society in the area who had been persuaded to join the revolution with his band. In the winter of 1928–1929, he became commander of the newly formed Fourth Independent Regiment. Both these men were later identified with the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, fell under suspicion during the Futian Incident (see below, “A Letter of Reply by the General Front Committee,” December 1930), and were eventually executed, Li in 1932 and Duan in 1933. For more details see Stephen C. Averill, “The Origins of the Futian Incident,” in Tony Saich and Hans van de Ven (eds.), New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), pp. 79–115 (hereafter Averill, “Futian Incident”).

6. A unit of weight which varied according to circumstances, but corresponded roughly to 30 or 60 kg. In this volume, we capitalize this term to distinguish it from another character, also pronounced dan, which represents a unit of volume. For more details see below, the relevant note to the Xunwu Investigation of May 1929.

7. Li Wenbin (1902–1939) was a native of Heilongjiang. At this time, he was commander of the Twenty-First Brigade of the Seventh Division of the Guomindang First Army Group.
the cadres, Yuan Wencai\textsuperscript{10} and a handful of others left the ranks), and correct guidance by the Party.

10) The highest Party organization in the army is the Front Committee appointed by the Central Committee (as required by the actual situation, aside from the list of names appointed by the Central Committee, a few more have been added). Except for a portion of it remaining in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, the Fourth Army has been reorganized into three sections totaling three thousand men, fifteen hundred guns, and very little ammunition. As the result of frequent battles, we have lost many old cadres, and combat effectiveness is no longer what it was. But the state of exhaustion and defeat in which we left the Jinggangshan has been dissipated, and morale is high once again. As a result of losses suffered on two occasions, the shortage of officers and political workers has reached an extreme. We hope very much that the Central Committee will send us replacements. At the very least, they should send several military instructors and several political instructors, so that training schools may be opened here.

11) Over the past two years, because of difficulties in communications, we have received only two documents from the Central Committee. The first was the long letter of last June, which we received in October on the Jinggangshan; the other was the Resolutions of the Sixth Congress (political, military, land, political power, peasants, and the Congress...a total of six), which we received in Yongxin in January of this year.\textsuperscript{11} The letters we have sent to the Central Committee include: a long letter by Mao Zedong written last August in care of the Hunan Provincial Committee and a detailed report from the Front Committee written in November in care of the Provincial Committees of Hunan and Jiangxi, which recounted the struggles in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area in the last two years and the current plans of the Red Army. We don’t know whether or not they were received.\textsuperscript{12}

12) The resolutions adopted at the Sixth Congress are extremely correct, and we accept them with great joy. Previously, we had already mimeographed over five hundred copies to distribute to the Party organizations along the way here from the Jinggangshan. Now we have printed another thousand lithographic copies to be used in expanding the organizations in western Fujian and southern Jiangxi. The only things that are missing are the three resolutions on organiza-

\textsuperscript{8} Liu Shiyi (1891–1982), zi Renfu, was a native of Jiangxi, who had studied military science in Japan. At this time, he was deputy commander of the Fifth Division of the Guomindang First Army Group, and concurrently commander of the Fifteenth Brigade.

\textsuperscript{9} The reference is to the Thirty-fifth Brigade of the Twelfth Division of the Guomindang First Army Group, commanded by Zhang Yuren.

\textsuperscript{10} The nature and behavior of the two bandit chieftains, Wang Zuo and Yuan Wencai, and the reasons why they were ultimately killed by the Communists themselves, have been the subject of many contradictory statements since Mao’s first interviews with Edgar Snow in 1936. For a brief discussion of this problem, see the Introduction to this volume.

\textsuperscript{11} This statement does not appear to be entirely accurate. Apart from the two items mentioned here, Mao himself refers in texts translated above to several other documents which had reached him during the year 1928.

\textsuperscript{12} For a fuller statement regarding communications which Mao had sent, see below, the letter of April 5, 1929.
tion, propaganda, and trade unions. Could we please ask you to send them to complete the set?

13) A Western Fujian Special Committee needs to be set up quickly. The Southern Jiangxi Special Committee is far away from the Jiangxi Provincial Committee, but has been in close contact with the Front Committee; since its establishment last May, the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area Special Committee has had a close relationship with the Hunan Provincial Committee, but has little contact with the Jiangxi Provincial Committee. Of all the Party organizations in southern Jiangxi, Yudu and Donggu are the best, followed by Xingguo, Xinfeng, Ningdu, Anyuan, and Xunwu; Ruijin, Huichang, and Shicheng have no organizations as yet. Changting is beginning to develop one. The best of them all, at Yongding, is more than 300 li from us, and because of having to deal with events in Jiangxi, the Red Army cannot go there now. Comrade Ruan Shan’s Red Army needs to come to Tingzhou. Only thus, when we leave for Jiangxi, can the Tingzhou régime continue to exist, and to have close contact with us. After Guo Fengming died, there was no one to rule Tingzhou. The center for activities in the eight xian should be in Changting. We hope the Provincial Committee will give this careful consideration!

14) In calculating strength, the Central Committee must not overestimate us.

The Front Committee

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A Letter from the Front Committee to the Central Committee

(Ruijin, April 5, 1929)

To the Central Committee:

On April 3, at Ruijin, we received your letter of February 7, which had been forwarded to us by the Fujian Provincial Committee. The Central Committee’s letter makes too pessimistic an appraisal of the objective situation and of the subjective forces. The third “suppression” campaign against the Jinggangshan represented the high water mark of the counterrevolutionary tide. But there it stopped, and since then the counterrevolutionary tide has gradually receded, while the revolutionary tide has gradually risen. Although our Party’s fighting capacity and organizational strength have been weakened to the extent described by the Central Committee, they will be rapidly restored, and the passivity among comrades in the Party will quickly disappear as the counterrevolutionary tide gradually ebbs. The masses will certainly come over to us. Butcherism only serves to “drive the fish into deep waters,” and reformism no longer has any appeal to the masses. The illusions of the masses about the Guomindang will assuredly be soon dissipated. In the circumstances which will arise, no other party will be able to compete with the Communist Party in winning over the masses. The political line and the organizational line laid down by the Sixth Congress are entirely correct: the current stage of the revolution is democratic and not socialist, and the present task of the Party is to win over the masses and not to stage immediate armed insurrections. Nevertheless, the revolution is de-

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We have translated this text from Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 54–63. There the source is given as a handwritten copy in the Party archives. This letter was first published in the 1941 edition of the internal documentary collection Liuda yilai (Since the Sixth Congress).

1. Large portions of this text were quoted by Mao in his letter of January 5, 1930, to Lin Biao, translated below. We have used the same wording in both cases for the passages which overlap.

2. The Central Committee’s letter of February 7, 1929, has long been known only from Mao’s references to it and from other secondary sources. The full text has now been published in Central Committee Documents (1929), pp. 29–37. As explained in the Introduction to this volume, it was drafted by Zhou Enlai.

3. I.e., the adversary’s policy of massacring the population.
veloping swiftly, and we should adopt a positive spirit in our propaganda about, and preparations for, armed insurrection. In the present chaotic situation we can lead the masses only if we have positive slogans and a positive spirit. Only by having such a spirit can the Party recover its fighting capacity. We feel that the Party committed the error of adventurism in the past, and now it has a rather marked liquidationist tendency in some places. The Party branches in the localities that we have passed through in western Fujian and southern Jiangxi had very low combat morale and had lightly let go many opportunities for battle. The masses are vast, and also revolutionary, but the party branches are not taking the lead. The examples of western Fujian and southern Jiangxi make us wonder whether there are similar phenomena elsewhere. So we have to oppose the evil tendency toward adventurism and commandism, but we must also energetically guard against the tendency toward liquidationism and immobilism. Proletarian leadership is the sole key to the victory of the revolution. Building up the Party’s proletarian basis and establishing Party branches in industrial enterprises in key areas are the greatest organizational tasks for the Party at present. But, at the same time, the development of the struggle in the countryside, the establishment of soviets in small areas, and the creation and expansion of the Red Army are prerequisites for aiding the struggle in the cities and hastening the revolutionary upsurge. The greatest mistake would therefore be to abandon the struggle in the cities and sink into rural guerrilla-ism. But in our opinion, it is also a mistake—if any of our Party members hold such views—to fear the development of the power of the peasants lest it outstrip the workers’ leadership and become detrimental to the revolution. For the revolution in semicolonial China will fail only if the peasant struggle is deprived of the leadership of the workers; it will never suffer just because the peasant struggle develops in such a way as to become more powerful than the workers. The Sixth Congress has pointed out the mistake of neglecting the peasant revolution. In this letter from the Central Committee, the idea “develop a vast struggle everywhere in the rural areas” represents the only correct view.

The Central Committee asks us to divide our forces into very small units and disperse them over the countryside and to withdraw Zhu De and Mao Zedong from the army, thus concealing the major targets, all this with the aim of preserving the Red Army and arousing the masses. This is a kind of ideal view. In the winter of 1927–1928, we did start to plan to disperse our forces over the countryside, with each company or battalion operating on its own and adopting guerrilla tactics in order to arouse the masses while trying not to present a target for the enemy; we have tried this many times, but have failed every time. The reasons are: (1) Most of the soldiers of the Red Army come from other areas and have a background different from that of the local Red Guards. The peasants in Ninggang and other xian of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area are willing to serve only in the local Red Guard units but not in the Red Army. Therefore, in the Red Army, one can hardly find any peasants from the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area. The Red Army is made up of veterans from the National Revolutionary Army, the peasant army from Liuyang, Pingjiang, and southern Hunan, and prisoners of war from the past. (2) Division into small units results in weak leadership and organization and inability to cope with adverse circumstances, which easily lead to defeat; (3) The units are liable to be crushed by the enemy one by one. (Because of the division of forces, the Fifth Army in Pingjiang and Liuyang xian and the Fourth Army in the border area and in Hunan have been defeated five times.) (4) The more adverse the circumstances, the greater the need for concentration and for the leaders to be resolute in struggle, because only thus can we have internal unity to resist the enemy. Only in favorable circumstances is it advisable to divide our forces for guerrilla operations, and it is only then that the leaders need not stay with the ranks all the time, as they must in adverse circumstances. This last time when we left the Jinggangshan and marched toward southern Jiangxi and western Fujian, because our troops were centralized, and the leading organ’s (the Front Committee) and the leaders’ (Zhu and Mao) attitudes were unwavering, not only was the enemy unable to do anything to us but their losses were greater than their gains, and our gains were greater than our losses. Our two victories in Ningdu and Tingzhou xian completely wiped out the combat effectiveness of the local bullies, Guo’s and Liu’s brigades, resulting in the current mass mobilization in southern Jiangxi and western Fujian. Without the centralization of the army and sound leadership, this could not have been done. The tactics we have derived from the struggle of the past three years are indeed different from any other tactics, ancient or modern, Chinese or foreign. With our tactics, the masses can be aroused for struggle on an ever-broadening scale, and no enemy, however powerful, can cope with us. Ours are guerrilla tactics. They consist mainly of the following points:

"Divide our forces to arouse the masses, concentrate our forces to deal with the enemy."

"The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue."

"To extend stable base areas, employ the policy of advancing in waves; when pursued by a powerful enemy, employ the policy of circling around."

4. Such were, in fact, the orders of the Central Committee. See also the discussion in the Introduction to this volume.

5. I.e., the Guomindang army.
6. Regarding the battles with Guo Fengming and Liu Shiyi, see above, Mao’s report of March 20, 1929.
7. This terse summary of the Red Army’s tactics, known in Chinese as the “sixteen-character formula” because each of its four clauses consists of four characters, had been coined by Mao Zedong and Zhu De in May 1928. It appeared for the first time in written form in the present letter, and soon came to be regarded as the definitive formulation of Mao’s guerrilla principles.
“Arouse the largest numbers of the masses in the shortest possible time and by the best possible methods.”

These tactics are just like casting a net; at any moment we should be able to cast it or draw it in. We cast it wide to win over the masses and draw it in to deal with the enemy. Such are the tactics we have used for the past three years. When we were in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, once we had pulled the forces together and defeated the enemy, we were able to scatter and work for two to three weeks (in several big teams, and then each big team could again be subdivided), until the enemy once more marshaled his forces to attack us, at which point we would get together again to defeat the enemy, then scatter again to work. This time when the enemy pursued us, we used the spiral guerrilla tactics and went through a vast area and mobilized vast masses. Whenever we came to a place, we would stay a minimum of half a day and a maximum of five days. First, we conducted propaganda on a large scale. (The press propaganda team and oral propaganda teams, under the Political Department, are based on the company; two teams per company and three people per team. Along the march and wherever we went, propaganda was immediately conducted everywhere.) Then we distributed money and goods (cloth, clothing, and tools owned by big landlords and reactionary elements), and we went ahead with organizing (Party branches, underground workers’ unions, and underground peasants’ unions). Our techniques of working with the masses have greatly improved. The Red Army now is not purely a combat force; its main function is, rather, to mobilize the masses. Combat is only a means. The time we spend on combat as compared with the time we spend on mass work stands in a proportion of 1 to 10. The army today is different from that in the days of Ye and He. The only occupation of the army of Ye and He was to fight. This would not work today. It would not have survived. At no time can the Red Army survive without a united leading organization for the Party and the army; otherwise, it will fall into anarchy and will certainly fail.

At present the Party’s leading organ is the Front Committee, with Mao Zedong as secretary, and the military commanding organ is the headquarters, with Zhu De as chief of the army. If the Central Committee needs Zhu and Mao for other assignments, please send us capable replacements for them. We think Comrade Liu Bocheng can take over the military post and Comrade Yun Daiying can take over the Party and political work. If they can both come, they will be able to do better work than we can. Last June in a letter from the Central Committee, it was mentioned that Comrade He Long would be sent here to inspect our work, but we don’t know why he has not yet arrived. Now it is very convenient to come here from Fujian. We hope that you will send people to inspect our work at any time.

Since Liu’s and Guo’s brigades were wiped out, it may be said that we have no more enemies in western Fujian and southern Jiangxi. The armies of Chiang Kaishek and the Guangxi warlords are approaching each other in the vicinity of Jiujiang, and a big battle is imminent. Henceforth, the rule of the Guomindang will disintegrate, and the revolutionary high tide will arrive very quickly. As for how our work should be arranged under these circumstances, we feel that, so far as the southern provinces are concerned, the armed forces of the compradors and landlords in Guangdong and Hunan Provinces are too strong, and that in Hunan, moreover, we have lost almost all the masses, inside as well as outside the Party, because of the error of the Party’s adventurerist policies. In the three provinces of Fujian, Jiangxi, and Zhejiang, however, the situation is different. First, the military forces are weakest there. In Zhejiang, there is only a small provincial defense force under Jiang Bocheng. In Fujian, although there are five groups of enemy troops totaling fourteen regiments in all, Guo’s troops have already been smashed; the troops under Chen and Lu are bandits of small fighting capacity; the two brigades of marines stationed along the coast have never seen action and their fighting capacity is undoubtedly not great; Zhang Zhen alone can put up some sort of a fight, but according to an analysis made by the Fujian Provincial Committee, even he has only two good regiments. In addition, Fujian is now in a state of complete anarchy and disunity. In Jiangxi, there are sixteen regiments under the two commands of Zhu Peide and Xiong Shihui; they are stronger than the armed forces of either Fujian or Zhejiang, but far inferior to those of Hunan. (When they have fought with us, apart from Li Wenbin’s brigade, we have defeated them all.) Secondly, fewer adventurerist mistakes have been made in these three provinces. We are not clear about the situation in Zhejiang, but the Party’s organizational and mass base is somewhat better in Jiangxi and Fujian than in Hunan. Take Jiangxi, for example. In northern Jiangxi we still have some bases in De’an, Xiusi, and Tonggu; in western Jiangxi the Party and the Red Guards still have some strength in Ninggang, Yongxin, Lianhua, and Suichuan; in southern Jiangxi the prospects are still much brighter, as the Second and Fourth Regiments of the Red Army are steadily growing in strength in the xian of J’ian, Yongfeng, and Xingguo; in eastern Jiangxi, the Red Army’s Third Regiment under Fang Zhimin has by no means been wiped out. All this places us in a position to close in on Nanchang. We hereby recommend to the Central Committee that during the period of prolonged and chaotic warfare among the Guomindang warlords, we should contend with Chiang Kaishek and the Guangxi clique for Jiangxi Prov-

9. Jiang Bocheng (?–1951), a native of Jiangxi, was commander of the local defense forces.
10. Lu Xingbang (1880–1945) and Chen Guohui (1895–1933) were both natives of Fujian. Each of them had spent several years as a bandit, before pursuing a military career. At this time, Lu was commander of the Guomindang’s newly organized Second Division; Chen was commander of the First Mixed Brigade of the Fujian forces.
11. Zhang Zhen (1884–1963), a native of Fujian, had participated in the Revolution of 1911. At this time, he was commander of the Guomindang’s Temporary First Division, with responsibility for the campaign against the Red Army in Fujian.

8. The reference is to the forces of Ye Ting and He Long, at the time when these commanders were leading them on the retreat from Nanchang.
inco, and at the same time for western Fujian and western Zhejiang. In these three provinces we should enlarge the Red Army and create an independent régime of the masses, with a time limit of one year for accomplishing this plan.

During this one year, we must lay the foundations for the struggle of the proletariat in Shanghai, Wuxi, Ningpo, Hangzhou, Fuzhou, Xiamen, and other places, so that they can lead the peasant struggles in Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Fujian. The Jiangxi Provincial Committee must be soundly established, and efforts must be made to build a basis among the workers in Nanchang, Jiujiang, Ji’an, and on the Nanchang-Jiujiang Railroad.

We came to Tingzhou on March 14, after we had defeated Guo’s brigade and shot Guo Fengming. Then we found out about the rift between Chiang Kai-shek and the Guangxi faction, and how a chaotic struggle within the Guomindang will soon come. As for our present arrangements, we have decided that during the initial stage of the fighting within the Guomindang, with the twenty-odd xian of western Fujian and southern Jiangxi as our sphere of action, we should mobilize the masses with our guerrilla tactics, in order that the masses may openly establish an independent régime. We must deepen the land revolution and establish worker-peasant political power, and then join this régime to the one in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area to form a strong force, which will be the foundation for future development. Therefore, we did not go down to Hangyong or Longyan. After working in Tingzhou for seventeen days, we came to Ruijin on April 1. We plan to enter and occupy Yudu on April 8. When we get to Yudu, we will call a big meeting to discuss our action plans with the Southern Jiangxi Special Committee and with Comrade Luo Shoufan sent by the Military Department of the Central Committee. The masses in western Fujian and southern Jiangxi are extremely well disposed. Several thousand had come together to seize grain from the local tyrants at Changting xian seat, Xinqiao, Hetian, and other places. At Tingzhou, we organized twenty underground peasants’ unions and five underground workers’ unions, and also established the trade union federation. The party organization has doubled in size. One Red Guard unit was also organized, but since it could not stand on its own, it has followed the army to Ruijin. The first organ of political power was a provisional revolutionary committee, appointed by the Political Department. After several workers’ unions and peasants’ unions had been organized, a representative assembly was called together to elect the formal revolutionary committee. Both the provisional and the formal revolutionary committees issued political programs. On arriving in Ruijin, we planned for four days’ work. The army was scattered to work in the xian town, Rentian City, Xijiang, and Jiubao, and in each place they were divided into subteams. The headquarters are in the xian capital. The masses of Ruijin have risen like a raging fire to welcome us. They have fought very bravely against the landlords. Unfortunately, there was formerly no organization, not a single comrade, and no local leading organizations. Since the work was done in a rush, it was not well done, especially in the xian town. After we get to Yudu, we will spend about one week there working in the xian capital and the four cities. Later we may march toward Ningdu and

Guangchang, or toward Wan’an and Taihe, depending on the circumstances. We will engage in guerrilla warfare for a while in southern Jiangxi before we move to western Fujian. Then we will take on the remnants of Guo Fengming’s and Lu Xingbang’s and Chen Guohui’s units. The Fujian Provincial Committee must make efforts to prepare for this.

As for the situation in the army, except for a small portion which has been left in the border area, we have with us in the main force of the Fourth Army a total of three thousand six hundred men and eleven hundred guns. We lost two hundred guns and six hundred men at Dayu, Xinfeng, and Xunwu (most of the men lost contact during the fighting). Only a few score guns and a little more than one hundred men were actually taken by the enemy. The shocking reports in the newspapers were all lies of the enemy. After the Ningdu and Tingzhou battles, we have not only recovered but even gained a little. The army is now organized as the first, second, and third columns, each of which is in charge of two detachments (equivalent to battalions), and each detachment is in charge of three groups [da dui] (equivalent to companies). Each column has about five hundred guns and over twelve hundred men. When we divide the forces to wage guerrilla warfare, we use the columns as units, spread them out, and then divide them again into detachments. It is very convenient to divide the forces and bring them back together again. Eight hundred men and five hundred guns from Comrade Peng Dehuai’s Fifth Army came to the Jinggangshan. Of those, six hundred men and four hundred guns are now at Ruijin. They have been reorganized as the Fifth Column of the Fourth Army. Comrade Peng Dehuai is now in command, with the title of deputy army commander. Within the next few days, we need to return to the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area to rally the old troops, to restore political power, and to restore contact with southern Jiangxi, which is still under the Front Committee. Political departments have been established. The army has a political department, and each column has its own political department within which there are the Secretariat, Propaganda, Organization (which includes sections for staff members, peasants, and Party affairs) and Political Security divisions. At the levels of detachments and companies there are Party representatives. We plan to abolish the Party representatives at levels higher than columns and have only the head of the Political Department. At Tingzhou, we have had new clothes made for the whole army, and each man was given four yuan as spending money. Provisions are no problem, and morale is high. Two other armies from eastern Jiangxi and Lichuan (near Guangchang) want to join us. One consists of five hundred men who have defected from Jin Handing with more than three hundred guns. They have been reorganized as the Fourth Column, with Tian Guiping as its commander. The other one is composed of over three hundred bandits with more than two hundred guns. They had been battered from all sides and could not find a way out. Now they have been reorganized as an independent battalion with Hu Zhusheng as its commander. Both of these armies will arrive in Ningdu after April 14 to be reorganized and trained. The Second and the Fourth Regiments
of the Jiangxi Red Army are now stationed in Xingguo and have good contact with us. The Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area has been defeated once, but now is the opportunity for its recovery. In that area, there are, in addition to Wang Zuo’s forces, with two hundred guns, which belongs to the Fourth Red Army, the Red Guard units of the six xian, Ninggang, Yongxin, Lianhua, Suichuan, Lingxian, and Chaling, with a total of eight hundred guns. At a time when the warlords are engaged in chaotic warfare and are incapable of paying attention to other matters, these two units can not only defend themselves but also move outward. When Comrade Peng leads his army back there, they will be even more capable of this. The secretary of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area Special Committee is Comrade Deng Qianyuan. In Hunan, since the uprising failed last March, the foundation of the Party has been completely wiped out under the reign of adventurism. The arms of the peasants have also been seized by the despotic gentry, and the masses suppressed. Last August, when the Red Army attacked Bing xian, we organized three xian committees at Zixing, Rucheng, and Guidong, three armed Red Guard units of the peasants, and a Special Committee over them with Du Xiuqing as its secretary. But according to a recent report, they have again been sacrificed to adventurism. In Liling, since last spring’s uprising, when the Party organization was broken up and the armed forces wiped out, they have obtained seventy guns from the Fourth Army during the summer and were fully recovered by fall at Huangtuling at the juncture of Youxian and Liling. This proves how difficult it is for a small armed force to survive independently.

The commanding organ for the Party in the Red Army is the Front Committee appointed by the Central Committee. The letter from the Central Committee dated June 4 of last year said: “As for the commanding organ for the front, the Central Committee considers that it is necessary to organize a committee. The appointees are as follows: Mao Zedong, Zhu De, one worker comrade, one peasant comrade, and the local Party secretary of wherever the Front Committee may be located, with Mao Zedong as the secretary. In addition, a Trade Union Committee must be set up, with the worker comrade on the Front Committee as its secretary, as well as an Army Committee, with Zhu De as its secretary. The members of the Army and Trade Union Committees will be determined by the Front Committee. The limits of jurisdiction will be determined according to the circumstances. The work within all areas of jurisdiction will be supervised by the Front Committee. When the Front Committee is in Jiangxi, it will be under the direction of the Jiangxi Provincial Committee; when in Hunan, it will come under the Hunan Provincial Committee. The Provincial Committee in question, upon receiving reports from the Front Committee, should respond immediately and submit both the Front Committee reports and the Provincial Committee’s responses to the Central Committee promptly.” We feel this directive from the Central Committee concerning organization is entirely appropriate and meets the needs of the struggle. The Red Army, which transcends local characteristics, should not be subjected to the leadership of the xian and Special Committees, nor even of a particular provincial committee. The Fifth Army in Pingjiang and Liuyang, and the Fourth Army in Hunan and in the Hunan-Jiangxi border area, have been defeated many times under the command of localism. The Red Army, which transcends locality, must be under the direct command of the Central Committee. Only thus can it adapt itself to the needs of the revolutionary environment and not suffer harm from the evil influence of localism.

Since August of last year, we have submitted three reports to the Central Committee. One was a long letter written by Mao Zedong after our defeat in the border area, discussing questions such as the independent régime and the policies of the Hunan Provincial Committee to be forwarded by the Hunan Provincial Committee. The original draft of the first letter has been lost. Another was a report of the Front Committee, written last November just after we first received your June letter, and just before the Red Army had to return to the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area. It contained an historical account of the struggle in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area and also discussed policies and plans concerning the setting up of independent régimes, and was forwarded by the Hunan and Jiangxi Provincial Committees. The original draft of this letter is still here and I am enclosing a copy of it again. The third was a letter sent by the Front Committee at Changting on March 20, to be submitted to you via the Fujian Provincial Committee. Have you received it? Another copy is enclosed. For three years, we have not received a single one of the publications of the Central Committee until we got to Tingzhou, where we finally saw The Young Pioneer, Nos. 3 and 4, The Chinese Worker, No. 3, The People’s Voice, No. 2, published in Beijing, and The Outpost, No. 2, put out by Tingzhou comrades in Shanghai. In the Hunan-Jiangxi border area, because of the enemy blockade, we were unable to read any newspapers for two to three months. Since last September, we have been able to buy newspapers from Ji’an and Changsha, but it is still very difficult. Since we came to southern Jiangxi and western Fujian, the convenience of the postal services allows us to read newspapers every day from Nanjing, Shanghai, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Zhangzhou, Nanchang, and Ganzhou. Since we have come to Ruijin xian, we can read He Jian’s official paper and Changsha’s Republican Daily. It is like being able to see the sky again through the clouds, and our joy is indescribable! We hope that the Central Committee will write to us once a month, and we will submit at least one report to the Central Committee every month. We also hope that you will find a way to send us Central Committee publications.

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12. This must be the letter “written last August” referred to above, in the Report of March 20, 1929. If so, not only the “original draft,” as indicated in the text, but all copies appear to have been lost. Presumably the content paralleled to some extent that of the report of October 5, 1928, translated above.
13. This clearly refers to the well-known report of November 28, 1928, also translated above.
14. This document is also translated above.
Order of the Military Department of the Fourth Army

(Yucheng, 8 A.M., April 10, [1929])

The position of assistant Party representative of this corps, left vacant by the commander of this corps, Lin Jun, is to be filled by the appointment of Wang Tingying. Please note and respect this order.

The Changting Red Guards

Army Commander, Zhu De
Political Commissar, Mao Zedong

[Xingguo Xian] Land Law

(April 1929)

1. Confiscate all public land and all land belonging to the landlord class, and turn ownership over to the government of the congress of workers, peasants, and soldiers of Xingguo, which should redistribute it to the landless peasants and peasants with little land, for them to cultivate and use.

2. Further purchase and sale of all public land and land belonging to the landlord class are prohibited once it has been confiscated and redistributed by the government of workers, peasants, and soldiers.

3. The quantitative criteria for land redistribution are:

a) using the number of people as the criterion, and redistributing an equal amount of land to men, women, the old, and the young;

b) using labor power as the criterion and giving twice as much land to those who can work as to those who cannot.

Of the above two criteria, the first is to be the primary one. In places where special circumstances prevail, the second criterion may be applied. The reasons for adopting the first criterion are:

i) before the facilities for caring for old people and children are in place, the old and the young, if they are given too little land, will certainly not be able to make a living;

ii) it is relatively simple and convenient to use the number of people as the criterion for land redistribution;

iii) very few families do not have old people or children. At the same time, although the old and the young are not capable of tilling the land, local governments should, after land redistribution, also assign them appropriate public services to perform, such as communication duties.

4. The administrative criteria for land redistribution are:

a) using the township as the unit for land redistribution;

b) using several townships as the unit for land redistribution (as was done in Xiaojiang District in Yongxin [xian]);

c) using the district as the unit for land redistribution.

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 3, p. 47.

Our source for this document is the 1941 edition of Nongcun diaocha, pp. 125–27. The text also appears in Mao Zedong ji, Vol. 2, pp.73–75.
Of the above three criteria, the first is to be the primary one. Under special circumstances, the second and third criteria may be used.

5. The methods of redistributing wooded and hilly lands are:

a) Hills where tea-oil plants are grown and firewood-producing hills are to be redistributed according to the same method used for the land, taking the township as the unit; they are to be redistributed equally for cultivation and use;

b) Bamboo forests are the property of the soviet government. Peasants may, however, enjoy the use of the bamboo after obtaining permission from the soviet government. Permission for [cutting] fewer than fifty stalks should be obtained from the township soviet; for fewer than a hundred stalks, permission must be obtained from the district soviet government; for more than a hundred stalks, permission must be obtained from the xian soviet government.

c) All bamboo is to be sold by the xian soviet government; the proceeds from such sales will be allocated by the soviet government at a higher level.

6. The collection of land tax:

a) Three rates of land taxes are set according to production conditions: (i) 15 percent; (ii) 10 percent; (iii) 5 percent. Of the above three rates, the first is to be the primary one. Under special circumstances and after permission is obtained from the soviet government at a higher level, the second and third rates may be used.

b) In the event of natural disasters or other special circumstances, exemption from land tax may be granted after petitioning to and obtaining approval from the soviet government at a higher level.

c) Land tax is to be collected by the xian soviet governments and turned over to higher-level soviet governments for allocation.

7. Rural artisans, if they themselves wish to receive redistributed land, may each get half the amount of land given to every peasant.

8. Officers and soldiers of the Red Army and the Red Guards, as well as all those serving in the government or in other public agencies, should all receive the same amount of redistributed land as given to peasants. The soviet government will hire people to cultivate it for them.

Note: This law was issued four months after the enactment of the previous land law [of December 1928], when the Red Army arrived from the Jinggangshan in Xingguo in southern Jiangxi. One important substantive change was made, consisting in the replacement of "confiscate all land" by "confiscate all public land and all land belonging to the landlord class." This was a correction of principle. All other provisions remained unchanged, however, and were modified only in 1930. These two land laws are preserved in order to show how our understanding of the land struggle developed. ¹

¹ This note, like that to the Jinggangshan land law of December 1928, was added to the text by Mao himself when it was first published in the 1941 Yan'an edition of Rural Investigations. For a brief discussion of the relation between this land law, that of December 1928, and that of February 1930, and the reasons for the changes, see the Introduction to this volume.
Report of Mao Zedong, Secretary of the Front Committee of the Fourth Red Army, to the Central Committee

(Sent on June 1, 1929, from Huleishi, Yongding, in Fujian)

To the Central Committee:

1. Our army (the first and second columns of the Fourth Army), coming from Ruijin and without attacking Tingzhou, took the route leading directly to Longyan. On May 24, we reached the town of Longyan and its environs, where, in Toushi, we took unawares two battalions of Chen Guohui’s forces, one special task company, and one machine gun company, disarming most of them, and obtaining two machine guns, more than two hundred rifles, and thirty thousand cartridges and capturing one battalion commander and more than two hundred soldiers.

2. Because Guo Fengming’s forces and Huang Yuepo’s regiment were located in Yongding, it was necessary to crush them speedily, so on May 26 we attacked Yongding. Huang’s regiment retreated to Shanghang without a fight.

3. Our army is now at Yongding. The troops have been split up and sent to various xian towns, such as Hulei and Jinfeng, to carry out guerrilla actions and to assist the revolutionary masses in the work of organizing the masses. They have also gone to new districts to launch the mass struggle and to wipe out the forces of the militia, and they are engaged in this right now.

After five days, they will then move on to other xian (such as Longyan and Shanghang). The Party has a fair base in western Fujian, and the masses are good, too. The struggle is developing daily in every xian, and hopes for the future are very high. Most of the forces of Zhang Zhen, Chen Guohui, and Lu Ximing have gone into Guangdong, leaving a vacuum in western and southern Fujian. The three remnant forces of Zhang Zhen, Chen Guohui, and Lu Ximing (replacing Brigade Commander Guo) total five thousand men, so the present time offers a particularly favorable opportunity for guerrilla operations in the whole of western Fujian. We hope the Provincial Committee will give more leadership to this dimension of the work.

4. On April 1, we withdrew from Tingzhou to Ruijin. In the five xian of Ruijin, Yudu, Ganzhou (Dongxiang), Ningdu, and Xingguo, we carried out the work of annihilating the reactionary military forces, in order to unleash and organize the masses. This went on for forty-five days in all, and the line of march was from Ruijin to Yudu to Dongxiang in Ganzhou to Xingguo to Ningdu. On May 15, we returned again to Ruijin. Every time we reached the territory of a xian or of a locality, we split the troops up and spread them around to every township. In each township, the troops were then once again split up into smaller units. With this kind of concentration and dispersion, it is easy to develop in tandem our plans both for winning over the masses and for dealing with the enemy, rather than stressing one aspect or the other. This corresponds to the directive of the Central Committee to “disperse your forces for guerrilla attacks, under a unified command.” This is the situation now in western Fujian.

5. In southern Jiangxi, during these forty-five days of guerrilla action, Zhu Peide has again been pursuing the bandit suppression campaign, sending one brigade from Ganzhou to attack Yudu and one brigade from Taihe to attack Xingguo. The troops that advanced together from Fuzhou to Ningdu, and to Ruijin from Fuzhou, were those of Wang Jun’s division and of Li Wenbin’s forces. In Ruijin, we did not, however, launch guerrilla attacks [on them]. When we were approaching Longyan, they had already entered Tingzhou. At this time, when the warlords have just launched chaotic struggles in the whole country, these units of enemy forces may be unable to pursue us again. This cannot, however, be determined with certainty and is under investigation. Toward such armies with powerful fighting capacities, we will certainly adopt the policy of moving around in circles, and will definitely not fight with them until all the conditions exist (for example, in terms of terrain and the masses) for a sure victory. So, in the end, the enemy will have no way to deal with us.

6. In southern Jiangxi, the base of the Party and the masses is relatively better in Yudu, Xingguo, and Dongxiang in Ganzhou. Anyuan. . . Ningdu are not as good, and Ruijin is just beginning. In xian such as Shicheng, Guangchang, and Nanfeng, there is no organization at all. As for the newly reorganized Southern Jiangxi Special Committee, in Yudu in southern Jiangxi they are extremely short-handed. In some places adventurism prevails, and in most places it is still opportunism (immobility). The Provincial Committee gives them very little leadership. The three xian of Yudu, Xingguo, and Ningdu all have organs of political


1. The heading of this document, as printed in Central Committee Documents (1929), adds that the report reached the Fujian Provincial Committee on June 25 and the Central Committee on July 1, 1929.

2. Mintuan, the landlord militia.

3. I.e., the “Campaign to Encircle and Annihilate the [Communist] Bandits.”

4. All ellipses in this text follow those in the Chinese original.
power (revolutionary committees of the workers, peasants, and soldiers); under the revolutionary committees are the peasant associations and labor unions. The landlord forces are very weak in all the xian of southern Jiangxi. Previously, the two local armies of Liu Shiyi and Lai Shicong (the younger brother of Lai Shihuang) were truly threatening, but the Red Army attacked and defeated Liu’s brigade twice, and he sent what was left of his troops to Shanghai and Zhejiang. When the Red Army attacked and defeated Lai’s troops at Ningdu on April 30, they, too, were completely destroyed (Lai Shicong was made prisoner, and more than a hundred rifles—some good, some bad—were taken). Since these two units no longer exist, and the troops of Zhu Peide will certainly not dare to stay long in the remote areas of southern Jiangxi, the future of southern Jiangxi also looks extremely promising. Because developments in southern Jiangxi may also allow the establishment of contact with the Jinggangshan in western Jiangxi (six xian, including Ninggang), and with the forces of Fang Zhimin in eastern Jiangxi, we request that the Central Committee send a circular to the Jiangxi Provincial Committee asking them to pay attention to the work in these two localities.

7. From January 26 to January 29 on the Jinggangshan, the two companies of soldiers under Comrade Peng Dehuai successfully resisted a very large force engaged in encirclement for four days and four nights, but were defeated by them in the end. The Red Detachments in the various xian, together with Wang Zuo’s battalion, are still in the border area and have not suffered great losses. Comrade Peng then withdrew to southern Jiangxi, having obtained more than a hundred rifles from Liu Shiyi’s troops. On April 1, they joined forces with the Fourth Army in Ruijin. The Front Committee decided that Comrade Peng’s forces and Wang’s forces should be reorganized as the Fifth Column of the Fourth Army (there is no Fourth Column), with Wang Zuo as column commander, and that the Red Guards of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area should constitute the Sixth Column of the Fourth Army, with Comrade He Guozhong as column commander. In all, they have fourteen hundred rifles, and the fighting strength of these two columns is considerable. These two columns are under the orders of Comrade Peng in his capacity as deputy commander-in-chief of the Fourth Army (internally, Peng is known as the secretary). The Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area Army Committee comes under the Front Committee. When the Front Committee is unable to exercise command directly, they are subject to the

Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area Special Committee. The heart of the guerrilla zone is Ninggang. All the xian of the border area that have extensive forces can be considered battle areas, and attention is paid to maintaining links with Jiangxi and Fujian. On April 14, Comrade Peng’s forces set out from Yudu, in the direction of the four border areas of Xinfeng, Nankang . . . and Suichuan. Subsequently, they went from . . . to . . . , and their activity. . . . The Second Independent Regiment and the Fourth Regiment of the Jiangxi Red Army, under the leadership of the Jiangxi Provincial Committee, have between them about a thousand rifles (the Fourth Army gave them a supplement of five hundred, half good and half bad), and the combat capacity of these two regiments is fairly good. The Fourth Regiment, which has been set up only recently, is somewhat inferior, but its internal organization is fairly sound, and the Party is very capable of exercising influence in military matters. Their sphere of guerrilla activity is in Ji’ an . . . Taihe, Wan’an and Xingguo. . . . In all these xian, their method of work is inferior compared to that mentioned earlier, but under the influence of the Fourth Army there has been some progress. When the Fourth Army was carrying out guerrilla activities in southern Jiangxi, they were subject to the orders of the Front Committee (their relations with the Front Committee have not changed), and in concert with the Fourth Army they carried out the work of unleashing and organizing the struggles of the masses. Their sphere of responsibility was the forces of of Xingguo and Ningdu. After the Fourth Army came to western Fujian, they carried out guerrilla attacks on various xian in all directions, with Xingguo as their center.

9. While we were in Ningdu, the Special Committee of the East River Area’ sent us a letter, saying that the East River was preparing an armed uprising, and they wanted the Red Army to send troops to help out. The Front Committee sent them a letter in reply stating that it did not approve of carrying out a general uprising at this time; that at present we could only launch guerrilla warfare; and that the Red Army really could not send troops to assist, because the reactionary forces there were very strong, and troops could not be sent over very long distances. After arriving in western Fujian, we sent them another letter, urging them to carry out mass work, and adding that after the Red Army had worked for a time in western Fujian, it might possibly come to the East River area to carry on guerrilla actions for a while. There is liaison between the East River Special Committee and the Western Fujian Special Committee, but hitherto there have been no links with the Southern Jiangxi Special Committee. In accordance with the progress of the work, it is necessary for all the special committees to have close links and for leading organs to be set up in the territories along the borders between the various

5. Fang Zhimin (1899–1935) was born in Yiyang xian in eastern Jiangxi, and joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1924. Following the break with the Guomindang, he returned in the autumn of 1927 to his native place, and spent the remainder of his life building what came to be known as the Fujian-Zhejiang-Jiangxi base area. Though at the outset he had no military training or experience, the forces under his control became, as indicated above in the letter of April 5, 1929, the Third Regiment of the Red Army, and were then reorganized in July 1930 as the Tenth Red Army. In Mao Zedong’s letter of January 5, 1930, to Lin Biao, Fang was cited, together with Zhu and Mao, He Long, and Li Wenlin, as one of four exemplars in setting up base areas.

6. The Chinese original contains no section number 8. Either this portion of the text is missing or section 7 (which contains several gaps indicated by ellipses) has been combined with section 8.

7. In Guangdong.
provinces, or for the Front Committee to make permanent arrangements there. We anticipate that the Central Committee will discuss this and give direction.

10. At the time when the First, Second, and Third Columns of the Fourth Red Army withdrew to southern Jiangxi after the defeat at Dayu, the number of men had fallen from three thousand six hundred to three thousand, a loss of six hundred (this includes over a hundred wounded or sick, who are now in Donggu recuperating, so the number of losses is actually two hundred). Fortunately [losses] were made up in the battle of Dabodi on the sixth against Liu's brigade, but because there were no soldiers to carry them, all the rifles were handed over to the Second Regiment of the Jiangxi Red Army. During the past three months, the number of men has increased by one thousand six hundred. The number of rifles has increased by five hundred (in the four campaigns of Tingzhou, Ningdu, Longyan, and Kanshi, a total of eight hundred rifles were gained, of which over three hundred relatively inferior ones were given to the local Red Guards), which together with what we originally had makes a total of two thousand. As regards ammunition, three months ago we had, on average, fewer than forty rounds for each rifle. This, too, has now doubled. Such is the real strength of our army. Propaganda for outside consumption gives numbers far in excess of these. For example, the Party organs in various places go so far as to say that Zhu and Mao have twenty thousand men, and ten thousand rifles. When present, there are three forces under the command of the Front Committee, or which have relations with it. One consists of the First, Second, and Third Columns of the Fourth Army, with two thousand rifles. This is the main force. Another is the troops in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, with one thousand four hundred rifles, and the third consists of the Second and Fourth Regiments of the Jiangxi Red Army, with one thousand rifles, making in all four thousand five hundred rifles. Broadly speaking, all three of these components are regular army units with fairly good fighting capacity. They have all been created during the most difficult high tide of the counterrevolution.8

11. The detailed circumstances of the Party in the Red Army have already been recounted in the copy of last year's November report sent on April 1 from Ruijin, which has been transmitted upward by the Fujian Provincial Committee and which you have undoubtedly perused already. Before November of last year, the whole army had an Army Party Bureau. After the November directive of the Central Committee, we organized this Front Committee. The Front Committee set up Army Committees to deal with the Party bureaus at various levels (such branches included regimental committees, battalion committees, and company committees). In addition, as regards local Red Guards, the Front Committee, in addition to leading the Red Army, also provides leadership for the local Party offices. In January of this year, when the Fourth Army set out from the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area to the Fujian-Jiangxi Border Area, marching or fighting battles every day, it found itself in a special situation. In these circumstances, and in order to deal with them, it was felt that the system of army committees was too cumbersome, so the decision was taken that the army committees should temporarily cease to function, power was concentrated in the Front Committee, and committees were organized under the direct control of the Front Committee. Now, because the time has grown longer, and the size of the Red Army has grown greatly as compared with what it was previously, and the Front Committee cannot keep track of everything, it has been decided to organize a supreme Party office for the army, with Comrade Liu Angong as secretary and head of the Political Department. Some defects which had manifested themselves within the army are now in the process of being progressively improved.

Now let us report that as of May, the important statistics for the First, Second, and Third Columns of the Fourth Red Army, and for those military units directly subordinated to the Party in the army, are as follows:

a) Number of Party members, 1,329.
b) Total number of personnel: officers, 330; combatant soldiers, 734; noncombatant soldiers, 188; support personnel, 68.
c) Statistics on comrades being developed: officers, 9; combatant soldiers, 99; noncombatant soldiers, 9; support personnel, 10.
d) Statistics regarding age: below the age of 18, 95; from 19 to 23, 544; from 31 to 40, 179; under 48, 48.
e) Statistics regarding social origins: workers, 311; peasants, 626; small merchants, 106; students, 192; others, 95.

These statements manifestly correspond rather to the viewpoint of Li Sisan than to Mao's position at this time. Perhaps they were mixed up with Mao's own words when portions of his report were quoted in communications of the Central Committee.

12. The text of this report that appears in the Bujian is made up of fragmentary extracts, so in general there would be no point in indicating the variants. It might be noted, however, that the abbreviated version contains at this point the following curious passage: "The most important thing at present is to get the popular masses themselves to rise up. Only then can the Red Army join forces with them and fight, so as to win final victory."
f) Statistics regarding punishment of comrades: exhortation, 29; warning, 96; placed under investigation, 10; dismissed, 31; total, 166.

g) Statistics regarding activists: members of branch committees, 65; group leaders, 123; group members, 200; total, over 500.

h) Statistics regarding comrades wounded and killed: officers, 6 wounded and 3 killed; combatant soldiers, 9 wounded and 5 killed.

Since submitting our previous letter, we sent another letter on April 1 from Ruijin, enclosing with it a letter from Comrade Peng and a copy of the detailed report of November of last year. We do not know whether these have all been received by the Central Committee or not. On reaching Yudu, we learned of the Central Committee’s letter to all the comrades, and Central Circulars Nos. 15 and 20. While we were in Xingguo, we produced several thousand lithographed copies of these and distributed them to the Red Army and to the Party bureaus in various localities. Comrade Liu Angong has not yet begun work, but we have heard a detailed oral report. On May 20 in Ruijin we received a letter from the Central Military Commission to the Front Committee, and on reaching Longyan, we also received Central Circular No. 34, a small pamphlet from the World Trade Union Movement, and the Central Committee’s “Declaration to the Masses Regarding the Wars between Chiang and Guangxi.”

Apart from this, we have also received a small pamphlet from the Fujian Provincial Committee “On the Political and Economic Situation in Western Fujian and the Party’s Policy Now and in the Future,” and periodicals such as Lienhuo (Fierce Fire). For a long time we have been in the remote mountains and inaccessible valleys, and our communications with the outside world have been cut off. It has truly been an unexpected pleasure to receive recently the various directives from the Central Committee and the Fujian Provincial Committee. Only the Jiangxi Provincial Committee has not had a single word for us during the past three years. The last two times we have come to southern Jiangxi, when Comrade Luo Shounan has brought documents to us from the Central Committee, he arrived empty-handed, because the documents had been retained by the Jiangxi Provincial Committee. This is an extremely bad situation, and we request the Central Committee to instruct the Jiangxi Provincial Committee that they absolutely must correct it.

13. What was reported in the newspapers about how we killed people and burned places down runs totally counter to the facts. For example, during our seventeen days in Tszhoun, we have raised only 20,000 [yuan] from the big merchants and 30,000 from the despotic gentry and landlords. Their propaganda said that we collected several hundred thousand. Only five people were killed, all of them most reactionary (from the camp of Guo Fengwu). The Changting Revolutionary Committee burned four, and the Red Army burned one, but their propaganda said that more than five hundred houses had been burned. Only three or four of Guo Fengwu’s diehard followers were killed, but their propaganda said that more than a thousand people were killed. In sum, this is all nonsense and unworthy of credence. It has already become an article of faith that in order to kill people and burn houses, there must be a mass basis. It can be said that there has been no burning or killing by the army on its own.

14. At present the most pressing need in the Red Army is for personnel. Because of the long period of struggles, our losses have been very great, and officers and political workers are severely lacking at all levels. Our only hope is that the Center will send us some. We now request that the Central Committee send, within a very short time, a hundred middle- and lower-ranking officers and a hundred lower-level political workers, as well as several doctors and several bomb-makers. We also need five higher-ranking officers and five high-level political workers within the next month. Comrades Zhu and Mao can leave the ranks at any time; we must simply ask the Central Committee to send replacements. The people who come can be escorted here by the Fujian Provincial Committee.

15. We request that the Fujian Provincial Committee take responsibility for setting up an organ for communication in Xiamen, with exclusive responsibility for transmitting [messages] between the Front Committee and the Central Committee. The expenses for setting up this organ are being sent in the form of

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17. As noted in the Introduction, this had been the peremptory demand of the Central Committee in its February 1929 letter to Mao and Zhu. In its initial reaction to this order, while rejecting the Central Committee’s ethnic idea of breaking up the Red Army into small units and scattering them in all the villages, Mao had indicated his willingness, and that of Zhu De, to leave the army if “capable replacements” could be sent. (See above, the translation of Mao’s letter of April 5, 1929.) Perhaps he only reiterated here his readiness to accept reassignment because by this time he had received the Central Committee’s letter of April 7, mentioned in the Introduction, indicating that this sacrifice would not be required of him “for the time being.” On the other hand, he returned to this theme two weeks later, stressing not only his “lack of wisdom,” but his physical weakness. (See below, the letter to Lin Biao of June 15, 1929.) Moreover, as indicated in the Introduction, Mao proceeded to spend five months recuperating in a hospital for an ill-defined illness, from late June to late November, though he continued to direct the work of the Western Fujian Special Committee during this interlude. Though the problem remains obscure, one point can be asserted with confidence: in the long term, Mao had no intention of giving up control of the army he had helped create.

18. Xiamen, commonly called Amoy in English-language sources, is located on the coast of Fujian not very far from the localities in which the Red Army was operating at this time.
10,000 yuan worth of opium, to be transmitted by the Longyan Xian Committee. As to how it is to be transported, kindly instruct the Longyan Committee.

16. Because the Red Army has been fighting for a long time, not only are the officers and the political workers extraordinarily starved for knowledge, but they also display mental fatigue. In order to alleviate the fatigue of the Red Army and prepare personnel for the future, the Fourth Red Army has designated twenty-two people to study in Russia, who will set off as soon as replacements are sent by the Central Committee. These twenty-two have already been selected by the Front Committee, as listed in a separate letter, to which we hope for a speedy reply!

We will report subsequently on the situation regarding propaganda!

Mao Zedong, Secretary of the Front Committee

Proclamation of the Fourth Red Army Headquarters and Political Department

(June 1929)

To be publicly announced. Our Red Army, under the guidance of the Communist Party, carries out the three great tasks of the democratic revolution, to overthrow imperialism, to overthrow the landlord class, and to overthrow the Guomindang government, under the guiding principle of helping the workers and peasants and all oppressed classes to attain liberation. Today the Guomindang is rent by disunity, chaotic warfare among Chiang Kai-shek, the Guangxi faction, Feng Yuxiang, and Yan Xishan is going on all over the country, and the reactionary government has been shaken to its foundations. Throughout the country, workers, peasants, soldiers, and the oppressed petty bourgeoisie are joining together to make revolution, in increasing numbers and increasing strength. In every province and every xian, every village and every town, there is a great deal of activity, of soldiers organizing Red armies, of workers organizing labor unions, of peasants organizing peasant associations. Our army has come to this place, knowing that the people are suffering bitterly, that the price of grain is very dear, that interest rates are very high, that rents are very heavy, and that there are a multitude of harsh fees. The local bullies and bad gentry control everything, using the clan temples and public associations to cheat and oppress all poor people of all families. These local bullies and bad gentry are no more than a few out of every hundred people. The great majority of the people should join together and overthrow these despotic gentry, for the benefit of the majority of the people. The most urgent things that must be done now are listed below.

1. In the case of large landlords who receive rents of 200 Dan or more, all their household grain and public association grain (except for that of the welfare granary) shall be confiscated without compensation and distributed among the poor peasants. The small landlords with rental incomes of less than 200 Dan must sell their household grain at a reduced price, to be fixed at one-half the original price per Dan. (Grain that merchants have imported from other places, however, shall not be included under this item.)

2. All debts that workers and peasants owe to landlords shall be canceled.
without repayment. (Debts incurred among merchants, or among workers and peasants, shall not be included under this item.)

3. Beginning this year, ownership of the fields shall revert to the peasants who till them, and rent shall no longer be paid to landlords.

4. Eliminate all harsh fees, miscellaneous taxes, lijin,¹ and land taxes.

5. The labor unions organized by workers, the peasant associations organized by peasants, and the revolutionary committees organized by workers and peasants together, shall seize the guns of the counterrevolutionaries and organize worker and peasant Red Guard units.

6. All local bullies and bad gentry who regularly oppress the workers and peasants, or obstruct the revolution, or who have not accounted for public funds that have passed through their hands, can be arrested by the peasant associations, and in accordance with the severity of their crimes, may be sentenced to punishments such as death, imprisonment, physical punishment, fines, parading in public, or writing a confession of their sins.

The above six items shall be implemented immediately upon being posted. If there are those who object, and who seek some personal gain for themselves and obstruct the public interests of the great majority of the people, they are counterrevolutionaries, and these evil persons should be rooted out without mercy. Heed this proclamation.

Commander of the Army: Zhu De
Party Representative: Mao Zedong
Head of the Political Department: Chen Yi
June [X], 1929

Letter to Lin Biao¹
(June 14, 1929)

Comrade Lin Biao:

1. I am greatly moved by your letter,² and my courage is strengthened because you are bravely moving forward. I will work with you and all the comrades who are for the unity of the Party and the advancement of the revolution against all harmful views, habits, and systems. The question under dispute at present is not a question which concerns one individual or a particular moment. It is a question concerning the entire Party of the Fourth Army and the struggle which has been going on for a year. Previously, it was, however, concealed for various reasons, and it has been exposed only recently. In fact, the past concealment was wrong, and the current exposure is the only proper course. When controversy arises over questions within the Party, this represents progress for

We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong wenyi, Vol. 1, pp. 64-75, where the source is given as a mimeographed copy in the Party archives. It does not appear to have been published previously.

1. Lin Biao (1907–1971), original name Yuyong, was a native of Hubei. After graduating from middle school in 1925, he joined the Communist Youth League in Shanghai and thus gained admission to the fourth class at the Whampoa Military Academy. After participating in the Northern Expedition under the command of Ye Ting, he joined, in August 1927, in the Nanchang Uprising, of which Ye was one of the principal leaders. In the course of the retreat from Nanchang, he followed Zhu De and Chen Yi to the Jiangxi-Guangdong-Hunan Border Area at the end of 1927 and went up the Jinggangshan with Zhu De in the spring of 1928. Earlier in 1929, he had played a role in the battles at Dadu and Shanghang, described by Mao in texts translated above. At this time, he was commander of the First Column of the Fourth Red Army.

2. Serious tensions had developed at this time between Mao Zedong and Zhu De, and according to accounts recently published in China, Lin Biao did his utmost to exacerbate the conflict. The letter to which Mao is responding here had been sent by Lin Biao only a few hours before the Baisha meeting of June 8, 1929. The text of Lin’s letter is not available to us, but its main theme was the overweening ambitions of “certain comrades,” meaning Zhu De. See Jin Chongji, Zhu De zhuanshu (Biography of Zhu De) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), pp. 175–80 (hereafter Jin, Zhu De). At the Baisha meeting, the Army Committee was abolished, leaving the Front Committee in sole control, and this decision was confirmed two weeks later at the Seventh Congress of Party Representatives from the Fourth Red Army. On the latter occasion, however, Mao lost his leading position as secretary of the Front Committee. For more details regarding these events, see the Introduction to this volume.

1. The transportation tax on goods moved within the country, commonly transcribed likin in English-language sources of the period.

177
the Party, not retrogression. It is retrogression only if one compromises, muddles through, and erases the line between the two sides, thereby reducing important matters to insignificance in a vulgar way. I think this time it will not lead to fearful and evil consequences. Only a few days after the Baisha conference, the question has already been hotly debated among the masses in the Party. I think our comrades will definitely demand a thorough clarification of this question and will definitely refuse to compromise, sit on the fence, and be blind to the distinction between right and wrong. They will certainly be able to choose and support a view that promotes the unity of the Party and the advancement of the revolution. There is absolutely no doubt that through this the work of transforming the Fourth Army can be completed, and as a result the Party of the Fourth Army can make extremely great progress.

2. One cannot understand the origins of the current debate without knowing the history of the struggle in the Fourth Army. Without an understanding of this origin, one cannot understand the nature of the entire problem in the struggle between two different systems of thought since the initiation of the Fourth Army. Among the key points of this problem are the following: (1) individual leadership and Party leadership; (2) the military point of view and the political point of view; (3) cliquism and anti-cliquism; (4) the roving rebel mentality and the anti-roving-rebel mentality; (5) the question of political power in the middle section of the Luoxiao Mountain Range; (6) the question of local armed forces; (7) urban policy and the question of Red Army discipline; (8) the assessment of the current situation; (9) the defeat in southern Hunan; (10) the question of a scientific approach, and of regularization; (11) the question of military skills in the Fourth Army; (12) formalism and utilitarianism; (13) the separation of powers and the concentration of power; (14) other decadent ideas. Let me speak about them below.

3. The main question for the Party of the Fourth Army is that of individual leadership and Party leadership. To discuss this question, we must first of all remember that the greater part of the Fourth Army was born out of the old army. Moreover, it was brought forth in an environment of defeat. If we remember these two points, we can then understand why all the ideas, habits, and systems are so difficult to change and why Party leadership and individual leadership are always in opposition, and have long been in a state of conflict. Since the Red Army emerged from the transformation of the old army, it brought with it a conflict between supporters of all the old ideas, old habits, and old systems and some who fight against these ideas, habits, and systems. This is the first reason why up to now it has not yet been possible to establish absolute Party leadership in the Fourth Army. Moreover, the greater part of the Fourth Army emerged in an environment of defeat (this was in 1927), and the Party organization that put it together was the one from before the defeat, which was extremely weak in the first place and lost the leadership completely in the course of the defeat. It can be said that survival at the time depended nine times out of ten solely on the leadership of the individual. It is this which created the enormous power of the individual leader. That is the second reason why it has not been possible to establish absolute Party leadership in the Fourth Army. Having understood these two causes, if we then look again at the history of the Fourth Army since it was organized, we can understand the central factor in the ebb and flow of the struggle between the individual and the Party. Since the Fourth Army was established, the Party has established a basis everywhere at the company level and above. Now that the policy of the higher leading bodies (the Special Committee of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area and the Fourth Army’s Army Committee and Front Committee) is correct, and with the establishment of local Party branches in the various xian of the border region, and the development of the mass struggle, the role of the individual has been gradually reduced, and the leadership of the Party has been strengthened. In general, this can be divided into three periods. The first period is from the creation of the Fourth Army to September of last year, when we returned to the border area. It includes the victories in a series of battles in the border area and the defeat in southern Hunan. In this period, the Party was unable to wield the absolute power of command. Cliquism existed widely and was on the rise. The Party dared not attempt to allocate and transfer the guns. There were clashes between the principle of giving attention to all aspects of the rear area of the Red Army and the selfish departmentalism of a minority of Red Army comrades. It was not possible to establish a system of military supplies or regulations regarding the organization of the army. Individual control over politics and weapons was common. From the company to the corps, the Party as it existed at that time was in reality in a subordinate position, and regarding certain issues, it was absolutely obliged to accept the orders of an individual.

The second period was from last September, when we returned to the border area, to March 14 [1929], when we took Tingzhou. During this period, the Party was first able to criticize cliquism theoretically (even though it still could not really do it). A system of military supplies was set up. The system of seventy-five long-barreled guns per company was set up. But it did not yet extend to short-barreled guns. It was not so difficult as in the first period to transfer guns to the localities. In this period, a minority of comrades tried hard to bow their heads, and the Party was really in a commanding position. This was so in general

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3. The conference of June 8, 1929, mentioned above, which was held in Baisha, Shanghang xian, Fujian.
5. Here eight or nine characters are missing from the mimeographed text held in the Party Archives in Beijing.
6. The Chinese text here reads jianshe (establish), but the editors in Beijing regard this as an obvious typographical error for piping (criticize).
7. After this clause, seven or eight characters are missing from the original.
8. Here approximately thirty characters are missing.
from the Party branch to the Front Committee. There were several obvious characteristics during this period: First, in the situation created by the Hunan defeat and the flight of most of the remaining forces, the individual did not manifest much effective leadership. At the same time, unlike the first period, when there was a series of military victories, now there was the possibility of collapse if we did not rely on Party leadership. This is the first reason why Party leadership gained ground. Second, during this period, as compared to the first period, there was indeed some progress in Party organization, as well as in the political consciousness and experience of struggle among the comrades. It was more difficult for the incorrect words and actions of a minority of comrades to gain support from the rank and file. As a result, these people had to restrain themselves somewhat. This is the second reason why Party leadership gained ground. Third, in this period, we encountered two fresh friendly forces: the Fifth Army and the Second and Fourth Regiments. The Fifth Army could not influence the Fourth Army much, but it did provide some stimulus to the Fourth Army in smashing cliquism. Particularly at the Bolu Meeting, in discussing the merging of the Fourth and Fifth Armies, Comrade Peng Dehuai’s indignant remarks dealt quite a blow to the minority of comrades. As for the Second and Fourth Regiments, the comrades of the Fourth Army were truly ashamed to see them. Their political instructors exercised authority over the officers. In the first five registers, the names of the officers were placed after those of the political instructors. They cannot allocate one bullet without asking the Party. They have absolute Party leadership. This can also be identified as a factor which helped to strengthen the leadership of the Party in the Fourth Army.

The third period is from Tingzhou to the present. During this period, the Party and the Red Army have truly progressed in all areas as compared to the previous situation. Because of the establishment of the First, Second, and Third Columns, cliquism really began to weaken. The column committees were somewhat more effective than the Front Committee. Party branches at all levels could discuss various issues without misgivings. The number of short-barreled guns could also be regulated. The establishment of the Political Department also limited the authority of the Headquarters. These are the organizational aspects. As far as the political line is concerned, an effort could be made in their work to carry out the political tasks delineated at the Sixth Congress. Urban policy was somewhat better applied. Progress was made in propaganda. They learned the tactics of large-scale guerrilla warfare. As a result of the development of the situation, the organization of the Red Army was also expanded. But because the will of the Party was very greatly extended, the will of the individual underwent unprecedented suffering. Then there were several military victories in a row, and a formalistic theory arrived from afar. These three factors combined to bring about the outbreak of the current dispute. The focal point of the controversy is whether we still need the Party branch in the present-day army. Because a minority of comrades firmly insisted on having an army committee, they had to attack the Front Committee. This in turn impinged on the question of the Party organization itself. The slogans of their attack were “the Party runs too many things” and “power is too much concentrated in the Front Committee.” When, in the course of the controversies, the discussion touched on the work of the Party branch, some said that the branch should be concerned only with the education of the comrades. This also arose from the question of the sphere of the Party’s authority. Because they advocated that the sphere of the Party’s interference should be restricted, they had to demand limits on the work of the Party branch as well. With the expansion of the will of the Party, and the restriction of the will of the individual, all questions had to be the subject of resolutions by Party meetings at various levels. Only then could the Party members as individuals carry out their work according to those resolutions. Thus the individual did not enjoy the freedom of the hero. As a result, their demand for considerable freedom found expression in such slogans as “Do we have to ask the Party even about one gun?” and “Should the Party take care of the groom when he runs out of things to eat?” deriding the work of the Party bureaus regarding minute details. Such are the views they expressed at the Hulei meeting of the Front Committee. Although the questions under discussion were divided into three (the scope of the Party’s power, the work of the Party branch, and the lack of freedom for the individual), the spirit was the same throughout. This is the concrete manifestation of the struggle for supremacy between Party leadership and the leadership of the individual. Since the recent controversies emerged, some comrades have felt that the Party in the Fourth Army has arrived at a crisis. If the individualist leadership exercised by a minority of comrades is victorious, the result, as you said in your letter, will inevitably be that the close unity of the Party will be disrupted and the future prospects of the revolution will be harmed. But I am confident it will not

9. The Fifth Army, under the command of Peng Dehuai, reached the Jinggangshan base and joined forces with the Fourth Army in December 1928.
10. The Second and Fourth Independent Regiments of the Jiangxi Red Army joined forces with the Fourth Army in Ji’an in February 1929.
11. The reference is to a meeting convened in Bolu, Ninggang xian, January 4–7, 1929, with the participation of the Front Committee of the Fourth Red Army, the Border Area Special Committee, the Army Committees of the Fourth and Fifth Armies, and the various xian committees of the border area.
12. Here the Chinese has ce, meaning “roll” or “register.” The Beijing editors suggest that the reference is to huamingce, “muster roll.”
13. I.e., at the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, held in Moscow in June 1928, of which word had reached Mao and his comrades in January 1929.
14. This comment cannot fail to call to mind Mao’s advocacy in earlier years, inspired by Nietzsche, of the idea of the hero. See especially, in Volume I of this edition, his comments on Paulsen, pp. 263–64.
15. This was a meeting of the Front Committee of the Fourth Army held at the end of May 1929 in Hulei, Yongding xian, Fujian.
come to this, because the Party of the Fourth Army at present has made obvious progress since the first and second periods. The foundations of the various columns can no longer be shaken. Decisions based on the selfish desires of the individual will be rejected by the masses. We need only look at the fact that at a meeting attended by forty-one people, the Army Committee which a minority of comrades obstinately insisted on establishing was abolished by a vote of thirty-six to five in order to see that the majority will definitely not support their demand, which is "harmful to solidarity and harmful to the revolution." The struggle between individualism and anti-individualism, that is to say, between individual leadership and Party leadership, is the main thread that runs through the history of the Fourth Army. Generally speaking, on the following questions (each one of them), there are none on which there are not diametrically opposed viewpoints. Let us simply try to list them.

4. Some comrades in the Fourth Army have always been partial to the military viewpoint and are at odds with those who adopt a political viewpoint, that is to say, a mass viewpoint. This is a serious problem concerning the political line. Thanks to long-term experience of struggle, and the influence of the worker-peasant masses, the brains entertaining this simplistic viewpoint have been gradually washed clean to some extent. The simplistic mentality of "fighting big battles" and "taking dozens of zhoud and xian" has become less common, but has not been completely eliminated. It raises its head at every opportunity. Particularly at times of military defeat, [such people hold that] everything else can be eliminated, and it is all right as long as you keep the guns. At meetings, what these comrades hate most is the discussion of questions of propaganda and organization. In guerrilla work, they try to develop military influence alone, not political influence. The cliquism left over from the warlord armies is one of the problems that does the most harm to the Red Army. And yet a minority of comrades are not only unwilling to strive vigorously to eliminate cliquism but even have a tendency to encourage it. If we do not eliminate cliquism, it will be impossible to have completely collective leadership by the Party as they do in the Second and Fourth Regiments, and then the Red Army will be nothing but a fine-sounding name!

The mentality of roving rebel bands has always been very powerful in the Red Army. Its source is to be found in the component of vagrants in the Fourth Army. The Party has already waged many struggles against this mentality, but a remnant of it still exists today, and even now those who formerly represented this mentality cannot be said to have abandoned it. The most striking political manifestation of this mentality of roving rebel bands lies in the dissident views on the problem of political power in the middle section of the Luoxiao Mountain Range. We must not forget that the unanimity within the Party in the Fourth Army regarding the question of the independent régime in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area is merely superficial. In their hearts, some of the comrades are constantly prepared to abandon the struggle in the border area. Whenever there is a crisis, these comrades immediately. . . . 17 All those who have participated in the struggle in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area understand this. The question of establishing a military force in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area has always ended in a struggle because it involves transferring guns from the Red Army. This is a manifestation of opposing views coming out of two different political lines—that of the military viewpoint and that of the mass viewpoint. The component of vagrants in the Red Army produced the mentality of roving rebel bands. At the same time, it has affected urban policy and the discipline of the Red Army. It is also evident that responsible comrades have put forward different views. According to one view, it does not matter much if military discipline is disrupted to some extent, or a city is smashed up a bit. The other view is just the opposite. As regards the matter of disrupting military discipline, some comrades feel that it would be better not to have this recent victory than to have our discipline broken. Other comrades do not feel so concerned and merely dismiss the matter with a sigh of regret. This is only the most recent example. In the past, there were many such instances. The question of military discipline is a big political question for the Red Army, but because one group of people advocates rigor while another group advocates laxity, the result is rather negative. As regards the psychology of the masses, the effect is rather harmful, because the majority behave [badly], and only a minority behave well.

On the assessment of the current situation, too, there have always been divergent views. As a result, views regarding the actions of the Red Army also differ. This was particularly striking when we were in the border area. Most comrades do recognize that it was a mistake for the greater part of the forces of the Fourth Army to go to southern Hunan in July of last year. The meeting of delegates at Shatian also recognized this. Who could have predicted that a bizarre view would arise recently among a minority of comrades saying that it was right to go to southern Hunan and that it was, in contrast, wrong to stay in the border area? This is another example of diametrically opposing views.

A Communist really must be a bit more scientific in his thinking and actions. Yet some comrades place themselves in direct opposition to the scientific attitude, so that we can find many contradictions in a single speech or a single action. When they speak, they are wholly unconcerned about the effect of what they say. They just shoot off their mouths at random, paying no attention to right and wrong. "Say whatever you like. They only understand so much." What an unscientific attitude! An army that wants to progress even a little must regulate itself. We can only regard a "messy rotten" situation such as that which formerly prevailed in the Red Army as a phenomenon characteristic of primitive ranks of vagrants. We must struggle against it with the utmost force. Yet it is clear that some of the comrades, intentionally or unintentionally, support such a phenomenon, or at least they do not have the resolve to fight against it. This has hitherto

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16. I.e., the Baisha meeting referred to in note 2 above.

17. Here three or four characters are missing in the original.
made it impossible for the Red Army to establish a pattern. It lags far behind the bourgeois armies, and that is truly a sad phenomenon.

"Rotten cowhide is not rotten cowhide. Spoiled bean curd is not spoiled bean curd." These are the angry words Comrade Zhu Yunqing18 used to describe the grossly deficient military skills of the Fourth Army. Of all those who have sojourned in the Fourth Army, there is probably no one who does not recognize that the military skills in the Fourth Army are highly deficient. But some comrades do not want to pay attention to their own main task of officer training, but engage in some political agitation every day, uttering strange words like "What is there to do if we cannot attack the despotic gentry?" If this situation does not change, there is no way the problem of poor military skills in the Fourth Army can be solved.

5. In recent days, the most obvious manifestation of the two opposing views has been the controversy regarding the Army Committee. A minority of comrades insist on having an Army Committee. What they really want is to have a leading Party organ in their hands, in order to provide scope for the manifestation of their long-suppressed ambitions (which represent yet another guiding line, different from that of the past). Yet they give grave and ceremonious reasons, which unfortunately are merely formalistic. They say "if the name is the Fourth Army, there should be an Army Committee." "To complete the organizational system requires an Army Committee." Is this not an utterly formalistic mode of expression? At present, we have only a small army of somewhat more than four thousand. We do not have many "armies," as the Central Committee has many provinces under it. Moreover, the guerrilla period, in which the army is often on the march, is quite unlike the period of the border area, when the army was often garrisoned, and demands swift and centralized army command. A minority of comrades do not consider these practical reasons at all. They are just obstinately resolved to insert formally an Army Committee between the Front Committee above and the Column Committee below. Everyone knows we don't really need it, when the people are the same and the work is the same. Yet a minority of comrades have exerted their utmost efforts,19 insisting that it must absolutely be set up. What actually is the reason for all this? If you want to search out a reason, I can only say that this is the synthesis of all the wrong lines practiced by a minority of comrades in the past and the final struggle between two guiding lines. We can easily understand the true meaning of this debate if we have a clear understanding of the history of the Fourth Army.

To set up a new leading organization, the Army Committee, they had to dig out the old reasons to attack the old leading organizations, the Front Committee and the Party branches. The most specific arguments put forward in their attack are: (1) that the Party has replaced the mass organizations; (2) that there is a patriarchal system within the Party in the Fourth Army. But these attacks, too, lapse completely into formalism. From the very beginning of the Party in the Fourth Army, it has been strictly forbidden to replace the mass organizations with those of the Party. As regards the worker and peasant organizations under the leadership of the Front Committee, there has never been an instance in which a Party branch has replaced a workers' or peasants' association. As for the soldiers' organizations, there has never been an instance in which the Party branch of any company replaced the soldiers' committee of that company. Everyone in the Fourth Army who has eyes has seen all this. As for a Party bureau or organ replacing a mass organ or an administrative organ, for example, the replacement of the Column Soldiers' Committee, the Column Headquarters, or the Column Political Department by the Column Committee, or the replacement of the Army Soldiers' Committee, the Army Headquarters, or the Army Political Department by the Front Committee, these things have never happened, either. But here also the formalism of a minority of comrades has manifested itself. They say that even though the organs of the Party bureau have not replaced the mass organs or the administrative organs, the Column Headquarters, in fact, rarely report to the Army Headquarters and that the Army Headquarters is now treated lightly. This minority of comrades does not understand that this represents the difference between formalism and utilitarianism. The leadership of the Column Committee and the Front Committee having been strengthened, all questions (whichever ones they want to raise) can be raised at the meetings, discussed, and resolved. Afterward, the responsible comrades in the administrative organs will be notified and will carry out these resolutions. Otherwise, it can be called acting on one's own (as in the arbitrary allocation of financial resources, guns and ammunition, and so on). This sort of thing is an example of the strengthening of Party leadership. We have to admit that this represents progress. At every meeting, the responsible comrades from the administrative organs are always present and voice their opinions. Moreover, many questions can be discussed only if they are raised by these responsible comrades (for example, battle plans, training plans for officers and soldiers, etc.). Everybody has participated in the discussion and voting on these questions, and afterward the decisions are carried out. As a result, it is felt that the administrative organs have become somewhat simpler and freer. In reality, what is so bad about that? The army commander is not so busy, but the Party representative (who is quite distinct from the secretary of the Party committee) has even less to do, because the Party representatives at the lower levels do not send reports to him. The Column Headquarters sends few reports to the Army Headquarters, but the Political Department of the column sends even fewer reports to the Political Department of the army. Not taking into account the comparison between the recent situation and the arbitrary allocation which prevailed earlier in the administration; not considering whether the present system leads to more results in the work and is more convenient for struggle than in the earlier period of frenzied
activity—the first stage of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area when there were many more reports; judging not on the basis of practical needs, but on the basis of mere outward forms—what kind of Communist attitude is this? Let me just ask, if it does not work in practice, no matter how much better it looks in terms of form, what use is it? As for the accusations against the Action Committee of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, they do not consider how many results the system of the Action Committee achieved in the border area, they merely opine in formal terms that the Party organization replaced the administrative organ and that this was a bad thing. This is another formalistic error. If this formalism continues to develop, in all matters the results will not be considered, but only the form, and this will be unspeakably dangerous. Everyone who has eyes to see understands that the Action Committee system achieved very great results in the struggle in the border area. Moreover, the Action Committee functions, on the one hand, as an internal Party bureau and, on the other hand, as an open administrative office. Why would this in any way hamper the system of administrative organs?

As for the attack on the patriarchal system within the Party in the Fourth Army, this is also a formalistic observation. Here we must first ask what a patriarchal system is. Only then can we know if there is such a system in the Fourth Army. Otherwise, casual and thoughtless comments will assuredly not correspond to the facts. The definition of a patriarchal system is that there are only orders from individuals, no collective discussion; there are only appointments from above, not elections by the masses. If everyone agrees with this definition, let us see if there exists within the Party of the Fourth Army what this definition describes. We will then know whether there is a patriarchal system or not. Collective discussion in the Party of the Fourth Army, from the Party branch to the Front Committee, has always existed. At Party meetings at every level, particularly the two levels of the Front Committee and the Column Committee, whether it is a general meeting or a meeting of the members of the standing committee, on virtually every occasion there are present, besides the committee members who are required to be there, comrades in responsible positions who are not committee members. If some comrades of the minority are forgetful, they can check the minutes of the meetings of all the columns (the Third Column has a complete set of minutes since May of last year; not a single one is missing) and of the Front Committee (the minutes are available starting with this year, and none are missing). On the important questions, such as the discussion about leaving the Jinggangshan, the separation of our forces in Donggu, or the current debate and the separation of forces, we have always sought the opinions of the masses. There are simply no grounds for saying that within the Party of the Fourth Army there are only orders by individuals and no collective discussion. As for the process by which the various leading organs were created, from the detachment to committees to the column committees and the Front Committee, they were appointed by the Central Committee. But this is no proof that a patriarchal system exists within the Party of the Fourth Army. In fact, one cannot find a patriarchal system within the Party of the Fourth Army. Why do the comrades of the minority use this excuse? What is the objective origin of this kind of talk? It is true that in the Fourth Army there is the system which allows the Party secretary to serve concurrently as the Red Army Party representative. Some comrades do not distinguish clearly that the Party representative and the secretary are two different things as regards their functions. Because the spheres of competence of the Party representatives and of the military commanders have never been fully clarified, the problem of a struggle for power frequently arises. This has led some middle-headed people to regard the Party representative working in a certain place as the Party secretary working there. This is why comrades in several companies of the Third Column called the Party secretary of their company "boss." This mistake can be eliminated only by separating the Party representative from the Party secretary. This can be done by searching for people from within, on the one hand, and by looking at the same time for more people from the outside, on the other. (The concurrent posts in the past were the result of the fact that we had very few qualified people. Everyone knows this.) The source of formalism lies in idealism. Idealism comes from individualism that originates in the categories of the vagrants, the peasantry, and the petty bourgeoisie. This is based on the same line as cliquism, the roving rebel mentality, the purely military viewpoint, and so on. All these are one and the same thing.

Another aspect of the development of this kind of thinking will assuredly lead to the doctrine of the separation of powers—another way of thinking which represents the vagrants, the peasantry, and the petty bourgeoisie. This is completely incompatible with the fighting organizations of the proletariat, whether it be the class organization—trade unions—or the vanguard organization of the class—the Communist Party—or its military organization—the Red Army. This is why the form of separation of powers should not be allowed to exist in the Army Committee and the Front Committee.

Vaingloriousness, boasting, the ideology of the hero, and other decadent ways of thinking all have their origin in individualism.

6. We are historical materialists. To get at the truth regarding any matter whatsoever, we have to investigate it both from the perspective of history and from the perspective of the circumstances. I have now raised the various aspects of the historical questions since the Fourth Army came into being to prove that the current question (the question of the Army Committee, but it is a question of principle) is merely a historical theme, the last struggle of a wrong ideological line in history. We should never forget the origins and composition of the Red Army. According to the statistics for May, of the 1,324 Party members in the Army, there are 311 workers, 626 peasants, 100 small businessmen, 192 students, and 95 others. The ratio of workers to nonworkers is 23 percent to 77

20. A detachment at this time was a guerrilla unit roughly comparable in size to a battalion in the Chinese regular army.
account prevent the goal of victory from being attained. So the worry expressed in the last section of your letter is excessive. Naturally, I can only express my views regarding my work. The decision will be made by the Party Bureau. Every day that I remain here will be a day on which I will fight with all of you in the ideological struggle!
C. salutations

Mao Zedong
June 14, at Xinquan

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21. Here seven or eight characters are missing from the original.

22. As indicated in the Introduction to this volume, Mao Zedong had received orders from the Central Committee in February 1929 to leave the army and come to Shanghai. In his letter of April 5 and in his report of June 1, translated above, Mao had agreed in principle to comply, though he probably had no intention of actually doing so. Here Mao goes a step farther than in his two previous communications, not only accepting the necessity of a transfer but suggesting that he himself had actually requested it. This may have been merely an attempt to save face, but he did suffer from illness at this time, as suggested in point 3 below, and went to a hospital to rest shortly after writing the present letter.

23. Mao here uses the Roman letter C to stand for "Communist" in the Chinese text.
The War between Chiang Kai-shek and the Guangxi Warlords
(To the Tune of "Clear Calm Music")¹
(Autumn 1929)

A sudden shift in wind and clouds,
And the warlords have renewed their conflicts.
Scattering only enmity upon the world,
Yet another yellow millet dream is dreamt.²

Red flags have leapt across the Ting River,³
Straight down to Longyan and Shanghang.⁴
A piece of the golden cup⁵ has been restored,
Now we are truly busy sharing out the land.

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Double Ninth Festival
(To the Tune of "Picking Mulberries")¹
(October 1929)

Men grow old; heaven ages not,
Year after year comes the Double Ninth.
Today is Double Ninth again,
On the battlefield, yellow flowers⁶ most fragrant.

Once a year comes the relentless autumn wind,
Resembling not the glories of spring.
And yet more glorious than spring,
River and sky a vast expanse, ten thousand leagues of frost.⁷

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This poem was first published in Renmin wenxue, May 1962. We have translated it from Shici dulian, pp. 26-28.
1. When this poem was first published (along with five others) in People's Literature, each ci had a "tune title" but no subject title (for the convention of "tune title" [cicipai], see note 1 to Mao's 1927 poem, "Autumn Harvest Uprising"). Under the general heading for all six poems, there appeared an "author's note," as follows: "These six cì were composed by humming them out on horseback between 1929 and 1931, and then were all forgotten. The comrades of the editorial board of People's Literature have collected them and sent them to me, wishing to publish them. I have made minor changes in them. April 27, 1962."
2. "Yellow millet dream," meaning something like "a pipe dream," comes from a popular story of the Tang dynasty in which a poor scholar who complains to a Daoist of his misfortunes is given a pillow upon which to lay his head and sleep. When he wakes from a dream of great fortune, the millet put on to cook before his nap is not yet done.
3. Tingzhou, which the Red Army had captured on March 14, 1929 (see, in particular, the report of March 20, 1929), is located on the Ting River in Fujian.
4. Longyan and Shanghang are xian in Fujian Province taken by the Red Fourth Army in May and June, 1929.
5. The image of a golden cup is used to signify the territorial integrity of the nation. (This metaphor is attributed to the first emperor of the Liang dynasty, during the period of the Northern and Southern dynasties.) Mao's idea is that, by setting up a soviet régime, he and his comrades had reclaimed at least a small fragment of the country for the real China.

This is another of the six poems first published in Renmin wenxue, May 1962. We have translated it from Shici dulian, pp. 29-30.
1. The Double Ninth Festival occurs on the ninth day of the ninth month of the lunar calendar (in 1929 it fell on October 11) and is traditionally celebrated with feasting, mountain climbing, and chrysanthemum viewing.
2. I.e., chrysanthemums.
3. An allusion may be intended here to the chrysanthemum, for which one name is shuangxia jie, "hero under the frost."
Letter to Li Lisan

(November 28, 1929)

Brother Lisan:

I haven’t been in touch with you for quite a while. Only with Comrade Chen Yi’s arrival did I learn of your situation. I have been very ill for three months, and although I am better now, my spirits are not yet fully recovered. I often think of Kaihui, Anying, and the others, and would like to communicate with them, but I don’t know their mailing address. I’ve heard that Zemin is in Shanghai. Please get in touch with him for me and ask him to tell me Kaihui’s mailing address and to write to me.

I am terribly starved for knowledge. Please send me reading materials often, and if you can spare the time, I would be so grateful if you’d write me a letter with your excellent guidance.

5. The reference is to Chen Duxiu (1879–1942), zi Zhongfu, the former chairman of the Party. Regarding his background and earlier activities, see the various texts about him, or signed jointly by him and Mao, in Volumes I and II of this edition. After his disgrace at the “August 7 Emergency Conference” of 1927, he had remained a member of the Party and continued to put forward views at odds with those of the leftist faction which had assumed control of the organization. In the summer of 1929, when conflict erupted between China and Russia following Zhang Xueliang’s seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway, Chen Duxiu sent a letter to the Central Committee arguing that, by aligning itself completely with Moscow, the Party was placing the interests of the Soviet Union above those of China. It is presumably Chen’s conduct in this matter which is here stigmatized as “truly outrageous,” though Mao may also be referring to the sympathy for Trotsky and Trotskyism which Chen Duxiu had openly expressed. Li seized upon the pretext of Chen’s line regarding the railway to announce his expulsion from the Party on November 15, 1929. If “the Central Committee documents denouncing” Chen Duxiu, presumably brought by Chen Yi, included this circular, communication between Shanghai and the Soviet area had in this case been remarkably rapid. Mao’s later comments regarding the affair of the Chinese Eastern Railway (see below, the note to the “Letter . . . to the Soldiers of the Guomindang Army,” January 1930) suggest that he did actually agree with the Central Committee on this issue, but in any case it would have been politic for him to say so, in the light of his own increasingly tense relations with Li Lisan.

6. On the only available text, the return address is shown thus, with the box number missing.
To the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party

(October 28, 1929)

To the Central Committee:

I have recovered from my illness. On October 26, the observer from the Fujian Provincial Committee, Comrade Xie, and I arrived in Tingzhou from Jiaoyang and met with the Fourth Army, to work on the Front Committee, in compliance with the directive of the Central Committee. The Fourth Army attack on Mei xian was not successful, and although the losses suffered were not small, morale is still high, and for the immediate future we are working within the borders of Fujian. Western Fujian already has 800,000 Red masses, who are able to provide cover for the Red Army. The situation created by the joint offensive of Liu (Heting), Jin (Handing), and Zhang (Zhen) is not a serious matter. It has now been decided that the only way out is, after a period of getting things in order, to mount an attack on Liu and Zhang to break up their joint offensive. We are now in the process of preparing one month’s provisions.

There is absolutely no problem in uniting the Fourth Army Party under the correct guidance of the Central Committee. Comrade Chen Yi has already arrived, and the intent of the Central Committee has already been fully achieved. The only problem is that the basic theoretical knowledge of Party members is too low, and we must quickly carry out education. In addition to requesting that the Central Committee send us Party publications (such as The Bolshevik, Red Flag, The Essentials of Leninism, and History of the Russian Revolutionary Movement, none of which we have received yet), we also request a sum of money for purchasing books (about 100 yuan, individual books to be sent separately). The address for requesting or sending payments is “...” We are absolutely starving for books and newspapers, so please do not put this aside as an unimportant matter. I shall make a detailed report on behalf of the Front Committee.

Mao Zedong
November 28, 1929
Tingzhou

Draft Resolution of the Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in the Fourth Red Army

(December 1929, at the Gutian Congress in Western Fujian Province)

I. The Problem of Correcting Erroneous and Nonproletarian Ideological Tendencies in the Party

Various kinds of nonproletarian consciousness are very strongly present in the Party of the Fourth Army and are an extremely great hindrance to the application of the Party’s correct line. Unless they are thoroughly corrected, the Fourth Army definitely cannot shoulder the tasks imposed on it by China’s broad revolutionary struggle. The overall source of the various incorrect tendencies in the Party of the Fourth Army lies, of course, in the fact that its basic units are composed largely of peasants and other elements of petty bourgeois origin; yet the failure of the Party’s guiding organs to wage a concerted and determined struggle against these incorrect tendencies and to educate the members in the Party’s correct line is also a major cause of their existence and growth. Basing itself on the spirit of the September letter of the Central Committee, this congress points out the sources, manifestations and methods of correction of various erroneous tendencies toward nonproletarian consciousness in the Party of the Fourth Army and calls upon comrades to eliminate them thoroughly.

Our source for this resolution is Mao Zedong ji, Vol. 2, pp. 77-125, where it has been taken from the 1944 edition of Mao Zedong xuanji, Vol. 3.

1. Only this first of the nine sections making up the original Gutian Resolution is included in the Selected Works, under a modified version of the original section title: “On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party.”

2. Here, and in similar contexts throughout this text, yishi (“consciousness” or “mentality”) has been replaced in the Selected Works by sixiang (“ideas” or “thought”).

3. Broad → Great
4. Tendencies → Ideas
5. Tendencies → Ideas
A. The Purely Military Viewpoint

1. The sources of the purely military viewpoint:

   a. Low political level. In consequence, failure to realize the importance of political leadership and the fundamental differences between the tasks of the Red Army and those of the White army.

   b. Remnants of the ideas of mercenary armies. Especially since many enemy soldiers were captured in previous battles and these elements have joined the Red Army, they have brought with them strongly marked mercenary ideas, thus providing a foundation for the purely military viewpoint at the lower levels.

   c. The above two reasons have given rise to a third reason, namely placing excessive faith in military strength, and not trusting in the power of the masses.

   d. The fact that the Party has neither actively paid attention to military work nor discussed it is another cause for the formation of the purely military viewpoint in some comrades.

2. The purely military viewpoint is very highly developed among some of the comrades in the Red Army. It manifests itself as follows:

   a. These comrades regard military affairs and politics as opposed to each other and refuse to recognize that military affairs are only one means of accomplishing political tasks. Some even say, "When military work is well done, political work will naturally be well done; when military work is not well done, political work cannot be well done either." This is to go a step further and recognize military work as leading politics.

   b. They think that the task of the Red Army, like that of the White army, is merely to fight. They do not understand that, in terms of the significance of its task, the Red Army is an armed group for carrying out the political tasks of the class. As regards its work, especially its work in China now, it should certainly not confine itself to fighting; besides the one type of work which consists of fighting, it should shoulder such important tasks as doing propaganda among the masses, organizing the masses, arming the masses, and establishing revolutionary political power. The Red Army fights not just for the sake of fighting but entirely for the purpose of conducting propaganda among the masses, organizing the masses, arming the masses, and establishing revolutionary political power.

3. The methods of correction are as follows:

   a. Raise the political level in the Party by means of education, destroy the theoretical roots of the military viewpoint, be clear on the fundamental difference between the Red Army and the White army; at the same time, eliminate the remnants of opportunism and adventurism, and break down the selfish departmentalism of the Fourth Army.

   b. Intensify the political training of officers and men and especially the education of ex-prisoners at the time of their enlistment. At the same time, as

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6. This and the other main headings regarding types of deviation are emphasized by the use of dots opposite the characters in the original Chinese version.

7. Class → Revolution

8. The one type of work which consists of fighting → Fighting to destroy the enemy’s military strength

9. Establishing revolutionary political power → Establishing revolutionary political power and setting up Party organizations

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10. Establish political power → Establish revolutionary political power

11. Line → Idea

12. Monopoly of the government → Control of the government

13. Departure from the class stand → Departure from proletarian leadership

14. Take the path of the Guomindang army → Take the path of warlordism like the Guomindang army

15. The main force → The Fourth Army

16. To arm the localities → To arm the local masses
far as possible let the local governments select workers and peasants experienced in struggle to join the Red Army, thus organizationally weakening or even eradicating the purely military viewpoint.

c. Arouse the local Party organizations to criticize the Party organizations in the Red Army and the organs of mass political power (the soviets) to criticize the Red Army itself, in order to influence the Party organizations and the officers and men of the Red Army.

d. The Party must actively attend to and discuss the military aspect of the work. All the work must be discussed and decided upon by the Party before being carried out through the mass line.\(^{17}\)

e. Draw up Red Army rules and regulations which clearly define its tasks, the relationship between its military and its political apparatus, the relationship between the Red Army and the masses, and the powers and functions of the soldiers’ committees and their relationship with the military and political organization.

**B. Ultrademocracy**

1. Since the Party of the Red Army\(^ {18} \) accepted the directives of the Central Committee, there has, indeed, been a great decrease in the manifestations of ultrademocracy. For example, Party decisions are now carried out fairly well; and no longer does anyone bring up such slogans as “applying democratic centralism from the bottom to the top” or “letting the lower levels discuss all problems first, and then letting the higher levels decide.” These are facts. Actually, however, this decrease is only superficial\(^ {19} \) and does not in any way mean that ultrademocracy has already been fundamentally eliminated from the ideas of ordinary party members. In other words, the pernicious root of ultrademocracy is still deeply planted in the hearts of many comrades. Various expressions of reluctance to carry out Party decisions are a proof.

2. The methods of correction are as follows: First, in the sphere of theory, eliminate the roots of ultrademocracy. To begin with, it should be pointed out that the danger of ultrademocracy lies in the fact that it damages or even completely wrecks the Party organization and weakens or even completely undermines the Party’s fighting capacity, rendering the Party incapable of fulfilling its fighting tasks and thereby inevitably leading to the defeat of the revolution. At the same time, it actually helps prolong the reactionary life of the ruling class. Next, it should be pointed out that the source of ultrademocracy resides in the individualistic aversion to discipline of the petty bourgeoisie (small peasant production and small-scale capitalism in the cities). When this individualistic aversion to discipline is transmitted into the Party, it develops into ultrademocratic thought in the political and organizational domains. Such thought is utterly incompatible with the fighting tasks of the proletariat. Objectively, it is really a kind of counterrevolutionary thought. Unless we work hard to correct it and to prevent it from developing freely, people with such ideas will certainly take the road of counterrevolution.

Second, in the sphere of organization, rigorously enforce democracy under centralized guidance. This should be done along the following lines:

a. The leading organs of the Party must offer a correct line of guidance and find solutions when problems arise, in order to establish themselves as centers of leadership.

b. The higher organs must be familiar with the situation in the lower organs, and with the life of the masses, so as to provide the social source\(^ {20} \) for correct guidance.

c. No Party organ at any level should make casual decisions. Once a decision is reached, it must be firmly carried out.

d. All decisions of any importance made by the Party’s higher organs must be promptly transmitted to the lower organs and to the mass of Party members. The method is to call meetings of activists or general membership meetings of the Party branches or even of the columns (when circumstances permit) and to assign people to make reports at such meetings.

e. The lower organs of the Party and the mass of Party members must discuss the higher organs’ directives in detail, in order to understand their meaning thoroughly and decide on the methods of carrying them out.

**C. Lack of Organizational Consciousness\(^ {21} \)**

The lack of organizational consciousness in the Party organization in the Fourth Army has many manifestations in various aspects. The most salient ones are the following three kinds:

1. Failure of the minority to submit to the majority
   For example, when a motion is voted down,\(^ {22} \) they become very annoyed or even do not sincerely carry out the Party resolutions. All [such behavior] is an example of this type [of mistake].

   The methods of correction are as follows:

   a. At meetings, all participants should be encouraged to voice their opinions as fully as possible. It should be clearly understood that the rights and wrongs in any controversy should be clarified without compromise or gloss-

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17. Carried out through the mass line → Carried out by the masses
19. Only superficial → Only temporary and superficial
20. Social source → Objective basis
21. Lack of Organizational Consciousness → On Views Incompatible with Organization
22. When a motion is voted down → When a minority finds its motion voted down
ing over. In order to reach a clear-cut conclusion, what cannot be settled at one meeting should be discussed at another, provided there is no interference with the work.

b. One requirement of Party discipline is that the minority should submit to the majority. If the view of the minority has been rejected at the first Party meeting, it must support the decision passed by the majority until the convening of the next meeting. It can bring up the matter for reconsideration at the next meeting, but apart from that it must not act against the decision in any way.

2. Criticism made without regard to the organization

a. Inner-Party criticism is a weapon for strengthening the Party organization and increasing its fighting capacity. In the Party organization of the Red Army, however, many people are not clear about this significance of criticism and wrongly use it for personal attacks. As a result, it damages the Party organization as well as individuals. This is entirely a manifestation of petty bourgeois individualist consciousness. The method of correction is to help Party members understand that the significance of criticism is to increase the Party’s fighting capacity in order to achieve victory in the class struggle and that it absolutely cannot be used as a means of personal attack.

b. Many Party members make their criticisms not inside, but outside the Party. The reason is that the political significance of the Party organization has not yet become part of the thinking of Party members in general, and they therefore do not understand the importance of the Party organization (its meetings and so forth), and see no difference between criticism inside and criticism outside the organization. The consequences of this fact alone will be enough to lead the Party onto the road of destruction. The method of correction is to establish the political significance of Party organization in the thinking of ordinary Party members. This is the only way to eliminate fundamentally all irresponsible criticisms that have adverse influences on the masses and that disregard Party organizational discipline.

3. Special treatment of some Party members. Some Party members do not come to Party branch meetings or small group meetings, do not present work reports even if they come to the meetings, and detach themselves in many ways from ordinary Party members, on the pretext that they are busy. The fact is that they do not want to get close to the masses, and also fear the criticism of the masses. The result is that they become separated from the masses, and separated from the Party. As regards this matter, responsible persons in Party branches, instead of rectifying the situation, have shown signs that they are intimidated by these special Party members.

The causes of this phenomenon: First, the Red Army has always suffered from a major mistake, namely, that Party organs pay very little attention to the discussion of work relating to military affairs. Consequently, they do not urge comrades responsible for military affairs regularly to submit plans for military affairs (such as training, management, battle, and other plans) and reports to Party meetings. As a result, discussions in the Party are divorced from military affairs and comrades responsible for military affairs also forget that they should be guided by the Party and should report to the Party. As a result, the military work of the Red Army has become a special area of work that is not understood by Party organs and ordinary Party members. This is not merely a major obstacle to the task of the militarization of Party members, it will also separate the Party from military affairs, creating the danger of the inability of the Party to guide military affairs. Second, because of the above-mentioned major serious mistakes concerning the tasks of the Party, some comrades responsible for military affairs have become a special group in the Party. At the same time, many comrades responsible for other work have also turned into special persons who do not want to come to Party branch meetings and do not speak even if they come. This is one reason why the life of Party branches in the Red Army is as abnormal and unhealthy as it is at present.

Methods of correction: First, Party meetings at various levels (from Party branches to the Front Committee) must all put plans and reports of military work on the agenda for discussion and decision. Second, all Party members, regardless of their fields of responsibility, must attend general meetings of Party branches and small group meetings and submit work reports, and may be absent only for good reasons.

D. Absolute Egalitarianism

1. Absolute egalitarianism was extremely serious in the Red Army at one time. After many struggles, it has certainly declined to a large extent, but there still exist many remnants. For example, on the matter of allowances to wounded soldiers, there were objections to differentiating between light and serious cases, and the demand was raised for equal allowances for all. When officers rode on horseback, it was regarded not as something necessary for performing their duties but as a sign of inequality. Absolutely equal distribution of things was demanded, and objections were raised to somewhat larger allotments in special cases. In the hauling of rice, the demand was made that all should carry the same load on their backs, irrespective of age or physical condition. Equality was
demanded in the allotment of billets, and the headquarters would be abused for occupying large rooms. Equality was demanded in the assignment of fatigue duties, and there was unwillingness to do a little more than the next man. It even went so far that when there were two wounded men but only one stretcher, neither could be carried away because each refused to yield priority to the other. All the above examples demonstrate that absolute egalitarianism has not been fundamentally eradicated from the heads of the masses. What is called getting rid of it to some extent is only partial or formal, and nothing more.

2. Absolute egalitarianism is actually, like ultrademocracy in political matters, the product of a handcraft and small peasant economy. The only difference is that the one manifests itself in the political sphere, while the other manifests itself in the material aspect.

3. The method of correction: We should point out in theory that before the abolition of capitalism, absolute egalitarianism is a mere illusion of peasants and small proprietors, and that even in the period of a socialist economy, there can be no absolute equality, for material things will then be distributed on the basis of the needs of individuals and their work. The distribution of material things in the Red Army must be as equal as possible, as in the case of equal pay for officers and men, because this is required by the present circumstances of the struggle. But absolute equality beyond reason must be opposed because it is not required by the struggle; on the contrary, it hinders the struggle.

E. Idealist Views

1. Idealist views are very strong among Party members of the Red Army. They constitute a great obstacle to the analysis of the political situation, the guidance of the work, and the organization of the Party. The reason is that idealist analysis of a political situation and idealist guidance of work is inevitably accompanied by and results in either opportunism or adventurism. As for the spirit of idealist criticism in the Party, loose and groundless allegations, or mutual suspicion, the consequence is often unprincipled and meaningless disputes in the Party and the disruption of the Party organization.

Another point that should be mentioned in connection with inner-Party criticism, apart from the spirit of idealist criticism, is the spirit of nonpolitical criticism. They do not understand that the main task of criticism is to point out political mistakes, and that pointing out organizational mistakes is only a secondary task. As for shortcomings in personal life and minor technical points, unless they are closely related to political and organizational mistakes, there is no need to be overcritical and to embarrass the comrades concerned. Moreover, once technical criticism develops, the greatest danger is that the attention of the Party members will concentrate entirely on routine technical aspects and everyone will become timid and overcautious and inevitably forget about the Party’s political tasks. This is the greatest danger. Like the spirit of idealist and nonscientific criticism, the spirit of technical and nonpolitical criticism in the Party of the Red Army will certainly lead to (and has already led to) the worst consequences.

2. The only method of correction is to politicize and make scientific the thinking of Party members and the life of the Party. To this end we must: (1) teach Party members to apply the Marxist method in analyzing political situations and appraising the class forces, instead of making a subjective analysis and appraisal; (2) direct the attention of Party members to social and economic investigation and research, so as to determine the tactics of struggle and methods of work and help comrades to understand that without the investigation of actual conditions they will fall into the pit of fantasy and adventurism; and (3) in inner-Party criticism, eliminate the idealist and the technical spirit; statements should be based on facts and discussion of work should focus on its political significance.

F. Individualism

I. Individualism in the Red Army manifests itself in the following ways:
   a. Retaliation. Some comrades, after being criticized inside the Party by a soldier comrade, look for opportunities to retaliate outside the Party, and one way is to beat or curse the comrade in question. There are many such cases. Besides, they also seek to retaliate within the Party. You have criticized me at

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25. Absolute egalitarianism → Absolute egalitarianism is still very serious among officers and soldiers of the Red Army.
26. On the basis of the needs of individuals and their work → On the basis of the principle of “from each according to his ability, to each according to his work,” as well as on that of meeting the needs of the work.
27. Absolute equality → Absolute egalitarianism.
28. Idealist Views → On Subjectivism. Throughout this section, "idealistic" (weixin) has been replaced by "subjective" (zhuguan) in the Selected Works.
29. The spirit of nonpolitical criticism → Some comrades ignore the major issues and confuse their attention to minor points when they make their criticism.
30. Routine technical aspects → Minor faults.
31. The only method of correction → The main method of correction is to educate Party members so that
32. Zhengzhuhua, kexuehu.
33. The Marxist method → The Marxist-Leninist method
34. Eliminate the idealist and the technical spirit; statements should be based on facts and discussion of work should focus on its political significance → Guard against subjectivism, arbitrariness and the vulgarization of criticism; statements should be based on facts and criticism should center on politics.
35. Individualism → On Individualism.
this meeting, so I’ll find some way to pay you back at the next. There are also quite a few such cases. Such retaliationism arises from purely personal considerations; it is oblivious of the interests of the class and of Party life as a whole. Such people are only aware of their own existence. Their target is not the enemy class, but individuals in our own ranks. This is a corrosive agent which greatly weakens the organization and its fighting capacity.

b. Small group mentality. Superficially, it is an enlargement of individualism, but in reality it is still the narrowest kind of individualism and has a strong corrosive and centrifugal effect. Small group mentality used to be rife in the Red Army, and although a great deal has been eliminated as a result of hard struggle, there are still remnants, and further efforts are needed in the course of struggle.

c. The employee mentality. Some comrades do not understand that the Party and the Red Army constitute an instrument for carrying out the tasks of the class, and they are part of it. They do not realize that they themselves are the main force in the struggle, but think that the struggle has nothing to do with them, their responsibility is merely to their superiors, or to organs at Party headquarters, and not to the revolution. This mentality of an employee of the revolution is quite developed and explains why there are not many activists who work unconditionally. Unless it is eliminated, the number of activists who will not grow and the heavy burden of the revolution will remain on the shoulders of a few people, much to the detriment of the struggle.

d. Pleasure-seeking. In the Red Army there are also quite a few people whose individualism finds expression in pleasure-seeking. They always hope that their unit will march into big cities. They want to go there not to work but to enjoy themselves. The last thing they want is to work in the Red areas where life is hard. The consequence of pleasure-seeking is to care only about personal interests and not to care about the revolution as a whole, or about group actions.

e. Passivity and going slow on work. Some comrades become passive and stop working whenever anything goes against their wishes. The basic reason

for going slow on work certainly lies in individualism and lack of a genuine and clear understanding of one’s class tasks, but there are also objective reasons arising from improper handling of affairs, assignment of work or enforcement of discipline by the Party and the army.

f. The desire to leave the army. The number of people who ask for transfers from the Red Army to local work is on the increase. The reason for this, too, does not lie entirely with subjective individualism. In addition, there are causes residing in objective circumstances, such as: (1) the material hardships of life in the Red Army, (2) exhaustion after long struggle, and (3) the handling of affairs, assignment of work, or enforcement of discipline.

2. The source of individualism lies in influences ranging from small peasant thinking to bourgeois thinking within the Party. The method of correction is primarily to make use of education to rectify individualism ideologically. Next in importance is to conduct affairs, make assignments, and enforce discipline in a proper way. In addition, methods must be found to improve objective conditions.

G. The Ideology of Roving Rebel Bands

1. The sources of the ideology of roving rebels in the Red Army are as follows: (1) The immediate cause is that the vagrants account for the majority in the Red Army; (2) A more remote cause is the existence of a broad mass of vagrants in the whole country and in various southern provinces in particular. These two immediate and remote causes have resulted in roving-rebel-style political ideology and plans of action in the Red Army. However, large-scale actions of roving insurgents in the style of Huang Chao, Li

41. The basic reason certainly lies in individualism and lack of a genuine and clear understanding of class tasks → This results mainly from lack of education, but there are also cases when it is caused by the way leaders handle problems
42. Lie entirely with subjective individualism → Lie entirely with individuals
43. The handling of affairs → The leadership’s handling of problems
44. Make use of → Strengthen
45. Ways must be found to improve objective conditions → Ways must be found to improve the material life of the Red Army, and every available opportunity must be utilized for rest and rehabilitation in order to improve material conditions. In our educational work we must explain that in its social origin individualism is a reflection within the Party of petty bourgeoisie and bourgeois ideas.
46. The vagrants account for the majority in the Red Army → The proportion of vagrants is large
47. Liukouchui, literally, “roving-rebel-ist”
48. Huang Chao (?–884), a native of Shandong, who had started life as a salt merchant, became in 875 the leader of a rebel band. In 880, he succeeded in capturing Chang’an and proclaimed himself emperor, but by 884 he had been utterly defeated and committed suicide. His wide-ranging campaigns lasting nearly a decade constituted one of the most famous peasant wars in Chinese history.
Chuang,\textsuperscript{49} and Hong Xiuquan\textsuperscript{50} are impossible in imperialist-controlled China, and especially in a modern China where advanced weapons (hand grenades, steel cannons, machine guns, etc.), advanced methods of communication (telephones and radios for military use), and advanced means of transportation (automobiles, ships, and railways) have already been introduced. So the ideology of roving rebel bands naturally cannot become the final forceful program of action of the Red Army. However, its influence still manifests itself strongly in all fields. For example, (1) Some people want to increase our political influence only by means of roving guerrilla actions, but are unwilling to increase it by undertaking the arduous task of helping the masses build up political power;\textsuperscript{51} (2) In expanding the organizational line of the Red Army, some people follow the line of expanding the Red Army by “hiring men and buying horses” and “recruiting deserters and accepting mutineers,”\textsuperscript{52} rather than the line of expanding the local Red Guards and the local troops and thus developing nonlocal forces of the Red Army;\textsuperscript{53} (3) Some people lack the patience to carry on arduous struggles together with the masses and only want to go to the big cities to eat and drink to their hearts’ content. All these manifestations of roving-rebelism\textsuperscript{54} seriously hamper the Red Army in performing the tremendous tasks imposed on it by the revolution.\textsuperscript{55} Consequently, the eradication of roving rebel ideology is an important objective in the ideological struggle within the Party in the Red Army.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{49} Li Zicheng (1606–1645), a native of Shaanxi, turned brigand at an early age and called himself General Chuang (the character chuang means “impetuous” or “daredevil”). In 1644, he proclaimed himself emperor and took Beijing, where the last Ming emperor hanged himself in consequence. Subsequently, he was defeated by Wu Sankui, a Ming general who had gone over to the Manchus, and driven south to Hubei, where he was killed by local militia.

\textsuperscript{50} Hong Xiuquan (1814–1864) was the principal leader of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. In view of the fact that, as noted above, Li Lisan and the Central Committee had repeatedly urged Mao to make use of the Taiping model of military organization, because it was particularly suited to guerrilla warfare, this reference may constitute a veiled attack on Li.

\textsuperscript{51} Unwilling to increase it by undertaking the arduous task of helping the masses build up political power → Unwilling to increase it by under taking the arduous task of building up base areas and establishing the people’s political power.

\textsuperscript{52} These two set phrases evoke the indiscriminate recruitment of followers by some rebels in Chinese history.

\textsuperscript{53} Developing nonlocal forces of the Red Army → Developing the main forces of the Red Army

\textsuperscript{54} Roving-rebelism → Roving rebel ideology

\textsuperscript{55} Seriously hamper the Red Army in performing the tremendous tasks imposed on it by the revolution → Seriously hamper the Red Army in performing its proper tasks

\textsuperscript{56} In the Red Army → In the Red Army. It must be understood that the ways of roving rebels of the Huang Chao or Li Chuang type are not permissible under present-day conditions.

2. The methods of correction are as follows:

a. Transform the incorrect ideas \textit{that have their basis in} the vagrants in the Party through education,\textsuperscript{57} and eradicate the ideology of roving rebel bands.

b. Intensify education among the basic sections of the Red Army and among recently recruited captives to counter the vagabond outlook.

c. Attract activist workers and peasants experienced in struggle to the ranks of the Red Army so as to change its composition.

d. Create new army units from among the masses of workers and peasants who are involved in struggle.

II. The Remnants of Adventurism

1. Relatively great efforts have been made in the struggle against adventurism in the Party organization in the Red Army, but these efforts cannot be described as already adequate. So, \textit{though many ideas and actions of adventurism in the Red Army have been overcome}, some remnants still exist. \textit{The source of adventurism lies in a combination of lumpenproletarian and petty bourgeois consciousness}. Its manifestations include the following: (1) blind action regardless of subjective and objective conditions; (2) inadequate and irresolute application of the Party’s policies for the cities; (3) slack military discipline, especially in moments of defeat; (4) acts of house-burning at the expense of the mass base exist to some extent in all units;\textsuperscript{58} and (5) the practices of shooting deserters and of inflicting corporal punishment, of which some aspects also result from adventurism.

2. The methods of correction are as follows:

a. Eradicate adventurism theoretically\textsuperscript{59}

b. Correct adventurist behavior through rules, regulations, and policies.

II. On the Problem of Party Organization

The matter of Party organization in the Red Army is now in an extremely grave period. In particular, the quality of Party members is so poor and the organization is so lax that they are very greatly affecting the leadership of the Red Army and the implementation of policies. The congress has made a special detailed analysis of this issue, and taken decisions on it. Comrades should stand by the spirit of the congress and work hard to transform the organization of the

\textsuperscript{57} Transform the incorrect ideas \textit{that have their basis in} the vagrants in the Party through education → Intensify education, criticize incorrect ideas

\textsuperscript{58} Acts of house-burning at the expense of the mass base exist to some extent in all units → Acts of house-burning are still carried out by some units

\textsuperscript{59} Theoretically → Ideologically
Party. Success can be achieved only if the Party organization is truly capable of assuming the Party’s political tasks.

A. The Organizational Line of the Party

1. The line for developing Party members takes combat soldiers as its main object. At the same time, noncombat soldiers such as laborers and orderlies should not be neglected either.

2. One of the important principles of Party organization in the Army is to set up a branch in every company and a small group in every squad. In case the number of Party members is too small among the troops and it is impossible to set up a small group in every squad, platoons may temporarily serve as the unit to set up small groups which assign group members to various squads in a planned manner. It must, however, be clearly understood that this is a transitional method.

3. The original method for setting up small groups in the Red Army, which consists in mixing cadres and ordinary members, intellectuals and laborers, is very correct. But the various elements, whose work and capacities are different, have not yet been well integrated in a planned way. In the future, this point should be given more attention. It is impermissible simply to organize cadres into small groups.

B. The Issue of Laxity in Party Organization

1. The present status of the Party organization in the Fourth Army:
   a. It has been too easy to join the Party. Many people who are not qualified as Party members have also been pulled into the Party. Officers, in particular, are all dragged into the Party without any conditions whatsoever. As a result, the quality of the Party has become very poor.
   b. The Party headquarters at all levels have resolved problems, but completely forgotten the task of educating comrades in their work. There are extremely few meetings of a training nature, such as assemblies of activists, joint meetings of party secretaries and members responsible for propaganda and organization, joint meetings of Party committees and groups, branch meetings, assemblies of Party members at the levels of columns and detachments.
   c. General laxity in discipline. Especially when one is responsible for important work and cannot be replaced by others, one can muddle through making mistakes and not be called to order. If one person is treated in this way, others have to be treated likewise. So discipline becomes generally lax.
   d. As all officers are Party members, the consequence is that the staff members of all military and political organs pay very little attention to the work of their social professions, and all believe that the work of their social professions is the same as the Party’s work and the two cannot be separated. For example, work conferences on military affairs at various levels and work conferences on political affairs at various levels are almost nonexistent, and it is held that all affairs can be easily decided by the Party. There is almost no mention of the fact that Party members should play core roles in social and professional work.
   e. The relations between lower- and higher-level organs are not close. The reports of lower-level organs are seldom approved, replied to, or dealt with by instructions from higher-level organs. Higher-level organs rarely send people to attend the meetings of lower-level organs. This is certainly due to the imperfections of the organization of the higher-level organs, but the un-enthusiastic attitude of higher-level organs toward work is also one of the reasons why lower levels receive no instructions, or no detailed instructions. This is the case especially regarding instructions on practical work. For example, when an army unit issues working instructions on guerrilla warfare and so forth, it generally gives no specific instructions. There are certain army units that do not even give general instructions.
   f. Many branch assemblies or small group meetings are not held on time.

2. The Line for Correcting [These Errors]
   a. The old basis should be rigorously eliminated. For instance, all those who have erroneous political views, take opium, enrich themselves, gamble, and refuse to mend their ways despite repeated warnings should be expelled from the Party, regardless of whether they are cadres or not.
   b. Qualifications for new members who join the Party in the future:
      i. They should have no errors in their political views (including class consciousness);
      ii. They should be loyal;
      iii. They should have the spirit of sacrifice and be capable of working actively.
      iv. They should not be bent on enriching themselves.
      v. They should not take opium or gamble.

Only those who meet the above five qualifications may be presented for membership in the Party. Those who recommend them should first investigate whether or not those they are introducing genuinely meet the above qualifications. When they have been recommended and joined the Party, new Party members should be told in detail about branch life (including the secret work) and about key points that Party members must observe. The introducers should take considerable responsibility for those they recommend. Branches should appoint people to talk to those who will soon join the Party and review their qualifications for joining the Party.
3. The Party headquarters at all levels do not exist merely to resolve problems and direct the practical work. They also have the weighty responsibility of educating comrades. All sorts of conferences for training comrades, as well as other training methods, such as training courses and discussion meetings, should be organized in a planned way.

4. Discipline should be strictly enforced, and all manifestations of laxity in discipline abolished.

5. The nature of Party members’ social and professional work should be distinguished from that of their Party work. Every Party member (except professional revolutionaries who have important or special tasks inside the Party) must have one social profession. At the same time, he should do Party work in his social profession.

6. The work attitude of Party headquarters at all levels should be more active than before. The lower levels should present more thorough analyses to the higher levels, and the higher levels should conduct thorough discussions of these reports and make specific replies and also do their best to send people to attend the meetings at the lower levels. Neither shortage of staff members, weak capacity for work, nor insufficient work time can be used as a pretext to cover up their own lack of enthusiasm and neglect of this work.

7. Branch committees and Party headquarters above the branch level should decide every month the materials to be discussed by branch and small group meetings in a planned way, determine the time of meetings, and closely supervise and promote the holding of these meetings.

C. How to Create Interest on the Part of Party Members in Attending Meetings

1. The reasons for the lack of interest on the part of Party members in attending meetings:

a. Not understanding the significance of the meetings. The first important purpose of branch meetings is to solve problems. All problems relating to the struggle, and to internal affairs, must be resolved through concentrated discussions at meetings. Those who do not attend meetings or do not actively express their opinions at the meetings they attend lack understanding of the political significance of meetings, or in other words lack interest in the struggle. All those who are enthusiastic about the struggle are definitely eager to come to the meetings and to speak at them. The second purpose is to educate comrades. Meetings not only resolve problems but, in the process of solving problems, require us to observe the context of problems and study the instructions of higher levels, thus stimulating the mental capacities of comrades. The politicization and actualization of meetings will politicize and actualize the head of every comrade. If every comrade is politicized and actualized, the fighting force of the Party will become very much greater. This is the educational significance of meetings. The fact that Party members in the Red Army do not understand this significance is the first reason why they dislike going to meetings or show little interest even if they come.

b. The interest in discussions declines as resolutions are adopted but never applied, and the requests made of higher levels are not responded to for a long time.

c. Responsible persons do not prepare properly in advance. They fail to prepare agendas, understand the contents and contexts of the issues, or prepare any comments on ways to resolve the issues.

d. The chairmen casually stop Party members from speaking. When Party members occasionally digress from the subjects under discussion, they are stopped immediately, so they feel frustrated and become silent. When they make mistakes in their speeches, they are not only stopped but derided.

e. A feudal style, rigid and devoid of any liveliness, is applied in conducting meetings. Attending meetings is like being imprisoned.

2. Methods of Correction: First, meetings should be politicized and actualized. Second, comrades, especially new Party members or Party members who lack enthusiasm in work, should be reminded often of the great significance of meetings. Third, resolutions should not be made in a careless and rash way, and once resolutions are decided upon, they should be carried out resolutely. Fourth, higher-level organs should be prompt in answering questions from the lower levels. Putting off replies for too long may cause loss of enthusiasm. Fifth, responsible persons should prepare agendas beforehand and make items of the agenda concrete. Prior investigation of the content and context of problems should be conducted carefully, and some thought should be given in advance to ways of resolving them. Sixth, chairmen should adopt good practices in conducting meetings. They ought to guide the tide of the masses’ discussion to focus on a certain problem. But digressions that constitute significant developments should not be stopped in a discouraging fashion; on the contrary, the gist of these developments should be grasped and introduced to all, and new items of agenda should be formulated. These are the only ways to make meetings interesting, truly to resolve problems, and truly to realize the educational significance of meetings. Seventh, feudal procedures for conducting meetings must be abolished. The meetingplace of a Communist Party should reflect the positive, lively, and straightforward spirit of the proletariat and incorporate it into the pattern of meetings.

D. The Youth Organization within the Red Army and Its Work

1. In the army, the interests of youth cannot be distinguished from those of adults, and the League does not have special objectives for its work. Moreover, the Party’s method for setting up small groups, taking the squad as the unit, is

60. Shijihuah.
most advantageous for the struggle. Consequently, there is no need to set up small groups of the League within Party branches.

2. Since those Party members who are young have sentiments different from those of adult members, they need to receive special education, apart from receiving the Party's general training. Furthermore, because winning over the masses of young workers and peasants is one of the important tasks of the Party, there must be special organizations to carry out this work. Consequently, a Party branch should single out those Party members who are under twenty (except special cases, such as being responsible for important Party tasks) to form a youth work conference. Such conferences may be held regularly by brigades as a unit in a planned way, but detachments and columns themselves should also decide on the times to hold such meetings in light of their respective conditions.

3. In order to plan for the education of young Party members, and for methods of winning over the masses of young workers and peasants, and to guide youth work conferences, the Front Committee and column committees may set up five-member commissions on youth work, and each detachment committee and branch committee should have one youth commissioner working under the direction of Party headquarters at various levels.

E. The Relationship between Political Commissars and Inner-Party Work

In principle, the Party secretaries at the two levels of brigades and columns do not serve concurrently as political commissars. But in units that are short of staff members, they may serve in the two positions at the same time temporarily. Higher-level Party headquarters may, on the basis of their observation of the situation and under appropriate conditions, appoint political commissars who are not Party secretaries to be special representatives of the Party. These special representatives have the task of directing the Party's work at specific levels.

F. The Issue of the Highest Party Headquarters of the Directly Attached Units

All directly attached units of the army and various columns may organize Party committees as their highest Party headquarters. The number of committee members ranges from five to seven.

G. The Issue of the Party and the League in Soldiers' Associations

The soldiers' associations of companies do not form Party and League organizations, and the work is directed by branch committees. The soldiers' associations of columns should set up Party and League organizations that are under the leadership of column Party committees.

III. The Problem of Inner-Party Education

A. Significance

The most urgent issue within the Party in the Red Army is the issue of education. The strengthening and expansion of the Red Army and the fulfillment of the tasks of the struggle must all start with inner-Party education. Without raising the inner-Party political level and eliminating various deviations within the Party, it is absolutely impossible to strengthen and expand the Red Army, and even more impossible to shoulder the important tasks of the struggle. Therefore, systematically carrying out inner-Party education, and correcting the past situation of having no plans and letting things take their own course, is one of the major tasks of the Party. The congress decides to use the following materials and methods to educate Party members. The leading organs of the Party should hold more detailed discussions and then proceed to carry out this task.

B. Materials

1. Political analysis;
2. Discussion of notices from higher-level leading organs;
3. The organizational ABCs;
4. Correction of the eight erroneous ideas within the Party in the Red Army;
5. Discussion of the issue of opposing opportunism and the Trotskyist opposition;
6. Tactics and techniques of mass work;
7. Social and economic investigations and studies of the guerrilla regions;
8. Study of Marxism-Leninism;
9. Study of social and economic science;
10. The question of the present stage and future of the revolution.

All the above ten items, except some (such as study of Marxism-Leninism) which are, in fact, applicable only to cadres, are applicable to ordinary Party members.

C. Methods

1. Party newspapers;
2. Political bulletins;
3. Editing various types of pamphlets for educating comrades;
4. Training courses;
5. Organized assignment of readings;
6. Reading books and newspapers to illiterate Party members;
7. One-to-one talks;
8. Criticism;
9. Small group meetings;
10. Branch assemblies;
11. Joint meetings of branch committee members and group leaders;
12. Assemblies of activists above the level of group leader, taking columns as the unit;
13. Assemblies of activists above the level of branch committee secretaries in the army as a whole;
14. Assemblies of Party members, taking the column as the unit;
15. Joint meetings of secretaries, committee members responsible for propaganda, and committee members responsible for organization, taking columns as the unit;
16. Joint meetings of secretaries, committee members responsible for propaganda, and committee members responsible for propaganda above the level of detachments in the whole Army;
17. Political seminars;
18. Appropriate assignment of Party members to participate in actual work.

IV. The Problem of Propaganda Work by the Red Army

A. The Significance of the Propaganda Work of the Red Army

The task of the propaganda work of the Red Army is to expand political influence and win over the broad masses. Only by accomplishing this propaganda task can the overall tasks of the Red Army, such as organizing the masses, arming the masses, establishing political régimes, destroying the reactionary forces, and promoting the revolutionary upsurge be fulfilled. The propaganda work of the Red Army is therefore first-priority work for the Red Army. To neglect this work is to abandon the main tasks of the Red Army and amounts to helping the ruling class weaken the force of the Red Army.

B. The Present Status of the Propaganda Work of the Red Army

1. Shortcomings in the content of propaganda:
   a. No concrete political program has been issued (The political programs issued in the past, such as the Four Character Proclamation,\(^{61}\) were not concrete);
   b. Propaganda and agitation regarding the daily struggles of the masses have been neglected;
   c. The achievements of the urban poor have been neglected;
   d. Propaganda addressed to the masses of women has been neglected;
   e. There is inadequate propaganda addressed to the masses of young people;
   f. There is inadequate propaganda addressed to the lumpenproletariat;\(^{62}\)
   g. There is all too little propaganda aimed at disrupting the armed organizations of the landlord class (such as the militia and the Pacification and Protection Corps);
   h. Propaganda does not take account of time and place.

2. Shortcomings in the techniques of propaganda:
   a. Inadequacies of propaganda teams
      i. The number of propaganda team members has declined from five for each brigade to three. Some brigades only have one or two propaganda team members, some only have one, and a few units have none at all.
      ii. The backgrounds of propaganda team members are highly deficient. There are captives, cooks and grooms, and opium addicts. Some people suspected of desertion have been disarmed and forced into the propaganda teams; some have been sent to propaganda teams after they proved incapable of serving as clerks; some are thrust into propaganda teams because they are disabled and are rejected by other work units. Propaganda teams at present have quite simply become reception centers and are completely incapable of carrying out their tasks.
      iii. Almost all officers and soldiers reject propaganda teams (at the same time, the dissatisfaction of ordinary people results from the fact that the backgrounds of team members are too bad, and the achievements of their work are too few). “Idlers” and “peddlers of fake plaster” are the names given to propaganda team members by the ordinary people.
      iv. Propaganda teams do not have enough propaganda funds.
      v. There are no plans for the training of propaganda team members.
   At the same time, the supervision of their work is also inadequate. Consequently, the work of propaganda teams is really done any old way, and no one cares whether they do it or not.
   b. Handbills, proclamations, manifestos, and the like are old and outdated, and the methods of distributing and mailing them are incorrect.
   c. Wall newspapers are seldom put up. The political bulletins have very brief content, are rarely published, and have small characters that are barely readable.

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\(^{61}\) The reference is manifestly to the Notice (bugao) dated January 1929, signed by Mao and Zhu De, written in lines of four Chinese characters.

\(^{62}\) Liuwang wuchanjieji, literally “the vagabond proletariat,” instead of the term usually employed by Mao, youmin wuchanjieji, which we translate as “the vagrant proletariat.”
d. Revolutionary folksongs are quite simply nonexistent.
e. Only a few pictorials are published.
f. There is almost no propaganda in makeup.
g. No clubs that serve the dual purpose of entertaining soldiers and getting close to the worker and peasant masses have been set up.
h. Oral propaganda is poor in quantity and quality.
i. Red Army discipline is a kind of practical propaganda to the masses. Now discipline is lax in comparison with the past, and this has a bad influence on the masses.
j. Putting back the doors [taken down to sleep on], bundling up the straw [used for bedding], sweeping floors, talking politely, paying fairly for what you buy, returning everything you borrow, and compensating for damage are all a form of Red Army propaganda work. At present these things, too, are done inadequately.
k. There are few mass rallies, and those held are not well organized.
l. The methods for propaganda addressed to the soldiers of the White armies are not good.

C. The Way to Correct These Defects

1. Regarding the Content of Propaganda:
   a. A concrete political program should be published and called the Political Program of the Red Army.
   b. Propaganda should be in harmony with the fighting spirit of the masses. Apart from issuing general slogans regarding the uprising, there should also be slogans related to daily life that are appropriate in places where the fighting spirit of the masses is low, which can be used to mobilize for daily struggles and link them to the slogans about uprisings.
   c. The urban poor (medium-size and small merchants and students) are a considerable force in the process of the democratic revolution. To neglect to win over this force is the same as handing it over to the despotic gentry and the bourgeoisie. In the future, in-depth propaganda work should be conducted among the masses of medium-size and small merchants and students in the cities, with the purpose of winning them over.

2. Regarding the Techniques of Propaganda
   a. The question of propaganda teams
      i. Significance: The propaganda teams of the Red Army are important instruments of the propaganda work of the Red Army. If propaganda teams are not well organized, a large part of the propaganda work of the Red Army is wasted. Therefore, the problem of reorganizing and training propaganda teams is one of the tasks to which the Party must devote greater efforts at present. The first step in this work is to correct, from a theoretical standpoint, the attitude of looking down on propaganda work and propaganda teams, which is widespread among officers and soldiers. From now on, strange names such as "idlers," and "peddlers of fake plasters" should be abolished.
ii. Organization: Detachments constitute units, and troops directly under the army or columns constitute units. Every unit organizes a propaganda team with one leader, one deputy leader, sixteen propagandists, one porter (carrying propaganda materials), and two persons running errands. The propagandists of each team are divided into several branches (the number of branches is determined by the number of brigades or other units and organs). Every branch has one branch leader and three propagandists.

The propaganda teams of all detachments are under the command of detachment political commissars. When various brigades are scattered in the course of guerrilla warfare, every brigade should dispatch a propaganda team branch to accompany them in their work under the command of the brigade political commissar. The propaganda teams of directly attached troops are under the leadership of the head of the propaganda sections of the political department. All propaganda teams of the whole columns are directed by the propaganda sections of the political departments of the columns. The propaganda teams of the whole Army are led by the propaganda section of the army political department.

The expenses of propaganda teams are paid by political departments, and sufficient funds should be provided.

Ways to transform the composition of propaganda team members: Apart from asking local governments to select and send progressive elements to join the propaganda teams of the Red Army, outstanding elements (so far as possible, not squad leaders) from the soldiers of various armed units may be chosen as propaganda team members. Political departments should frequently make plans for training propaganda teams, specifying training materials, methods, times, teachers, and so on, in an active effort to improve the quality of propaganda team members.

b. The old handbills, bulletins, declarations, and other propaganda materials should be reviewed, and new ones should be drafted quickly.

The appropriateness and effectiveness of the distribution of propaganda materials must be an important aspect of the problem of propaganda techniques. Whether to mail propaganda materials by inserting them in packages for mailing, or by stamping propaganda and agitation slogans on the packages, is a matter to which political organs should pay attention and which should be dealt with properly.

c. Wall newspapers are one of the important ways to carry out propaganda among the masses. The army and the columns serve as the units to run wall papers. The propaganda sections of political departments are responsible for them and the name of all the papers should be *Current Affairs Bulletin*. The contents are, first, international and domestic political news; second, the situation of the mass struggle in the guerrilla regions; third, the situation of the work of the Red Army. There should be at least one issue every week. The papers should be all written on large sheets of paper and do not need to be mimeographed. Each time, as many pages as possible should be produced. In editing and printing the political news bulletin, attention should be paid to the following points: 1. it should be put out quickly; 2. it should be rich in content; 3. the characters should be a bit bigger and clearer.

d. The various political departments are responsible for collecting and editing revolutionary folksongs that express the different sentiments of the masses. The editorial committee of the army political department has the responsibility for supervising, promoting, and investigating this work.

e. The art unit of the propaganda section of the army political department should be fully developed and should publish lithographed or mimeographed pictorials. In order to strengthen the art unit of the army, the painting talents of the whole army should be concentrated and work together.

f. Propaganda in makeup is the most concrete and most effective method of propaganda, and all propaganda teams of various detachments and various directly attached troops should establish makeup propaganda units to organize and direct the makeup propaganda toward the masses.

g. With the company as the unit, soldiers' associations may set up their own clubs.

h. Propaganda teams should have oral propaganda units and written propaganda units to study and direct oral and written propaganda techniques.

i. The three points of discipline should be strictly observed.

j. The political departments or propaganda teams should hold various kinds of mass rallies in a planned and organized way. The order of rallies, speakers, subjects of speeches and speaking times should be decided in advance.

k. Propaganda directed at the White soldiers and lower-ranking officers is extremely important. In the future, attention should be given to the following methods:

i. The language of propaganda should be simple and concise, to enable them to finish reading in an instant, and should be epigrammatic, so as to leave an impression on them.

ii. Apart from writing, in a planned way, slogans appropriate to the reality of certain armed units along the two sides of roads where the enemy often passes, handbills should be stored with the party headquarters and mass organizations along the roads and be distributed to the enemy troops ingeniously when they pass.

iii. The names of enemy officers and soldiers and the numbers of the enemy units to which they belong may be learned from the captured officers and soldiers and from the inspection of the mail. Propaganda materials should then be mailed to them, or letters should be written to them.
iv. Considerate treatment of captured enemy soldiers is an extremely effective method for conducting propaganda directed at enemy troops. Methods of considerate treatment of captured soldiers include: First, there should be no body searches for money and other objects. The past practice of body searches of captured soldiers for money and goods by Red Army soldiers should be resolutely abolished. Second, captured soldiers should be warmly and enthusiastically welcomed, to make them feel happy in their minds. Any humiliation of the captured soldiers by word or deed should be opposed. Third, captured soldiers should enjoy the same material treatment as the old soldiers. Fourth, if they do not want to stay, they will be let go with travel expenses after they have been exposed to propaganda, so that they may spread the influence of the Red Army in the White army. The practice of forcibly keeping those who are unwilling to stay in order to satisfy the greed for more soldiers should be opposed. All the above points are entirely applicable to captured officers, except in special circumstances.

v. Providing medical treatment for wounded enemy soldiers is also a very effective method for conducting propaganda directed toward the enemy troops. The medical treatment of wounded enemy soldiers and the money issued to them should be exactly the same as those of the wounded soldiers of the Red Army. Advantage should be taken of all possible circumstances to send the enemy wounded back to the enemy army after they are given medicine and money. The treatment of the wounded enemy officers is also the same.

V. The Problem of the Political Training of Soldiers

A. The problem of materials

Textbooks should be very artistically compiled on the following topics, to be used as training materials for soldiers:

1. Analysis of the current political situation and the tasks and plans of the Red Army;
2. Various aspects of the agrarian revolution;
3. Armed organizations and their tactics;
4. The reasons for developing the Three Main Rules of Discipline;
5. Roll call slogans for mornings and evenings;
6. The literacy movement;
7. How to carry out mass work;
8. Item-by-item explanations of Red Army slogans;
9. The correction of various deviations;
10. The Soviet Russian Red Army;
11. The present stage of the revolution, and its future;
12. Comparison between the Red Army and the White armies;
13. Comparison between the Communist Party and the Guomindang;
14. Revolutionary stories;
15. Stories of social evolution;
16. Hygiene;
17. Basic knowledge of the geography, politics, and economy of the guerrilla areas;
18. Revolutionary songs;
19. Pictures and newspapers.

B. Methods

1. Attending political courses
   a. The courses are divided into ordinary, special, and cadres’ courses. There are two kinds of ordinary courses: When the whole detachment is in one place, the detachment constitutes the unit for attending courses, and the political commissars of detachments serve as course directors. The political commissars of companies serve as teachers of different courses. Apart from combat soldiers who should take the courses, messengers, orderlies, permanent laborers, grooms, and cooks should all come to class. The objective of the ordinary courses is to enable ordinary soldiers to gain elementary political knowledge.
   b. A special course is formed with the detachment as a unit by selecting through examination fifty soldiers from various brigades who have some degree of literacy and a little basic political knowledge. Detachment political commissars serve as head teachers, and brigade political commissars teach various classes. The objective of special courses is to produce talented people with political knowledge higher than that taught in ordinary courses, so that in future they may be promoted to serve as lower-ranking cadres.
   c. Cadre courses are formed with columns as a unit. Troops directly attached to armies may also constitute a unit. Cadre courses are composed of company commanders, deputy company commanders, squadron commanders and deputy squadron commanders, junior officers at all levels, and other designated persons. The objective is to raise the existing political level of the lower-ranking cadres to enable them to lead the masses and to become middle-ranking cadres in the future. The teachers are the political commissars, heads of the political departments of columns, column commanders, and other capable persons.
   d. Committees on political training should be organized with detachments as the unit. The organizers are those political commissars and military com-
manders of detachments who are capable of acting as political instructors. The political commissars of detachments should be the directors. The task is to discuss various issues about the political training of soldiers within the detachments.

e. Political training in the troops directly attached to armies and various columns should be conducted by the committees on political training organized by the political propaganda sections of the army and various columns.

f. Methods of teaching:
   i. Stimulating methods (abolish stuffing methods);
   ii. Proceed from near to far;
   iii. Proceed from the easy to the difficult;
   iv. Speak in popular language (new words should be explained in an easily understandable way);
   v. Speak clearly;
   vi. Speak with humor;
   vii. Gesture to assist speaking;
   viii. Review previously learned concepts;
   ix. Prepare outlines;
   x. Cadre courses should adopt the form of discussions.

2. Speeches at roll call in the mornings and evenings
   a. Speeches are limited to no more than half an hour at a time.
   b. Materials:
      i. Report political news;
      ii. Criticize daily life;
      iii. Explain political slogans of the week.

3. Speeches at assemblies
   a. Once every week for detachments; once every half month for columns; those for the whole army are flexible.
   b. The content of every speech must be decided, speakers must be appointed, and the times of speeches must be apportioned through discussion between political work organs and military affairs organs.
   c. Everyone must attend all talks, except those on duty.
   d. Lower-level political organs must report to higher-level political organs about the influence of the content of each speech on the masses.

4. One-to-one talks
   a. One-to-one talks must be conducted with the following types of people:
      i. Those who have erroneous tendencies;
      ii. Those who have been punished;
      iii. Wounded soldiers;
      iv. Sick soldiers;
      v. New soldiers;
      vi. Captured soldiers;
      vii. Those who do not like their work;
      viii. Those who are ideologically vacillating;
   b. Before making speeches, the psychology and environment of the objects of talks should be investigated.
   c. During the talks, one should take a comradely position, and speak to the person sincerely.
   d. After the talks, the gist and impact of the talks must be recorded.

5. Recreational activities
   a. With companies as units, the work of the entertainment department of soldiers' associations should be strengthened by carrying out the following recreational activities:
      i. Hide and seek, etc.;
      ii. Soccer;
      iii. Music;
      iv. Martial arts;
      v. Flower drum tunes;
      vi. Old operas;
   b. Every propaganda team should set up a makeup propaganda troupe.
   c. The equipment expenses of recreational activities are paid with public funds (the expenses of brigades are approved by the political departments of columns).

6. Improve treatment
   a. Resolutely abolish corporal punishment;
   b. Abolish insults and curses;
   c. Preferential treatment of wounded soldiers;
   d. Restore the system of issuing 0.4 yuan in silver every month for straw shoes;

7. How to conduct special education for new soldiers and captured soldiers
   a. Inform new soldiers and captured soldiers of the customs of life in the Red Army, such as: 1. equality between the lives of officers and soldiers (there are only differences of duties but no differences of class between officers and soldiers, and the officers are not the exploiting class and the soldiers are not the exploited class); 2. the Three Main Rules of Discipline and their rationale; 3. the significance and functions of soldiers' associations; 4. the economic systems in the Red Army (economic resources, managerial and economic organizations, economic openness, and the system of inspection by soldiers); 5. the management of company messes, submesses and their sur-
pluses by economic committees; 6. abolishing physical punishments and insults; 7. considerate treatment of captured soldiers.

b. Explain in outline the history of the Red Army.

c. The guiding principles of the Red Army: 1. The differences between the Red Army and the White army should be explained in detail to captured soldiers; 2. the difference between the Red Army and bandits; 3. the three great tasks of the Red Army.

d. Explain the organizational systems of the Red Army.

e. Basic political knowledge, such as: 1. The Guomindang and the Communist Party; 2. the aggression against China by the three big imperialist countries of Britain, Japan, and the United States; 3. the fighting among various factions of warlords under the direction of imperialism; 4. redistribution of land; 5. the soviets; 6. the Red Guards.

VI. Special Education for Young Soldiers

A. The political departments of various columns are responsible for compiling literacy textbooks for the young (using as reference materials the primary school textbooks of the Commercial Press, The Common People’s Thousand Character Textbook, the textbooks compiled by the Longyan Cultural Association, etc.).

B. Every column should set up an internal school of young soldiers with three to four classes. Every detachment forms one class and every directly attached unit has one class. The number of students for each class should not exceed twenty-five persons. The director of the political department should be the principal of the school, and the head of the propaganda section should be the dean. Each class has a head teacher and should complete ninety hours of instruction as one semester.

C. Paper, pen, ink, and other accoutrements shall be purchased with public funds and issued to students.

VII. The Problem of Abolishing Corporal Punishment

A. The Effects of Using Corporal Punishment in the Red Army

The units that have the severest beatings are hated by soldiers the most and have the most numerous deserters. The most obvious examples are the following: A certain officer of the Eighth Detachment of the Third Column liked to beat people. As a result, not only did all the dispatchers and cooks run away but the quartermaster sergeant and the adjutant also ran away. For a time, there was a company commander in the Twenty-fifth Brigade of the Ninth Detachment who took extreme pleasure in hitting people and was called blacksmith by the masses. Consequently, the soldiers felt that they had no way out and were full of resent-

ment and hate. Only when this company commander was transferred elsewhere were the soldiers liberated. The beatings in the Third Company of the Special Task Detachment led to the desertion of four cooks, a head of the special task force, and two squad leaders with long experience of struggle. One of the squad leaders by the name of Xie Wencheng left behind a letter before he went away, explaining that he was not a counterrevolutionary and fled only because he could no longer stand the oppression. In the early period of the founding of the Fourth Column, the column commanders transferred from the Second and Third Columns were bent on beating soldiers brutally. As a result, the soldiers deserted one after another, and finally these officers themselves could not maintain their foothold there and had to leave the Fourth Column. The Second Column has more deserters than any other column. Although there is more than one cause, one of the most important is that the majority of lower-ranking officers of the Second Column have the worst habit of beating people up. In the Second Column, there have been three cases of suicide (one platoon leader and two soldiers). This is the biggest blemish on the Red Army and has the gravest significance. It must be acknowledged that this results from the particular prevalence of the practice of beating people in the Second Column. The outcry of the ordinary soldiers in the Red Army now is “Officers do not beat soldiers, but they beat them to death!” Such expressions of the masses’ anger, resentment, and hatred truly deserve our most serious attention.

B. The Origin of Corporal Punishment and the Reasons for Abolishing It

In order to maintain their feudal exploitation, the feudal classes have to use the cruelest punishment as a tool to suppress the resistance and rebellion of the oppressed. This is the reason why corporal punishment is a product of the feudal era. As the economy develops and progresses to the capitalist system, liberalism must be put forward to promote the individuality of the masses of workers, peasants, and soldiers, to strengthen their capacity to work and struggle, and to create the conditions for capitalist development. Therefore, all capitalist states have generally abolished corporal punishment, and the strange phenomenon of beating people has long ceased to exist in their armies. As the economy develops to the birth of socialism, and the class struggle intensifies, the worker and peasant classes will overthrow the political authority of the ruling class and the exploitation based on this authority. Only by mobilizing the forces of the broad masses of their own classes can they win victory in this struggle. The soviet political régime is the political régime of the most advanced classes. No remnants of feudal systems should exist under it. Therefore, not only has the Soviet Union long since eliminated corporal punishment in the Red Army, but all of its laws strictly prohibit the use of corporal punishment. The Fourth Army of the Red Army is a product of a China that still has not eliminated the feudal system. Its main components are in large part transformed elements from feudal and
warlord armies. The general ideas and habits of the feudal system are still widespread among ordinary officers and soldiers. So the habit of beating people and the conventional idea that fear can be instilled only through beating are still similar to the habits of feudal warlord armies. Although the slogan of officers not beating soldiers and the stipulations of officers’ associations on the right to complain were put forward a long time ago, they are simply not effective. Consequently, distances between officers and soldiers have been created, the spirits of soldiers and officers have been depressed, the number of deserters is increasing daily, resentment and hatred permeate the army, and incidents of suicide have even occurred. This situation runs completely counter to the Red Army’s tasks of struggle. If it is not corrected quickly, there will be indescribable dangers.

C. Methods of Correction

1. Resolutely abolish corporal punishment.

2. A movement for abolishing corporal punishment should be launched. This movement should be carried out among both officers and soldiers, so as to disseminate widely the significance of the saying that “to abolish corporal punishment serves precisely to assist the struggle” among the masses of officers and soldiers. Only thus can officers be made to feel not only that they will still be able to lead the soldiers after the abolition of corporal punishment, but that abolition can further benefit management and training. On the side of the soldiers, they will not become more mischievous because of the abolition of corporal punishment. On the contrary, their fighting spirit will be higher as a result of the abolition. The elimination of the misunderstandings between officers and soldiers will lead to conscientious acceptance of management, training, and general discipline.

3. After the abolition of corporal punishment, some wrongdoing may occasionally occur because of past habits. We should, therefore, strengthen our sense of duty and try to give play to the spirits of persuasion and voluntary observance of discipline in order to overcome this feudal system, which is most contradictory to the tasks of the struggle. A few instances of wrongdoing should never be a pretext for covering up the habit of beating people derived from the feudal system. All those who oppose the abolition of corporal punishment under the pretext of occasional wrongdoing, or go slow in the movement to abolish corporal punishment, are objectively obstructing the development of the revolutionary struggle and are in fact assisting the ruling class.

4. Legal procedures of the Red Army in abolishing corporal punishment: (1) The rules and regulations of the Red Army on punishment shall be amended. (2) The supreme military and political organs shall jointly issue a notice abolishing corporal punishment and promulgate new rules and regulations of the Red Army on punishment. (3) After the notice is issued, the military and political organs should, on the one hand, convene meetings of officers to explain thoroughly the reasons for abolishing corporal punishment and to enable all the officers to support the important reform embodied in the notice and try hard to implement it in their units. (4) On the other hand, soldiers’ associations should convene representative conferences of soldiers to support this reform and to demand conscientious observance of discipline in the future. In addition, the disciplinary sanctions by the masses should be strict for the purpose of achieving good results after the abolition of corporal punishment.

VIII. On the Question of Granting Considerate Treatment to Wounded Soldiers

A. The Sufferings of Wounded and Sick Soldiers and Their Impact

1. The medical units of all forces of the whole army are not well established, with few medical officers and little medicine, insufficient stretchers and equipment, and few and incompetent staff members. Therefore, at times many wounded and sick soldiers cannot obtain adequate treatment or even general preliminary treatment.

2. The military and political organs of the whole army have not given enough attention to wounded and sick soldiers. For example, (1) Utmost efforts have not been made to develop medical units and, moreover, absolutely no attention has been paid to this issue. Meetings of all kinds rarely discuss the issue of health. (2) Officers fail to do all they possibly can to comfort wounded and sick soldiers at all times, such as bringing them tea, covering them with quilts, and visiting them frequently. These and other habits are almost nonexistent in the Red Army. The officers adopt an attitude of ignoring wounded and sick soldiers or even of loathing them. (3) During marches, officers and even soldiers show absolutely no sympathy toward wounded soldiers who fall out of ranks. Not only do they fail to find ways to help the wounded but they angrily curse them or drive them away ruthlessly.

3. Supplies and funds for seriously wounded and sick soldiers are insufficient. Seven or eight days after being wounded, the soldiers still have no clothes into which to change. The wounded officers have money for recuperation, but wounded soldiers have none.

4. The shortcomings of Jiaoyang Hospital: (1) a state of anarchy; (2) severe shortage of medical officers and medicine; (3) medical officers selling medicine illegally; (4) unhygienic; (5) lack of winter clothes; (6) too few nurses; (7) poor food supplies; (8) lack of living space; (9) a poor relationship with the local masses. All this makes wounded and sick soldiers regard the hospital as a prison and dislike staying in the rear.

The above-mentioned ill treatment of wounded and sick soldiers has the following impact: (1) Soldiers are dissatisfied with the Red Army. The opinion “the Red Army is fine so long as one is not wounded or sick” is very prevalent among
the entire body of soldiers and lower-ranking officers. (2) The discontent of soldiers and officers will further increase the misunderstandings between them. (3) Soldiers and officers are all afraid of being wounded, thus weakening the fighting force of the Red Army. (4) More deserters. (5) The masses of workers and peasants are influenced, and their courage to join the Red Army is diminished.

**B. Methods for Resolving the Problem**

1. Military and political organs should never behave as they did in the past and pay no attention to the issue of health, and future meetings should discuss the issue of health.

2. The organization of medical units should be made particularly sound. Competent staff should be recruited, and those who are not wanted elsewhere should not be stuffed into medical units. The number of staff members should be increased to provide adequate care. The problem of lack of doctors and medicine should be resolved by all means. With regard to doctors, attention should be paid to urge them to examine patients carefully and to avoid rashness.

3. Officers, especially those at company level, who are close to the soldiers, should frequently visit wounded soldiers, bring them tea to drink, and cover them with quilts at night. If they feel cold, solutions should be found for them, such as borrowing from others or increasing clothes for them. The above methods of taking care of the wounded should become a system, and everyone should carry it out, for this is the best method to win support from the masses.

4. Concerning wounded soldiers who fall behind the ranks during marches: (1) They are not allowed to be cursed furiously or sneered at. (2) They should be kindly persuaded and not forced aside with one push when asking them to make way. (3) No matter which forces or units they are in and whether they are combat or noncombat soldiers, all those who fall behind the ranks because of sickness or wounds should be taken care of by sending a person over. If they are seriously wounded or sick, the best efforts should be made to hire helpers to carry them. (4) In every march, the rear guard should be patient and bring up the wounded and sick soldiers who have fallen behind and carry back guns and ammunition for them whenever necessary.

5. In issuing pocket money to wounded soldiers, consideration should be given to the severity of their wound or sickness. More money should be given to the seriously wounded or sick than to the slightly wounded or sick. The very seriously wounded or sick should be given money for recuperation in light of their condition regardless of whether they are officers, soldiers, or laborers.

6. Concerning the issue of clothes and quilts to wounded and sick soldiers, besides those provided by the units in the best way they can, requests for donations should be initiated among officers and soldiers in all units. This not only serves to increase the pocket money of the wounded but is also a good method for arousing the spirit of mutual assistance and aiding those in hardship.

7. The many shortcomings of Jiaoyang Hospital in the rear should be corrected systematically. Furthermore, a request for donations (clothes, quilts, cash, and grain) should be launched among the masses of workers and peasants in western Fujian to strengthen the link between the masses of workers and peasants and the Red Army.

**IX. On the Problem of the Relationship between the Military System and Political System of the Red Army**

A. Before the establishment of high-level local political organs, the political and military organs of the Red Army work on an equal footing under the guidance of the Front Committee.

B. The relationship between the Red Army and the masses:

1. All items that have significance for the whole Army, such as the issuance of political programs, should be put out by the military and political organs jointly.

2. Before the establishment of local political organs, the guidance and supervision of mass work such as propaganda to the masses, organization of the masses, the establishment of political régimes, confiscation, administration of justice, punishment, fund raising, and disaster relief shall be the responsibility of the political department.

3. In areas where no political organs have been established, the political department of the Red Army should substitute itself for local political organs until such organs are established. In the areas where local political organs have already been established, the principle of enabling the local political organs to handle all matters independently and of consolidating the belief of the masses in them should be adhered to. Only in areas where local political organs are not well established, and on issues that concern both the Red Army and the localities, may the method of handling matters jointly by local political organs and the Political Department of the Red Army be employed.

4. Assisting the establishment and development of local armed forces is the responsibility of the Political Department, and assisting peacetime military training and wartime combat command of local armed forces is the responsibility of Headquarters. In both cases, the channel passing through local political organs needs to be used as much as possible and direct handling should be avoided as much as possible.

C. Inside the Red Army, the military and political systems have independent channels for dealing with personnel and administration. When they have contacts such as transfer of personnel and exchange of information, they should interact through official letters on an equal footing.

D. With regard to courtesy and administration of military discipline, both the military and political systems in their mutual relationships should abide by the
principle of submitting themselves to the class\textsuperscript{65} and should not go slow or disobey orders in any way on the pretext that the systems are different.

E. On matters such as supplies, hygiene, marches, combat, and taking up quarters, the political system should be under the command of the military system. On matters concerning political training and the work of the masses, the military system should be under the command of the political system. But the only way to command is by direct guidance of the subordinate units in the opposite system (the general affairs section or the adjutant's office).

F. All matters concerning the guidance of fund-raising and the determination and spending of funds for political work in the Red Army are under the jurisdiction of the Political Department and should not be interfered with by military organs. (The procedure of withdrawing funds is that the Political Department makes direct contact with the military supplies section.) The expenditure for the party headquarters should be apportioned by the Political Department.

G. Regarding all orders of military organs, apart from those that must be countersigned by the political commissar, the director of the Political Department does not need to sign them. All orders of political organs are executed by the Political Department independently and the political commissar does not need to countersign them.

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\textsuperscript{65} I.e., of subordinating themselves to the interests of the working class.
New Year's Day¹
(To the Tune of "Like a Dream")
(January 1930)

Ninghua, Qingliu, and Guihua,²
Paths are narrow, forests deep, moss slippery.
Whither shall we go today?
Straight to the foot of Wuyi Mountain.
At the foot of the mountain, the foot of the mountain,
The wind unfurls our red banner like a picture.

¹ This refers to the first day of the lunar new year, which fell in 1930 on January 30.
² Names of three xian in Fujian Province, through which Mao led his Red Army troops at the beginning of 1930.
Letter to Comrade Lin Biao

(January 5, 1930)

Comrade Lin Biao:

Several days have gone by since New Year and I still have not replied to your letter. One reason is that some things have kept me busy, and another is that I have not been wondering what I should actually write to you. Do I have anything good to offer you? After racking my brain, I still could not find anything suitable, so I put it off. Now I have thought of a few things. Although I do not know whether they really apply to your situation, the few things I have to say are indeed about an important problem in the present struggle. Even if it does not apply to your particular circumstances, it is still a crucial general problem, and that is why I am bringing it up.

What is the problem that I want to raise? It is the problem of how to evaluate the current situation and what actions we should take in consequence. I felt quite strongly in the past, and to some extent I still feel now, that your evaluation of the situation is rather pessimistic. This viewpoint of yours was most obvious at the meeting on the evening of May 18 last year in Rujin. I know that you believe that a revolutionary high tide will inevitably arise, but you do not believe it could possibly come quickly. Consequently, as far as action is concerned, you do not approve of the plan to take Jiangxi in one year and approve only of guerrilla actions in the three areas on the borders of Fujian, Guangdong, and Jiangxi; at the same time, you do not have a deep understanding of what it means to establish Red political power in the three areas and, therefore, do not have a deep understanding of the idea of accelerating the nationwide revolutionary high tide through the consolidation and expansion of Red political power. Judging from your belief in the policy of "star" mobile guerrilla actions, you seem to think that, since the revolutionary high tide is still remote, to undertake the arduous work of establishing political power would be to labor in vain. Instead, you want to extend our political influence through the easier method of roving guerrilla actions and wait until the masses throughout the country have been won over, or more or less won over, before launching a nationwide insurrection which, with the participation of the Red Army, would become a great nationwide revolution. Your theory that we must first win over the masses everywhere on a nationwide scale, and then establish political power, is not, in my opinion, applicable to the Chinese revolution. As I see it, this theory derives mainly from your failure to understand clearly that China is a semicolonial country for which imperialism is contending in its final stages. If you clearly recognized this, then you would understand, first of all, why, in the whole world, the strange phenomenon of chaotic warfare within the ruling class is found in China alone, why this warfare is steadily growing fiercer and more widespread, and why there can at no time be a unified political power. Second, you would understand the grave significance of the peasant problem and hence why rural insurrections have developed on the present nationwide scale. Third, you would understand the absolute correctness of the slogan of workers' and peasants' political power. Fourth, you would understand another strange phenomenon, which follows from the first (that in China alone there is chaotic warfare within the ruling class), namely, the existence and development of the Red Army and guerrilla forces, and together with them, the existence and development of small areas of Red political power (the soviets) encircled by the White régime.

This text first appeared in the 1947 Jin-Cha-Ji edition of Mao's works, Mao Zedong xuanji, compiled by the Central Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party for the Jin-Cha-Ji Border Area, Xibian (Supplement) (Xinhua shudian, 1947), and we have translated it from that source. It was about to be similarly published in the two-volume 1948 edition compiled by the Jin-Ji-Lu-Yu Central Bureau of the Party, when Lin Biao made a plea to the Central Committee that a document so critical of him should not be reproduced yet again. The relevant pages were therefore cut out of the books, which had already been printed, and the title blotted out in the table of contents. All references to Lin were subsequently removed in the official version published in 1951 in the Selected Works, under the title "A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire." The fact that Lin Biao was the target is indicated in the second Chinese edition of the Xuanji, published in 1991, but the new title has been retained. The extensive passages quoted by Mao in this text from his letter of April 5, 1929, are reproduced here as in the translation which appears above under that date. Variants introduced by Mao in 1951 are indicated in the usual way.

1. The problem of how to evaluate the current situation and what actions we should take in consequence → Some comrades in our Party still do not know how to evaluate the current situation and what actions we should take in consequence.
2. I know that you → Although they
3. Here, and in the balance of this paragraph, you → they.
strange thing does not exist outside China.) Fifth, you would understand that the expansion of the Red Army, the guerrilla forces and the Soviet areas is the highest form of the peasant struggle in a semicolonial, and the form toward which the semicolonial peasant struggle must move. Sixth, you would understand that they (the Red Army and the peasants’ soviet) are undoubtedly the most significant allied forces of the proletarian struggle in the semicolonial countries. (The proletariat must step forward to lead them), and that they are important factors in promoting the revolutionary high tide throughout the country. And seventh, you would also understand that the policy which merely calls for roving guerrilla actions cannot accomplish the task of promoting this nationwide revolutionary high tide, while the kind of policy adopted by Zhu and Mao, He Long, Li Wenlin, and Fang Zhimin is undoubtedly correct—that is, the policy of establishing base areas; of systematically setting up political power; of close coordination, organization, and training of the Red Army, the guerrilla troops, and the broad peasant masses; of deepening the agrarian revolution; and of expanding the armed forces by a comprehensive process of building up first the township insurrection troops, then the district Red Guards, then the xian Red Guards, then the local Red Army troops, all the way up to non-local Red Army troops; and of spreading political power by advancing in a series of waves. Only thus is it possible to build the confidence of the revolutionary masses throughout the country, as Soviet Russia has built it throughout the world. Only thus is it possible to create tremendous difficulties for the ruling classes, shake their foundations, and hasten their internal disintegration. Only thus is it really possible to create a Red Army which will become one of the important instruments in the great revolution of the future. In short, only thus is it possible to promote the revolutionary high tide.

Now, I would like to say more about what I feel are the reasons for your rather pessimistic evaluation of the situation. I feel that your evaluation is the exact opposite of the evaluation by the faction within the Party who suffer from revolutionary impetuosity. Comrades who commit the error of revolutionary impetuosity overestimate the subjective forces and underestimate the objective forces. Such an appraisal stems mainly from idealism, and in the end undoubtedly leads to the erroneous path of adventurism. You have not made this mistake; but your shortcomings seem to be of another kind, namely, underestimating subjective forces and overestimating objective forces to a certain extent. This would also constitute an improper appraisal and be certain to produce bad results of another kind. You acknowledge the weakness of subjective forces and the strength of objective ones, but you do not seem to recognize the following key points:

1. Although the subjective forces of the revolution in China are weak, so also are all organizations (organs of political power, armed forces, political parties, etc.) of the ruling classes, resting as they do on the fragile social and economic structure of China. This helps to explain why revolution cannot break out at once in the countries of Western Europe, where, although the subjective forces of revolution are much stronger than in China, the forces of the ruling classes are many times stronger. In China the revolution will undoubtedly move toward a high tide more rapidly than in Western Europe, for although the subjective forces of the revolution at present are weak, the objective forces are weak, too.

2. The subjective forces of the revolution have indeed been greatly weakened since the defeat of the Great Revolution. The remaining subjective forces are very small, and if one judges by form, this naturally makes the comrades (those comrades who have this way of looking at things) feel pessimistic. But if we judge by reality, it is quite another story. Here we can apply the old Chinese saying, “A single spark can start a prairie fire.” In other words, our forces, although small at present, will grow very rapidly. In the conditions prevailing in China, their growth is not only possible but indeed inevitable, as the May Thirtieth movement and the Great Revolution which followed have fully proved. When we look at a thing, we must examine its essence and treat its form merely as an usher at the threshold, and once we cross the threshold, we must grasp the

20. Overestimate the subjective forces and underestimate the objective forces → Overestimate the subjective forces of the revolution and underestimate the forces of the counter-revolution. As indicated by this emendation of 1951, Mao refers to the forces of revolution as “subjective,” because they are within the control of the Communist leadership, and the forces of counter-revolution as “objective,” because they constitute an external reality with which the Communists must deal. There is little doubt, however, that in this letter he is also talking more broadly about the importance of subjective factors and “conscious action,” which he had stressed since his earliest youth.

21. Idealism → Subjectivism
22. You acknowledge the weakness of subjective forces and the strength of objective ones, but you do not seem to recognize the following key points: → Therefore, in judging the political situation in China it is necessary to understand the following:

23. The fragile social and economic structure → The backward and fragile social and economic structure
24. Are much stronger → Are perhaps now somewhat stronger
25. The Great Revolution → The revolution in 1927
26. Form → appearances alone
essence of the thing and throw away the form that serves as an usher; this is the only reliable and scientific method of analysis that has revolutionary significance.

3. Similarly, in appraising the objective forces, we must never look merely at their form, but should examine their essence. In the initial period of our independent régime in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, a few comrades, under the influence of the incorrect appraisal of the Hunan Provincial Committee at that time, genuinely believed the words of the Hunan Provincial Committee and regarded the class enemy as altogether worthless; the two descriptive terms, "thoroughly shaky" and "utterly panic-stricken," which are standing jokes to this day, were used by the Hunan Provincial Committee at the time (from May to June the year before last) in assessing the Hunan ruler Lu Diping. Such an assessment necessarily led to adventurism in the political sphere. But during the four months from November the year before last to February last year (before the outbreak of the war between Chiang Kai-shek and the Guangxi warlords), when the largest and the third "joint suppression expedition" was approaching the Jinggangshan, some comrades expressed doubts, saying, "How long can we keep the Red flag flying?" As a matter of fact, the struggle in China between Britain, the United States and Japan had by then become quite open and a state of tangled warfare between Chiang Kai-shek, the Guangxi clique and Feng Yuxiang was taking shape; hence it was actually the time when the counter-revolutionary tide had begun to ebb and the revolutionary tide to rise again. Yet a pessimistic mentality was to be found not only in the Red Army and local Party organizations; even the Central Committee was misled by the superficial objective situation and adopted a pessimistic tone. Its February 7 letter is evidence of the pessimistic analysis made in the Party at that time.

4. The objective situation today is still such that comrades who see only the form and not the essence of what is before them are liable to be misled. In particular, when our comrades working in the Red Army are defeated in battle or encircled or pursued by strong enemy forces, they often unwittingly generalize and exaggerate their momentary, specific, and limited situation, as though the situation in China and the world as a whole gave no cause for optimism and the prospects of victory for the revolution were remote. The reason they brush aside the essence in their observation of things is that they have no scientific understanding of the essence of the overall situation. The question of whether there will soon be a revolutionary high tide in China can be decided only by making a detailed examination to ascertain whether the contradictions leading to a revolutionary high tide are developing. If we correctly recognize that contradictions are developing in the world between the imperialist countries, between the imperialist countries and their colonies, and between the imperialists and the proletariat, it follows that the need of the imperialists to contend for the domination of China becomes more urgent. While the imperialist contention becomes more intense, both the contradiction between imperialism and the whole Chinese nation and the contradictions among the imperialists themselves develop simultaneously on Chinese soil, thereby creating the tangled warfare which is expanding and intensifying daily and giving rise to the continuous development of the contradictions among China's ruling classes. In the wake of the contradictions among the rulers—the chaotic warfare among the warlords—come ruthless increases of taxation, which steadily sharpen the contradiction between the broad masses of taxpayers and the rulers. In the wake of the contradiction between imperialism and China's capitalism comes the failure of the Chinese bourgeoisie to obtain concessions from the imperialists, which sharpens the contradiction between the Chinese bourgeoisie and the Chinese working class, forcing the Chinese bourgeoisie to increase exploitation of the working class. In the wake of imperialist commercial aggression, merchant-capitalist extortion, heavier burdens of taxation, and so on, comes the deepening of the contradiction between the landlord class and the peasantry, that is, exploitation through rent and interest is aggravated. Because of the pressure of foreign goods, the exhaustion of the consumer power of the worker and peasant masses, and the increase in government taxation, more and more dealers in Chinese-made goods and independent small producers are being driven into bankruptcy. Because of endless expansion of armies and constant extension of the warfare under the condition of lack of provisions and funds, the masses of soldiers are in the daily misery of suffering from hunger and cold, flight, and casualties. Because of the growth in

27. In appraising the objective forces → In appraising the counterrevolutionary forces
28. The words of → The incorrect appraisal made by
29. The largest and the third → The enemy's third
30. Mentality → Ideas
31. Situation → Appearances
32. The form → The superficial appearance
33. Brush aside the essence → Seize on the appearance and brush aside the essence
34. They have no scientific understanding → They have not made a scientific analysis
35. If we correctly recognize that → Since
36. The proletariat → The proletariat in their own countries
37. Among China's ruling classes → Among the different cliques of China's reactionary rulers
38. Ruthless increases of taxation → Heavier taxation
39. The rulers → The reactionary rulers
40. China's capitalism → China's national industry
41. The Chinese bourgeoisie → The Chinese industrialists
42. Forcing the Chinese bourgeoisie to increase exploitation of the working class → With the Chinese capitalists trying to find a way out by frantically exploiting the workers and with the workers resisting
43. Exploitation through rent and interest is aggravated → Exploitation through rent and usury is aggravated and the hatred of the peasants for the landlords grows
44. Consumer power → Purchasing power
45. In the daily misery of suffering from hunger and cold, flight, and casualties → In a constant state of privation
government taxation, the rise in rent and interest demanded by the landlords, and the daily spread of the disasters of war, famine and banditry everywhere and the peasant masses and the urban poor can hardly keep alive. Because the schools have no money, students fear that their education may be interrupted; because production is backward, graduates have no hope of employment. Once we understand all these contradictions, we shall see in what a desperate situation, in what an anarchic state, China finds herself. We shall also see that the high tide of revolution against the imperialists, the warlords, and the landlords is inevitable and will come very soon. All China is spread with dry faggots which will soon be aflame. The saying “A single spark can start a prairie fire” is an apt description of the present situation. We need only look at the development of the national situation, in which the strikes by the workers, the uprisings by the peasants, the mutinies of soldiers, and the strikes of merchants and students are taking place everywhere, to see that they are no longer just “sparks” and that the time of a great “prairie fire” is undoubtedly not far off.

The gist of the above was already contained in the letter from the Front Committee to the Central Committee on April 5, 1929, which reads in part:

The Central Committee’s letter (dated February 9) makes too pessimistic an appraisal of the objective situation and of the subjective forces. The three “suppression” campaigns against the Jinggangshan represented the high water mark of the counterrevolutionary tide. But there it stopped, and since then the counterrevolutionary tide has gradually receded, while the revolutionary tide has gradually risen. Although our Party’s fighting capacity and organizational strength have been weakened to the extent described by the Central Committee, they will be rapidly restored, and the passivity among comrades in the Party will quickly disappear as the counterrevolutionary tide gradually ebb. The masses will certainly come over to us. Butcherism serves only to “drive the fish into deep waters,” and reformism no longer has any appeal to the masses. The illusions of the masses about the Guomindang will assuredly be soon dissipated. In the circumstances which will arise, no other party will be able to compete with the Communist Party in winning over the masses. The political line and the organizational line laid down by the Sixth Congress are entirely correct: the current stage of the revolution is democratic and not socialist, and the present task of the Party is to win over the masses and not to stage immediate armed insurrections. Nevertheless, the revolution is developing swiftly, and we should adopt a positive spirit in our propaganda about, and in preparations for, armed insurrection. In the present chaotic situation we can lead the masses only if we have positive slogans and a positive spirit. Only by having such a spirit can the Party recover its fighting capacity. We feel that the Party committed the error of adventurism in the past, and now it has a rather marked liquidationist tendency in some places. . . . Proletarian leadership is the sole key to the victory of the revolution. Building up the Party’s proletarian basis, and establishing Party branches in industrial enterprises in key areas are the greatest organizational tasks for the Party at present. But, at the same time, the development of the struggle in the countryside, the establishment of soviets in small areas, and the creation and expansion of the Red Army are prerequisites for aiding the struggle in the cities and hastening the revolutionary upsurge. The greatest mistake would therefore be to abandon the struggle in the cities and sink into rural guerrilla-ism. But in our opinion, it is also a mistake—if any of our Party members hold such views—to fear the development of the power of the peasants lest it outstrip the workers’ leadership and become detrimental to the revolution. For the revolution in semicolonial China will fail only if the peasant struggle is deprived of the leadership of the workers; the revolution itself will never suffer just because the peasant struggle develops in such a way as to become more powerful than the workers. The letter also contained the following reply on the question of the Red Army’s operational tactics:

The Central Committee asks us to divide our forces into very small units and disperse them over the countryside and to withdraw Zhu De and Mao Zedong from the army, thus concealing the major targets—all this with the aim of preserving the Red Army and arousing the masses. This is a kind of ideal view. In the winter of 1927–1928, we did start to plan to disperse our forces over the countryside, with each company or battalion operating on its own and adopting guerrilla tactics in order to arouse the masses while trying not to present a target for the enemy; we have tried this many times, but have failed every time. The reasons are: 1. Most of the soldiers of the Red Army come from other areas and have a background different from that of the local Red Guards . . . ; 2. Division into small units results in weak leadership and
organization and inability to cope with adverse circumstances, which easily lead to defeat; 3. The units are liable to be crushed by the enemy one by one...; 4. The more adverse the circumstances, the greater the need for concentration and for the leaders to be resolute in struggle, because only thus can we have internal unity to resist the enemy. Only in favorable circumstances is it advisable to divide our forces for guerrilla operations, and it is only then that the leaders need not stay with the ranks all the time, as they must in adverse circumstances. . .61

The weakness of this passage is that the reasons adduced against the division of forces were all of a negative character, and this is altogether insufficient. The positive reason for concentrating our forces should be62 that only concentration will enable us to crush63 comparatively large enemy units and occupy towns. Only after we have crushed comparatively large enemy units and occupied towns can we arouse the masses on a broad scale and set up political power extending over several adjoining xian. Only thus can we make a widespread impact (what we call “extending our political influence”) and contribute somewhat effectively to speeding the day of the revolutionary high tide. For instance, both the régime we set up in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area the year before last and the one we set up in western Fujian last year were the product of this policy of concentrating our troops. This is a major principle.64 But are there not times when our forces should be divided up? Yes, there are. The letter from the Front Committee to the Central Committee spoke of guerrilla tactics for the Red Army, including the division of forces within a short radius. The main points are as follows:

The tactics we have derived from the struggle of the past three years are indeed different from any other tactics, ancient or modern, Chinese or foreign. With our tactics, the masses can be aroused for struggle on an ever-broadening scale, and no enemy, however powerful, can cope with us. Ours are guerrilla tactics. They consist mainly of the following points:

“Divide our forces to arouse the masses, concentrate our forces to deal with the enemy.”

“The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue.”

“To extend stable base areas, employ the policy of advancing in waves; when pursued by a powerful enemy, employ the policy of circling around.”

“Arouse the largest numbers of the masses in the shortest possible time and by the best possible methods.”

These tactics are just like casting a net; at any moment we should be able to cast it or draw it in. We cast it wide to win over the masses and draw it in to deal with the enemy. Such are the tactics we have used for the past three years.

Here, “to cast the net wide” means to do so within a short radius. For example, when we first captured the xian town of Yongxin in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, we divided the forces of the Twenty-ninth and Thirty-first Regiments within the boundaries of Yongxin xian. Again, when we captured Yongxin for the third time, we once more divided our forces by dispatching the Twenty-eighth Regiment to the border of Anfu xian, the Twenty-ninth to Lianhua, and the Thirty-first to the border of Ji’an xian. And we again divided our forces in the xian of southern Jiangxi last April and May, and in the xian of western Fujian last July. These are all appropriate examples. As for dividing our forces over a wide radius, it is possible only on the two conditions that circumstances are comparatively favorable and the leading bodies fairly strong. For the purpose of dividing up our forces is to put us in a better position for winning over the masses, for deepening the agrarian revolution and establishing political power, and for expanding the Red Army and the local armed units. It is better not to divide our forces when this purpose cannot be attained, or when, on the contrary, the division of our forces would even lead to defeat and to the weakening of the Red Army, as happened in August two years ago when our forces were divided on the Hunan-Jiangxi border for an attack on Chenzhou. But there is no doubt that, given the two above-mentioned conditions, we should divide our forces, because division is then more advantageous than concentration. As for dividing our forces in order to preserve our real strength and avoid the concentration of targets under grave circumstances, I am in principle opposed to this, as explained in the letter of the Front Committee to the Central Committee quoted above. Apart from this, will there be times when the division of forces to carry out the work is necessary, because the economic situation does not permit concentration? Perhaps there will be. But I cannot draw definite conclusions about it, since we have no concrete experience of such circumstances.

The Central Committee’s February letter was not in the right spirit and had a bad effect on a few Party comrades65 in the Fourth Army. It seems that even you were influenced by it to some extent. At that time the Central Committee also issued a circular stating that war would not necessarily break out between Chiang Kai-shek and the Guangxi warlords. Since then, however, the appraisals and directives of the Central Committee have, in the main, been entirely correct. It has already issued another circular correcting the one containing the wrong appraisal. (In fact, only a part of the circular was wrong.) Although it has not made any correction of the letter to the Red Army, its subsequent directives have been completely devoid of those pessimistic sentiments and its views on the Red

61. The suspension points here are Mao’s but we have added the indication that points (1) and (3) of the April 5 letter are quoted above in abridged form.
62. Should be \(\rightarrow\) is
63. To crush \(\rightarrow\) To wipe out
64. A major principle \(\rightarrow\) A general principle
65. A few Party comrades \(\rightarrow\) Some Party comrades
Army’s operations now coincide completely with those of the Front Committee. Yet the bad effect which this letter had on some comrades still persists. Although the Front Committee’s letter replying to the Central Committee was distributed within the Party at the same time as the Central Committee’s letter, it does not appear to have had any great influence on these comrades, because the letter of the Central Committee met their taste exactly. The many correct directives issued later by the Central Committee regarding the situation have, on the other hand, either been ignored by these comrades or have not been able to wash away their earlier impression. Therefore, I feel that it is still necessary to give some explanation.

As for the plan to take Jiangxi Province within one year, it was also proposed last April by the Front Committee to the Central Committee, and a decision to that effect was later made at Yudu. The reasons for this were given in the letter to the Central Committee, and I reproduce them here:

The armies of Chiang Kai-shek and the Guanzhao warlords are approaching each other in the vicinity of Jujiang, and a big battle is imminent. Henceforth, the rule of the Guomindang will disintegrate, and the revolutionary high tide will arrive very quickly. As for how our work should be arranged under these circumstances, we feel that, so far as the southern provinces are concerned, the armed forces of the compradors and landlords in Guangdong and Hunan provinces are too strong, and that in Hunan, moreover, we have lost almost all the masses, inside as well as outside the Party, because of the error of the Party’s adventurist policies. In the three provinces of Fujian, Jiangxi, and Zhejiang, however, the situation is different. First, the military forces are weakest there. In Zhejiang, there is only a small provincial defense force under Jiang Bocheng. In Fujian, although there are five groups of enemy troops, totaling fourteen regiments in all, Guo’s troops have already been smashed; the troops under Chen and Lu are bandits of small fighting capacity; the two brigades of marines stationed along the coast have never seen action and their fighting capacity is undoubtedly not great; Zhang Chen alone can put up some sort of a fight, but according to an analysis made by the Fujian Provincial Committee, even he has only two good regiments. In addition, Fujian is now in a state of complete anarchy and disunity. In Jiangxi, there are sixteen regiments under the two commands of Zhu Peide and Xiong Shihui; they are stronger than the armed forces of either Fujian or Zhejiang, but far inferior to those of Hunan. Secondly, fewer adventurer mistakes have been made in these three provinces. We are not clear about the situation in Zhejiang, but the Party’s organizational and mass base is somewhat better in Jiangxi and Fujian than in Hunan.

66. Henceforth, the rule of the Guomindang will disintegrate, and the revolutionary high tide will arrive very quickly → The resumption of mass struggle, coupled with the spread of contradictions among the ruling reactionaries, makes it probable that there will soon be a high tide of revolution.

67. The military forces → The military forces of the enemy
68. Good regiments → Relatively strong regiments
69. Complete anarchy → Complete chaos

Take Jiangxi, for example. In northern Jiangxi we still have some bases in De’an, Xiushui, and Tonggu; in western Jiangxi the Party and the Red Guards still have some strength in Ninggang, Yongxin, Lianhua, and Suichuan; in southern Jiangxi the prospects are still much brighter, as the Second and Fourth Regiments of the Red Army are steadily growing in strength in the xian of Ji’an, Yongxin, and Xingguo; moreover, the Red Army under Fang Zhimin has by no means been wiped out. All this places us in a position to close in on Nanchang. We hereby recommend to the Central Committee that during the period of prolonged and chaotic warfare among the Guomindang warlords, we should contend with Chiang Kai-shek and the Guanzhao clique for Jiangxi Province, and at the same time for western Fujian and western Zhejiang. In these three provinces we should enlarge the Red Army and create an independent régime of the masses, with a time limit of one year for accomplishing this plan. During this one year, we must lay the foundations for the struggle of the proletariat in Shanghai, Wuxi, Ningbo, Hangzhou, Fuzhou, Xiamen, and other places, so that they can lead the peasant struggles in Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Fujian. The Jiangxi Provincial Committee must be soundly established, and efforts must be made to build a basis among the workers in Nanchang, Jujiang, Ji’an, and on the Nanchang-Jujiang Railroad.

This proposal to take Jiangxi within one year rested only in mechanically setting a time limit of one year. In my understanding, taking Jiangxi also implied, apart from conditions within the province itself, that a nationwide revolutionary high tide would soon arise. For unless we had been convinced that there would soon be a high tide of revolution, we could not possibly have concluded that we could take Jiangxi in one year. The defect of the proposal was that it should not have mechanically set a time limit of one year, thus giving a flavor of rigidity and impetuosity to the word “soon” in the statement “there will soon be a high tide of revolution.” Your failure to believe in taking Jiangxi in one year results, however, from your overestimate of objective forces and underestimate of subjective forces. That is why you do not believe in the rapid arrival of a revolutionary high tide, and why you reach this conclusion. As to the subjective and objective conditions in Jiangxi, they very much merit our attention. Apart from subjective conditions, which are still as described above, and about which I have no new opinions to add, three points can now be clearly made regarding objective conditions. First, the economy of Jiangxi is mainly one of feudal remnants, or of exploitation through land rents, the merchant-capitalist class is relatively weak, and the armed forces of the landlords are stronger than in any other southern province. Second, Jiangxi has no provincial troops of its own and has always been garrisoned by troops from other provinces. Sent there for the “suppression of Communists” or “suppression of bandits,” these troops are unfamiliar with local conditions, their interests are much less directly involved than if
they were local troops, and they usually lack enthusiasm. And thirdly, unlike Guangdong which is close to Hong Kong and under British control in almost every respect, Jiangxi is comparatively remote from imperialist influence. Once we have grasped these three points, we can understand why rural insurrections72 are more widespread and the Red Army and guerrilla units more numerous in Jiangxi than in any other province.

I have more or less finished what I want to say to you. I have been long-winded and perhaps have said too much. But I feel that our discussion of the problem has been beneficial. If indeed the issue that we have been discussing is resolved correctly, it will have a very substantial impact on the actions of the Red Army. That is why I have been very glad to write this piece.

Two last points must still be clarified. First, how then should we interpret the word “soon” in the statement “there will soon be a high tide of revolution”? This is a question shared by many comrades. Marxists are not fortune-tellers. They should, and indeed can, only indicate the general direction of future developments and changes; they should not and cannot fix the day and the hour in a mechanistic way. But when I say that there will soon be a high tide of revolution in China, I am emphatically not speaking of something which in the words of some people “is possibly coming,” something illusory, unattainable, and devoid of significance for action. It is like a ship far out at sea whose masthead can already be seen at the horizon from the shore; it is like the morning sun in the east whose shimmering rays are visible from a high mountain top; it is like a child about to be born moving restlessly in its mother’s womb. Second, when I say that you want to use the method of mobile guerrilla actions to extend political influence, I do not mean that you have a purely military viewpoint or the ideology of roving rebel bands. Manifestly, you have neither of them, for these two kinds of ideas are devoid of any concept of winning over the masses and you, on the contrary, have proposed to “go all out to mobilize the masses.” Not only have you advocated this but you have been carrying it out in practice. What I disapprove of is your lack of an incisive concept for building political power. Consequently, the task of winning over the masses and promoting a revolutionary high tide can definitely not be successfully accomplished as you have imagined in your mind. The main purpose of my letter is to make this point.

Please correct me where I am wrong.

Mao Zedong
At Shanghang, Gutian

Letter from the Fourth Army of the Chinese Red Army (the Red Army of Zhu and Mao) to the Soldiers of the Guomindang Army

(January 1930)

Brother soldiers of the Guomindang army!

1. The warlords are now opening fire again!

The warlords are now fighting again. On the one hand, the imperialist allies are attacking the Soviet Union (Russia), and the Chinese warlord Chiang Kai-shek is their loyal running dog; on the other hand, Chiang Kai-shek, having usurped all power over the central government, has aroused the opposition of warlords big and small throughout the nation. The first kind of war, the attack on the Soviet Union, is a worldwide war of all counterrevolutionary forces attacking the revolutionary forces, while the latter is a contest among the Chinese warlords, representing imperialist interests, to seize the central government’s territorial sphere of control. The outbreak of both these wars has aggravated the suffering of the workers, peasants, and soldiers, especially our brothers who are soldiers, who are tragically sacrificed directly for the warlords and imperialists. Since the situation has become this serious, you must absolutely think, brothers, about what is the way out for us soldiers!

2. Listen to the views of the Red Army:

We are China’s Red Army. Two years ago a portion of our comrades fighting to the death for the national revolution, struggling bitterly, saw with their own eyes old brothers and new brothers, one group after another, become cannon fodder for the army commanders and division commanders of the Guomindang high command. Not one iota of the slogans that the Guomindang addressed to the workers and peasants and soldiers was actually carried out. Moreover, they defended the mounting oppression of the people by the local bullies and bad gentry. Especially detestable was their murder of leaders of the workers and

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72. Insurrections → Uprisings

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong Ji. Bujian, Vol. 3, pp. 61–68, where it has been taken from two documentary collections published in China, one in 1979 and the other in 1982.
peasants associations and of Communist Party members. It was not until the black plot of this phony revolution was exposed that we really understood that the Guomindang was a counterrevolutionary thing. It was only then that we got our comrades together and with our rifles went into the countryside to join the workers and peasants to carry out the land revolution. In the last two years, the counterrevolutionary national government, using military forces from three provinces, has attacked us several times, but in the end has not been able to hurt the Red Army in the slightest. On the contrary, we thank them for sending us reinforcements which have served to make the Red Army stronger. The fact that today the Red Army is appearing everywhere throughout the nation is full proof that the strength of the worker and peasant masses is growing day by day. We are people who have been deceived by the Guomindang, and as the day of this battle approaches we think of the suffering of our brothers, and we specially and very sincerely offer an opinion to our brothers!

3. Why do we want to support the Soviet Union?

Brothers! First, we must realize the danger that the imperialist attacks on the Soviet Union pose to those of us who are soldiers. Today the entire world is divided into two fronts, one of which is the front of imperialist capitalism, of countries like Great Britain, the United States, Japan, and France, which specialize in oppressing the proletariat and the weak and small nations. Since coming to power in Nanjing, Chiang Kaishek has shamelessly surrendered to the imperialists, because he is both a capitalist and a warlord and, therefore, acts as a running dog of the imperialists. The other is the front of the proletariat, of those like the Soviet Union and the impoverished workers, peasants, and soldiers of various countries. More than ten years ago, the Soviet Union overthrew the Russian emperor and established a government of the workers, peasants, and soldiers that swept away all the capitalists, landlords, and so on. When the workers, peasants, and soldiers themselves administer their own country, they attain true freedom and equality. As the proletariat of the entire world come to see that the Soviet Union has done as well as this, they will all rise up in revolution and join with the Soviet Union. For example, China had a great revolution between 1925 and 1927, which did indeed receive help from the Soviet Union. If the Guomindang had not turned against the revolution, if the revolution had not failed, the workers, peasants, and soldiers would long ago have gained political power and would long ago have established the second Soviet Union. It has now been two years since the Guomindang turned traitor, but the revolution still has not been destroyed. Furthermore, it is again gradually raising its head. This is true of China, and it is also true of other countries. The Soviet Union has become the elder brother of us workers, peasants, and soldiers, leading millions of wretched people to overthrow imperialism and the warlords. This has aroused extreme fear among the imperialists, who have no choice but to join together to attack the Soviet Union in order to suppress all the revolutionary forces. Under the direction of the imperialists, Chiang Kaishek has been loyally and bravely going out to attack the Soviet Union, creating the agitation of these past several months regarding the Chinese Eastern Railway. This is plainly and clearly the beginning of the imperialist attack on the Soviet Union. When one morning war erupts, you will see that the imperialists and the Chinese warlords will want to move tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of troops into the battle. Indeed, they intend to use our toiling worker and peasant masses to strike at the toiling worker and peasant masses. How vicious! Brothers! We must make sure that we are not cheated. We must defend the Soviet Union, defend the state of the proletariat, and turn our rifles around and shoot at the Chinese warlords!

4. We must rise up and overthrow the warlords.

Brothers! Second, we must realize that the senseless wars of the Chinese warlords add to the sufferings of those of us who are soldiers and to that of the workers and peasants. The Chinese warlords, creatures such as Chiang Kaishek, Zhu Peide, Tang Shengzhi, Fung Yuxiang, Yan Xishan, Zhang Fakui, Zhang...
Xueliang, and others, are sometimes peaceable, sometimes the opposite, and when they start fighting, today it’s Nanjing attacking Wuhan, tomorrow it’s Wuhan striking at Nanjing. Sometimes Guangdong attacks Guangxi, and sometimes Guangxi attacks Guangdong. This happens several times a year, to the point that we soldiers become dazed and confused. Every time they go to war, we soldiers must die by the hundreds of thousands, while the warlords, whether they win or lose, always strip the land to the extent of hundreds of thousands and into the millions in some cases. As for the common people, especially for the soldiers, people’s rights mean prohibiting people from holding meetings, and people’s livelihood means raising rents and increasing fees and taxes. The Guomindang warlords understand only fighting over territory, stripping the land, getting rich on foreign money, capitulating to the imperialists and relying on their patronage, and defending the interests of the imperialists. The imperialists aid the warlords with money and bullets, so the warlords’ fighting will never stop, and it will never overthrow imperialism. Brothers! Because the territory was distributed unevenly after the overthrow of the Guomindang faction, Chiang Kai shek, Yan Xishan, Feng Yuxiang, Zhang Fakui, and the others are fighting again! This war must inevitably further aggravate the suffering of the soldiers and add to the exploitation of the people. Soldier comrades should rise up to oppose this, and everyone should refuse to fight for the warlords. Let the soldiers on both sides turn around and overthrow the warlords and seek their own way out!

5. What are the sufferings of us soldiers?

Brothers! Third, we must realize the source of our own suffering and also our way out. Brothers! We were not born soldiers, nor was it fate that we should be soldiers. It’s just that at home we had no clothes to wear, no food to eat, so we had no choice but to run off and become soldiers. Why is it that we had no clothes to wear and no food to eat? First of all, it’s because the imperialists invaded China and used foreign goods to make money from China. The vast market for foreign goods made it impossible to sell local products, so local production had to stop. As a result, tens of millions of workers and peasants inevitably lost their jobs. To this was added the successive years of warlord fighting, oppression by greedy bureaucrats and corrupt officials, local bullies and bad gentry, and exploitation by harsh fees and miscellaneous taxes. All these things together left our common people with no way of making a living. Having nowhere to turn, anyone who didn’t become a bandit had no alternative but to serve as a soldier. After we joined the army, we first entered an army camp, where every day we had three drills and two lectures, seven beatings and eight scoldings, from hitting the palms of our hands to beatings on the buttocks, being locked up tight, expelled, and even used for target practice. These ways of treating us are a matter of course to the warlords! The main idea is to cultivate in us a slavishness of character so that we dare not rebel. And the soldier’s clothing? At most two sets of clothing to wear, too long, too short, clothes that don’t fit at all, so that when we go out people laugh at us. Bedding? Just a bed or two of old blankets, too heavy in summer and too light in winter, full of big holes, which might as well be a base camp for bedbugs. And living quarters? The army officers are leeches and refuse to spend money for repairs. With the wind blowing and the sun scorching, they treat the soldiers worse than prisoners in a jail. The army salaries that aren’t paid for several months or years go into their pockets. The money for food is never given out, and the warlords skimp on food by providing terrible meals of rice gruel and cabbage every day, all with no oil and no salt. This is the clothing, food, and housing for soldiers. If one is wounded in battle and taken to the hospital for wounded soldiers, there are even stranger things to be seen—men who are blind, crippled, or have broken backs, lying on cots unable to move. Over there someone sobbing, over here another screaming, no funds, no medicine, the nasty stench of yellow pus running from wounds. A wounded soldier can only die a painful death. So everyone hopes for the relief of one last bullet, to end the torture of living. Ai! Compare these conditions with the Western-style houses of the warlords, playing mah-jongg, eating Western food, sleeping with several mistresses apiece, with millions in the bank—is any of them worth it? There are also warlords who deliberately embezzle money from the soldiers’ salaries, so that the soldiers are totally impoverished, and then even say to our brothers: Don’t worry, the war starts soon. When the war reaches a big place, our brothers can take a lot of things. Ai! This is the evil plot of the warlords! They embezzle from the army’s salaries and command us to go into battle to steal. They really want us to risk our lives for them. Some brothers are happy when they hear that they are going to fight, thinking that this will be their chance to get rich, and every time they rush

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6. Zhang Xueliang (1898–), zi Hanqing, a native of Liaoning, was the eldest son of Zhang Zuolin. After graduating from the Fengtian Military Academy, he served in his father’s army, and by 1919 had attained the rank of colonel. He played an active role in the first and second Fengtian-Zhili wars of 1922 and 1924, in which he held important commands. As noted above, he became ruler of Manchuria following the assassination of his father on June 4, 1928. Having learned that the Japanese army was responsible for Zhang Zuolin’s death, he turned against Japan and, in December 1928, pledged his allegiance to the Guomindang government in Nanjing. In early 1930, Chiang Kai shek, on the one hand, and Yan Xishan and Feng Yuxiang, on the other, were both seeking his support.

7. These figures may refer to amounts of income to be gained from the land.

8. This is a pun on the name of the Guomindang. The Chinese for “skin-the-people party” is guomindang.
forward to steal wildly. This is part of the the warlords’ poisonous plot. Think about it. Every time the fighting reaches a city, the warlords have long before announced that the big stores and banks are to be protected. Who would dare touch them? To get rich you could only go to the small merchants and the suffering common people, but they, like us, are suffering! Think about it again. The soldiers have fought several hundred wars for the warlords, from Guangdong to Beijing, with the result that there has been a reduction in troop size, keeping the strong and healthy and getting rid of the maimed. Let me ask you, has any soldier ever gone home with money in his pocket? The warlords’ statement that you can get rich by fighting is nothing but one of their poisonous schemes to get us to risk our lives for them! Brothers, you must not let them cheat you! Ai! Brothers! At home, the oppression of the imperialists, warlords, and despotic gentry forced us to run out and join the army, and after joining the army we are still oppressed by the imperialists and, furthermore, become the tools for defending the oppression of the people by the imperialists, warlords, and despotic gentry. Without us soldiers, the imperialists, warlords, and despotic gentry could not be as cruel as this; without us soldiers, the workers and peasants and toiling common people would not suffer or be oppressed like this. We soldiers are ourselves oppressed, and we act as running dogs for others, oppressing our own wretched compatriots, getting nothing out of it for ourselves, just helping the warlords to get rich. Ai! How stupid this is! It’s not worth it! Do we still not understand?

6. What alternative do we have?

Brothers! In the past, some of our brothers in the Red Army were, like you, very obedient to the warlord officers, and did not understand that the warlords are detestable. Afterward, the facts allowed them to see through the dark curtain of the warlords’ oppression of the soldiers. Only then did they fully understand that the workers, the peasants, and the soldiers are of the same flesh and blood, that they should join together, so only then did they resolve to leave the warlords and come over to the side of the Red Army. Brothers! Do you want to know what the advantages of the Red Army are?

7. The Red Army is the army of the revolution of the workers and peasants.

First of all, the Red Army is the army of the worker and peasant revolution. The brothers of the Red Army cannot be separated from the workers and peasants. Worker and peasant comrades, shouldering rifles and making up the ranks—these are the Red Army. Red Army comrades, putting down their rifles and going out into the fields and into the factories—these are the workers and peasants. This is why, when the Red Army reaches a location, the workers and peasants form a crowd to welcome us, cook rice and make tea, kill pigs and slaughter sheep, to welcome us. Those local bullies and bad gentry who flee run away; those who are caught are fined, or else they are brought to trial and sentenced by a meeting of the workers, peasants, and soldiers. All their lands and property are disposed of by decision of a big meeting of the workers, peasants, and soldiers. It is for this reason that the Red Army and the workers and peasants, joining together as one, divide the lands, and with their own government for governing themselves, create a world of true freedom and equality. For example, Red Armies exist today in many places, in Guangdong, Fujian, Jiangxi, Hunan, Hubei, Henan, and Sichuan. All these are organized by the workers and peasants themselves!

8. The Red Army is an army of the soldiers themselves.

Second, the Red Army is an army of the soldiers themselves. The Guomindang army hangs out the label, National Revolutionary Army, but in its bones it is an army of the warlords. The officers have authority; the soldiers have no authority. The relationship between officers and troops in the Red Army is like that between teacher and student, like the bond of affection between older and younger brothers. Clothing, food, and living quarters are managed jointly by representatives elected by the soldiers, and are provided by the government of the workers, peasants, and soldiers. Thus in the Red Army the officers, the soldiers, and the laborers all dress, eat, and are paid the same. In the Red Army, there are only different tasks; there are no class distinctions. The commanding officer does not beat the soldiers; the soldiers respect the commanding officer; finances are open and public; and the representatives of the soldiers have the right to ask questions. How much the entire army has and how much it uses is clear and open. There is absolutely no such strange thing as the private pocketing of funds for salaries or food allotments. If an inequity occurs, a meeting can be called to raise and question it, and it will be dealt with immediately and fairly. That is why only the Red Army is a real army, based on the interests of the troops, with absolutely no oppression.

9. The Red Army supports the Communist Party in unifying the forces of the world revolution.

The Red Army supports the Communist Party in unifying the forces of the world revolution. The forces of imperialism and of the warlords are extremely great, and they have, moreover, a worldwide union. Our revolution of the workers, peasants, and soldiers must assuredly also have a worldwide union if we are to be able to overthrow them. The Communist Party is the guiding organ of the worldwide revolution and has very good organizations in various countries. The Red Army must necessarily support the Communist Party, for only thus can it attain unity with the world revolution. The political views and military plans of
the Communist Party are all extremely correct and enlightened. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the Red Army and the masses of the workers and peasants can definitely attain success, step by step. At the same time, the Communist Party is in no sense a special organization. It is simply that portion of comrades from among the workers, peasants, and soldiers who are the bravest, the most clear-headed, who have organized successfully, whose discipline has been especially strict, and who have worked especially hard. Any worker, peasant, or soldier who strives for revolution, and demonstrates this in his work, is qualified to join the Communist Party. Thus, the Communist Party is the party of the workers, peasants, and soldiers themselves. It is definitely not like the Guomindang, which is an organ only of a few warlords, capitalists, and despotic gentry, which crushes the workers, peasants, and soldiers under its feet.

Brothers! It is precisely for the above three reasons that the Zhu-Mao Red Army has been able to extend the battle to four provinces, and the counterrevolutionary factions have not been able to do anything about it. This proves that it is only when we soldiers go over to the Red Army that we shall be able to enjoy the support and welcome of the workers and peasants, that it is only when we accept the guidance of the Communist Party that we can avoid taking the wrong road, that we can avoid being beasts of burden for the warlords. Brothers! Today war has already broken out. On the one hand, it again increases the oppression that we workers and peasants and soldiers suffer at the hands of the imperialists and warlords, but on the other hand, when the imperialists and warlords fight, it is really a good opportunity for us workers, peasants, and soldiers to unite. If there is to be hope for the victory both of the world revolution and of the Chinese revolution in the near future, it will depend solely on the unity and efforts of the workers, peasants, and soldiers.

10. Come over to the side of the Red Army! Brothers! Rise up! Be no longer the beasts of burden, the slaves, of the warlords. Quickly bring your rifles and join the Red Army. The broad masses of the workers and peasants, and of the Red Army throughout the nation, warmly welcome you. Understand clearly that you were born into the worker-peasant proletarian class. Understand clearly that the enemies oppressing you are the imperialists and the warlords. Understand clearly that the workers and the peasants are your good friends. Understand clearly that the Red Army is the open road to your own self-liberation. Leave hell, rise up to heaven. Come quickly!

11. Our common revolutionary slogans:
   1. Oppose the imperialist attacks on the Soviet Union!
   2. Oppose the wars of the Chinese warlords!
   3. Soldier masses of the entire country, unite!
   4. Don’t go to the front; don’t fight for the warlords! Don’t be cannon fodder for the warlords!

5. Make the warlords pay back wages; demand a soldier’s wage of 20 yuan per month!
6. Brother workers and peasants do not fight brother workers and peasants; soldiers do not fight soldiers!
7. Support the Red Army; come over with your rifles to the Red Army.
8. Carry out the work of the land revolution, of distributing land to soldiers!
9. Workers, peasants, and soldiers unite!
10. Support the government of the workers, peasants, and soldiers.
11. Support the Communist Party, overthrow the Guomindang!
12. Long live the success of the Chinese revolution!
13. Long live the success of the world revolution!
Land Law
(February 7, 1930)\(^1\)

Chapter One: Confiscation and Redistribution of Land

Article 1. After the political power of the despotic gentry and landlord class has been overthrown by an armed uprising, all land, hills, woods, ponds, and houses owned by the despotic gentry and landlord class, as well as by ancestral halls, temples and societies, must be immediately confiscated, turned over to the soviet, and redistributed by the soviet to impoverished peasants, and other categories of people in need of land. Where there is only a peasant association, and a soviet has not yet been set up, the peasant association can also carry out confiscation and redistribution.

Article 2. Of the land, hills, woods, ponds and houses belonging to owner-peasants, if there is a surplus in excess of what is needed for self-support, after the majority of local peasants demand its confiscation, the soviet should approve the peasants’ demand, confiscate the surplus portion and redistribute it.

Article 3. The families of the despotic gentry, landlords, and reactionaries, after undergoing investigation by the soviet and receiving permission to reside in the countryside, may receive an appropriate amount of land when they have no other means of supporting themselves.

Article 4. Officers, soldiers, and porters of the Red Army currently in military service and those engaged in revolutionary work shall also receive redistributed land; moreover, the soviet shall assign people to help their families farm the land.

Article 5. Rural residents who can make a living through other lines of work, such as industry, commerce and education, shall not receive redistributed land. Those who cannot make ends meet may receive a suitable amount of redistributed land, no more than enough to make up the shortfall in their incomes.

Article 6. Farm laborers and unemployed vagrants, if they are willing to receive redistributed land, should be given land. But those vagrants who receive redistributed land must rid themselves of evil addictions, such as to opium and gambling, otherwise the soviet will take back their land.

Article 7. Those who have traveled to other areas and do not live in their native villages shall not receive land.

Article 8. There are two criteria for land redistribution as regards administrative subdivisions:

a. Using the township as the unit; the peasants of a certain township pool together the land they farm in their township and in neighboring townships and redistribute it jointly.

b. Using several townships as the unit. For example, three or four townships are adjacent to each other, and some of them have more land while the others have less land; if land is redistributed taking each township as the unit, the townships with less land cannot support themselves, nor do they have any other form of production to support themselves. In this case, three or four townships may be combined into one unit to carry out the redistribution. Of the above two methods, the first is widely applicable. Under special circumstances, the second method may be used after the township Soviets have made a request and received permission from the district soviet.

Article 9. The quantitative criteria for land redistribution:

a. In order to meet the demands of the majority of the people and enable peasants to receive land quickly, land should be redistributed according to the number of people in the countryside; men, women, the old, and the young should receive equal shares.

b. In places with special circumstances, after the township Soviets make the request and receive permission from the district soviet, the criterion of labor [power] may be used. Those who can work get twice as much land as those who cannot work (those between fourteen and sixty who can do farm work each constitute one labor unit).

Article 10. In order to destroy the feudal forces swiftly, land redistribution should follow the principle of drawing on the plentiful to make up for the scarce. It is not permitted to distribute the land a second time, applying the principle of absolute egalitarianism. After the land has been redistributed, the Soviets shall make wooden markers and place them in the fields to mark the yield of the plot and the name of its current tiller.

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Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan*, Vol. 3, pp. 69–74, where it is transcribed from a documentary collection published in China in 1982. (Regarding this gathering, see below, the “Front Committee Notice No. 1” of February 16 and the notes thereto.) While many paragraphs in this text are identical to provisions in the law dated August 1930, there are significant differences. The most notable point is the harsher attitude toward relatively well-to-do peasants. Thus, apart from landlords, paragraph 2 of this law (which does not appear in the August 1930 law) authorizes the confiscation and redistribution of land belonging not only to rich peasants, but to other owner-peasants, if they have more than the minimum required to support their families. On the other hand, paragraph 10 of this law calls only for “drawing on the plentiful to make up for the scarce,” while the August law adds the principle of “drawing on the fat to make up for the lean,” in other words, of taking the more productive land of well-to-do peasants and giving it to the poor peasants. For a discussion of Mao’s evolving position on agrarian problems during 1930, see the Introduction to this volume.
Article 11. All land deeds of the despotic gentry, landlords, common land owned by ancestral halls, and temples must be surrendered to the township soviets or township/district peasant associations within a specified period to be burned in public. The deeds of the land owned by owner-peasants should also be burned if the majority of peasants so demand.

Article 12. After land is redistributed, the xian soviets or district soviets are to issue cultivation permits.

Article 13. The redistributed land of all those in the countryside who have died, changed their occupations, or gone elsewhere will be taken back by the soviets to be redistributed once more. As for newcomers and newborn babies, the soviets should find a way to give them land, but only after the harvest.

Article 14. When land is redistributed following an armed uprising, if the peasants have already sown the seeds, the crops harvested in this season belong to the peasants who previously farmed the land; others are not allowed to harvest these crops.

Article 15. Dikes and large ponds that are not easy to redistribute are placed under the management of the soviet for public use by the people; [the soviet] also supervises people to repair and maintain them.

Article 16. Large hills and forests that are not easy to redistribute are placed under the management of the soviet. When people need to cut bamboo, they must obtain permission from the soviets according to the following rules. Permission for cutting fewer than twenty stalks may be obtained from the township soviets; permission for cutting more than twenty and fewer than fifty stalks may be obtained from the district soviets; permission for cutting more than 50 stalks may be obtained from the xian soviets.

Article 17. The products of large hills and forests, aside from those supplied to meet the needs of the people, are to be marketed by the soviet; the proceeds are used to pay the expenses of the soviet. Higher-level soviets determine the proportions of the proceeds to be received by the soviets at each level.

Article 18. As for hills covered with camphor, China fir, and bamboo, which cannot easily be redistributed individually, several families should form one group and obtain [the rights] of cultivation from the soviet, making available the products of these hills for the use of the members of the group.

Article 19. In order to meet the demands of the impoverished peasants, all confiscated land should be completely redistributed to them. The soviet need not keep any back, but it should keep some of the confiscated houses to be used for public purposes.

Chapter Two: Cancellation of Debts

Article 20. No debts owed by workers, peasants, and poor people to the despotic gentry and landlords shall be repaid. Notes and debt certificates must be turned over to the soviet or peasant associations within a specified time to be burned.

Article 21. Debts owed by the gentry, landlords, and merchants to the government, workers, peasants, poor people, or the petty bourgeoisie must be repaid in full regardless of whether these debts are old or new.

Article 22. Debts owed by workers, peasants, and poor people to businessmen that arise out of commercial transactions and are not commercial high-interest loans must still be repaid; but only the principal, and not other types, will be repaid; debts owed for a long period of time will not be repaid, either.

Article 23. The debts owed between workers, peasants, and poor people themselves before the revolution should be repaid in full, reduced, or written off. Township and district soviets will make appropriate regulations according to concrete circumstances. Debts incurred after the revolution should be repaid in full.

Article 24. As for articles and houses pawned or mortgaged by workers, peasants, and poor people to the despotic gentry, landlords, and dishonest pawnbrokers, all collateral will be returned unconditionally.

Article 25. As for articles and houses pawned or mortgaged by workers, peasants, and poor people to the petty bourgeoisie, part, or none, of the collateral may be returned; this is to be determined by township and district soviets according to the economic circumstances of both sides.

Article 26. As for money and grain paid in advance by workers, peasants, and poor people to the gentry, landlords, and dishonest businessmen in credit unions and grain associations, the persons who take over the credit unions and grain associations should return the money and grain to their members and dissolve the organizations. As for money and grain taken in advance by workers, peasants, and poor people from the gentry, landlords, and dishonest businessmen, the persons who take over the credit unions and grain associations need not return the money and grain to their contributing members; these organizations are also to be dissolved.

Article 27. Usurious loans are banned under the soviet régime; xian soviets set appropriate interest rates according to local financial conditions. These rates must not exceed the amount of returns obtained by ordinary capital under normal local economic conditions.

Chapter Three: Land Taxes

Article 28. To meet the needs of overthrowing the counterrevolutionaries (for example, maintaining and expanding the Red Army and the Red Guards and maintaining the organs of political power) and to increase benefits for the masses (for example, setting up schools and clinics, providing relief to the handicapped, old, and young, and repairing roads and river embankments), the soviet must collect land taxes from peasants.

Article 29. Land taxes may be collected only after the soviet has been established, the masses have received actual benefits, and permission is granted by higher-level soviets.
Article 30. Land taxes are to be collected progressively according to the quantity and quality of the land redistributed to peasants:

1) Those who receive, per person, land that yields less than 5 Dan of rice are exempted from tax.
2) A tax rate of 1 percent is levied on those who receive, per person, land that yields 6 Dan of rice.
3) A tax rate of 1.5 percent is levied on those who receive, per person, land that yields 7 Dan of rice.
4) A tax rate of 2.5 percent is levied on those who receive, per person, land that yields 8 Dan of rice.
5) A tax rate of 4 percent is levied on those who receive, per person, land that yields 9 Dan of rice.
6) A tax rate of 5.5 percent is levied on those who receive, per person, land that yields 10 Dan of rice.
7) A tax rate of 7 percent is levied on those who receive, per person, land that yields 11 Dan of rice.
8) A tax rate of 8.5 percent is levied on those who receive, per person, land that yields 12 Dan of rice.

Each additional yield of 1 Dan of rice is accompanied by an increase of 1.5 percent in the land tax rate.

Article 31. Land tax revenues are distributed among the soviets at various levels according to the following proportions: Fifty percent to the township soviet; 20 percent to the district soviet; 20 percent to the xian soviet; 10 percent to the provincial soviet.

Article 32. No taxes are levied on the products of hills and forests that are enough only to provide for consumption by the people and leave no surplus. If there is a surplus in addition to personal consumption, the soviet levies taxes on the surplus portion of the sale value at appropriate rates.

Chapter Four: Wages

Article 33. Rural artisans, workers, and hired laborers whose previous wages were too low should get a raise. Future wages are to be set by the soviet according to two criteria: fluctuation in the cost of living and fluctuation in the peasants' harvests. Wage rates set by township and district soviets must be approved by the xian or provincial soviets.

On Occupying Ji'an and Establishing a Jiangxi Soviet Government

Proclamation Number 1 of the Joint Conference of the Front Committee, the Western Jiangxi Special Committee, and the Army Committees of the Fifth and Sixth Armies

(February 14, 1930)

Resolution of the Joint Conference on plans for the first actions to be taken in the struggle in Jiangxi:

I. To make basic plans in accordance with the resolution of the Joint Conference concerning the political situation and the Party's tasks.

II. The overall objective and central slogans for present actions: the overall objective for present actions is to attack and take Ji'an, and the following six slogans are the central slogans for the present.

1. Take Ji'an and eliminate all reactionary forces.
2. Take Ji'an and set up a western Jiangxi soviet government.
3. Take Ji'an and completely redistribute the land.
4. Take Ji'an and further develop the arming of the workers and peasants.
5. Take Ji'an and put a stop to the indiscriminate fighting of the warlords.
6. Take Ji'an and give armed support to the Soviet Union.

All army groups, political organs, and mass organizations should immediately and publicly raise and widely disseminate the above six slogans among workers, peasants, and soldiers, and among other oppressed groups of people (medium and small merchants and students). (For workers, peasants, and poor townspeople, they should be written all over every wall. For soldiers, these should be the slogans shouted out during morning and evening roll call.) This is the only way

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 3, pp. 75–81, which reproduces it from a documentary collection published in China in 1982.

1. This public proclamation states Mao's vision of rapid revolutionary success more prudently than the inner-Party "Notice No. 1" which follows.
to mobilize the broad masses and achieve the political task of opposing the undermining of political objectives and subversive propaganda.

III. Estimation of the enemy’s situation and the significance of the attack to take Jì’an.

1. The enemy’s situation: The war in Guangxi and Guangdong continues undecided; a coup d’état has broken out in Fujian; military action is being taken against Zhou Lan and Wu Shang in Hunan; in Hubei there is a struggle between the Hubei faction (Xia Douyin and Xu Yuanquan) and the Chang Kaishek faction; there is a stalemate between the old Guangxi faction (Li Shiqiao and Li Yixuan) and the Chang Kaishek faction; Chang Kaishek and Yan Xishan are actively cooking up a great war between north and south; the struggle of the workers, peasants, soldiers, poor people, and vagrants is developing everywhere. Given the situation outlined above, the Chang Kaishek faction cannot possibly increase its troop strength in Jiangxi within a short period of time, and in eastern and northern Jiangxi, we can pin down at least three of Zhang Huizan’s regiments (two eastern Jiangxi regiments and one northern Jiangxi regiment), and Zhang can deploy only three regiments of troops to deal with western Jiangxi. Tan Daoyuan’s single division is unable to return, and Jin Handing has been pinned down by the workers and peasants in western Fujian. At the same time, he also has to participate in the fight for territory in Fujian, so for the time being it will not be easy for him to get to western Jiangxi.

The deployment in western Jiangxi of the two regiments of the Cheng [Guangyao] brigade, the one regiment of the Zhu [Yaohua] brigade, and the pacification defense corps is as follows: at Jì’an, the two battalions of the pacification defense corps have a hundred and fifty rifles protecting the xian capitals of Fenyi, Yuanzhou, and Xinyu, altogether forming one battalion, plus one roving guerrilla company, and in addition Fenyi has a pacification defense corps of thirty rifles; at Yuanzhou the merchant defense corps and pacification defense corps have three hundred rifles; at Xinyu the pacification defense corps has sixty rifles; Xiajiang has the Yi regiment headquarters and seven companies of troops and also a pacification defense corps with eighty-five rifles and has fortifications; Sanqutan has one battalion doing guerrilla work between Jì’an and Sanqutan, Jìshui has two companies (newly deployed) and a pacification defense corps with sixty-eight rifles; Xin’gan has only a pacification defense corps with thirty-five rifles; and Xingguo and Wán’an each have pacification defense corps protecting the towns. The enemy troops and the ruling classes of the above xian are all in a state of great panic.

2. Our situation: In western Jiangxi, the xian of Xingguo, Yudu, Ningdu, and Nanfeng have a total of 1.15 million Red masses. The six xian towns of Ninggang, Yongxin, Lianhua, Yongfeng, Le’an, and Ningdu are all ours. In Taihe, Jì’an, and Jìshui, only the xian towns are in enemy hands, while the four townships are in our hands. In Anfu, Xinyu, Fenyi, Xiajia, Nanfeng, and Yudu, a part of each of them is in our hands. Most of Xingguo is Red territory. Add to this the fact that the various places to which the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Red Armies have gone in western Jiangxi still have a substantial number of local armed forces and fighting morale is very high.

3. Given the circumstances of the enemy and ourselves listed above, to “take Jì’an” is indeed to implement the demands of the broad popular masses. Since the past mobilizations of the broad popular masses have already shaken the enemy’s foundations, this call to action is entirely correct. Our first step is not, however, to strike at the town of Jì’an, but rather to carry out an encirclement of the town of Jì’an with the objective of making life even more difficult inside the town, increasing the mental state of panic, and isolating White rule further. Afterward, we will proceed to the plan for step two (see attached).

IV. Moving and deploying the troops

1. East of the Gan River: (a) The three columns of the Fourth Army and the units directly attached to Army Headquarters will all assemble at the town of Wujiang on February 13, and on the 14th the attack on Jìshui city must be carried out with determination (the three columns of the Fourth Army will have completely razed the Yongfeng city walls before the 12th); (b) The Fourth Detachment of the Second Column of the Sixth Army will set out for Zhonghu on February 13, and on the 14th, in coordination with the popular masses of Jìshui, the Red Army will use armed force to destroy the enemy at Shuidong and (two companies) will set up a watch over Jì’an city, in response to the Fourth Army attack on Jìshui; (c) The Zhonghu soviet, in addition to sending a portion of the masses to coordinate with the attack of the Fourth Detachment on Shuidong, shall also send a portion of the masses to set out early on the 14th for Jìshui city to join with the Fourth Army attack on the enemy within the city of Jìshui and eliminate the enemy, with responsibility for tearing down the city walls and constructing a floating bridge; (d) The Fifth Detachment of the Second Column of the Sixth Army will arrive in Xingtian and Donggu on the 9th, and the Red Guards, under the command of Yuan Zhenya, will reach Xingtian on the 10th and join up with the Fifth Detachment, and organize an administrative committee to direct work in the Xingtian area, with Yuan Zhenya as secretary (names and responsibilities of the administrative committee separately attached); (e) The task of the Fourth Column and the Ningnan Guerrilla Corps of the Twenty-fifth Column of the Fourth Army, as set out by the Front Committee, will be to pin down Jin Handing and to raise funds in the large Red district comprising the three xian of Ningdu, Guangchang, and Nanfeng; (f) The significance of having the entire Fourth Army withdraw from Yongfeng and take Jìshui is: to reveal the objective of the Fourth

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2. Tan Daoyuan (1888–1946), a native of Hunan, was at this time the commander of the Fifty-fifth Division of the Second Column of the Guomindang Ninth Route Army. Jin Handing (1891–1967), a native of Yunnan, was the commander of the Twelfth Division of the Guomindang army.

3. No such plan is in fact attached to the available text of this document.
Army, by threatening Ji’an City from a point across from Ji’an, and to influence the popular masses downstream on the Gan River to rise up, and also to make the reactionary government at Nanchang focus on western Jiangxi; (g) After Jishui has been taken, the work of the Front Committee and of the Jishui Xian Committee will be (i) rapidly to dismantle the city wall; (ii) to set up a xian government; (iii) to set up a workers’ organization in the xian town; (iv) to develop Party and Youth League work within the city and set up a regional committee.

2. West of the Gan River: (a) The activities and duties of the Fifth Army and of the border Red Guards: The Fifth Army and the border Red Guards (with at least four hundred rifles), will assemble at Yongyang by February 13 and, using Yongyang as the command center, will coordinate their action with the armed forces of the popular masses of the western district, to put pressure on the vicinity of Ji’an City, and at the same time be on the lookout for an enemy retreat from Taihe toward Ji’an and to cut them down if the occasion arises. All armed forces of the popular masses in the western district area will come under the command of the Fifth Army. (b) The First Column (originally the Second and Third Regiments) of the Sixth Army shall arrive by February 13 and assemble at Futian (if the Third Regiment cannot make it in time this may be delayed one day; the Second Regiment must arrive at the same time) and, using Futian as its command center, will coordinate its action with the armed forces of the popular masses of Xiangshui and Jintan, and the Jishui guerrilla corps, to put pressure on the three areas of Sanqutan, Ji’an, and Xijiang. (i) A small unit from the First Column will be sent out to coordinate its action with the mass armed forces to harass the enemy at Sanqutan and make contact with the Fourth Army at Jishui; (ii) The guerrilla unit in the Xijiang area will harass the enemy at Xijiang City; (iii) Both inside and outside continue to have the Red Guards and the Ruxing guerrilla units assemble at Tongshuping to harass the enemy at Ji’an (harassing the enemy means to shoot at the enemy every day before dawn and in the middle of the night) and to cut the communications of the enemy at Ji’an and Sanqutan downstream, which is also a task of the First Column of the Sixth Army. All armed forces of the popular masses in the northern sector will be under the command of the First Column.

V. Rules of action and finance policies:

1. When any unit or group of the worker and peasant masses reaches a location, especially a town or city, and has not yet received orders, it must not engage in indiscriminate searches of the people or of shops.

2. When any unit reaches a location, especially a town or city, there should be planned assignments of that unit and responsible persons to split up and search those places that should be searched and to arrest those offenders who should be arrested.

3. All confiscation of the property of reactionaries and all arrest of offenders shall be under the direction of the political department. Dealing with the search for remnants of the enemy and the confiscation of the military equipment of the reactionaries shall be under the direction and management of the headquarters command.

4. For all fines, fund-raising, confiscation, and dealing with offenders, the political department or mass organ of political power must make clear public proclamations or statements of crimes committed.

5. Schools and post offices must not be destroyed.

6. When not politically necessary, no public organs and no equipment or implements of the popular masses should be destroyed.

7. Burning and killing that has no political significance or mass basis are prohibited.

8. Financial policy: (a) The pay and provisions of the Red Army and the expenses of the political organs should be taken mainly from the despotization of the gentry and landlords and should not be added to the burdens of the middle and small merchants. (b) Payments shall not be exacted from shops with less than 2,000 yuan in capital, while those with over 2,000 yuan shall be required to make contributions to the army’s pay and provisions according to the following scale: those with capital of 2,500 yuan shall contribute 30 yuan, and those with 3,000 yuan shall contribute 40 yuan. For each additional 1,000 yuan of capital, an added contribution of one percent on the total amount of capital shall be made. In the case of 4,000 yuan of capital, to the 40 yuan contribution shall be added one percent of 4,000 yuan, for a total of 80 yuan; for those with 5,000 yuan in capital, to the 80 yuan contribution is added 50 yuan, for a total contribution of 130 yuan; someone with 6,000 yuan in capital, in addition to the 130 yuan contribution shall pay another one percent on 6,000 yuan, or 60 yuan, for a total of 190 yuan; increased capital shall be calculated in similar fashion. (c) Payments exacted from big gentry landlords shall be called fines, while payments from merchants shall be called contributions. (d) For big gentry landlords who own shops, contributions on that portion of their capital that is in shops shall be made according to the scale, while fines shall be assessed against that portion they have as big gentry landlords. (e) Shops owned by reactionary elements, after the middle and small merchants have become sympathetic to the propaganda, may be confiscated; otherwise, they need not be confiscated. Reactionary shopowners should be arrested and fined when this is necessary because of its significance for the masses. (f) River traffic should undergo inspection as militarily necessary, but whether a certain type of boat traffic is stopped for a period of time, or boats are detained, the goods on board such boats and other property must not be confiscated.
VI. Mass mobilization inside and outside the Party.

1. A great political duty: It is only by mobilizing all the popular masses both inside and outside the Party that success has been achieved in many areas in the past, and the mistake of letting only a few responsible persons know the objectives of actions, and not letting the masses know them, should be resolutely abolished.

2. When this announcement reaches any location, various kinds of Party meetings and mass meetings and assemblies should be convened immediately, to report in detail on the political situation, on the situation of the crumbling of the reactionary forces and the high tide of the revolutionary forces internationally, nationally, in Jiangxi and in western Jiangxi, on the future of the struggle (the outbreak of the revolution in which workers and peasants will take over Jiangxi) and on the objectives of present actions (six central slogans), and also to announce the rules (the various rules of action). The Red Army and the organs of political authority should also post flyers to enable the popular masses to understand fully what it is we want to do.

3. Mobilizing within the Party: (a) The leading organs at all levels of the Party shall hold meetings to discuss this announcement and all successive announcements. (b) Hold a large meeting of activists and send persons from leading party organs to give reports. For the military, the meetings shall be held at the army, column, or detachment level. Local party meetings shall be held at the district level. (c) Hold branch meetings to report on the content of announcements and to mobilize all Party members.

4. Army mobilization: (a) Hold meetings of army political workers to report on the political situation, future struggles, the objectives of actions, and on the various rules, to discuss ways of implementation, and of guiding the soldiers to positive action. (b) Hold talk sessions with the soldiers which also report on various items such as the political situation, and instill in them the courage to struggle.

5. Mobilization of worker and peasant masses: (a) Hold meetings at all levels of mass organs and of worker and peasant cadres (i.e., hold committee meetings at all levels), and at the district level hold large mass meetings. (b) Large mass meetings, to be called Such-and-such District Demonstration Meeting for the Attack on Ji’an, must be held within three days after this announcement is received. Good preparations must be made beforehand, and afterward a report of the results is to be made to the higher organ. (c) The central slogans of the large mass meetings, in addition to the six central slogans listed above, will also include the following six slogans (a total of twelve slogans).
   i. Welcome the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Red Armies to help eliminate the reactionary forces.
   ii. Welcome the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Red Armies to help distribute the land.
Conclusion of the Joint Conference
and Announcement of the Establishment
of the Front Committee

Front Committee Notice No. 1
(February 16, 1930)

The Joint Conference of the Fourth Army Front Committee, the Western Jiangxi Special Committee, and the Army Committees of the Fifth and Sixth Armies, held at Pitou in Ji'an, met for four days, February 6 to 9. The political situation at the time of the convening of the Joint Conference was that imperialism was actively preparing war against the Soviet Union, that the world proletariat and the oppressed colonial masses were rising up together to oppose imperialism, that the confused wars among the Chinese warlords were expanding daily, that financial and economic crisis was spreading throughout the whole country, that the opposition movement of the workers, peasants, soldiers, and urban poor was developing everywhere, and especially that the Red armed struggle in several southern provinces, with Jiangxi as its center, was developing on a large scale, with over three million workers, peasants, soldiers, and members of the impoverished masses carrying the Red flag. The Joint Conference clearly recognizes that with the movement of the imperialists to attack the Soviet Union, a high tide of world revolution will burst out, that the high tide of the Chinese revolution will arrive very soon, that Chinese soviets will appear as successors to the Russian soviets, and that they will become a powerful branch of the world soviets. Within China a Jiangxi soviet will appear first, because the objective conditions and subjective forces are more mature in Jiangxi than in other provinces. The Joint Conference clearly recognized that the armed struggle in the five provinces of Fujian, Guangdong, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Hunan, centered on Jiangxi, is a situation that is developing daily, that it is a fresh banner of the land revolution which affects the entire country, that it is a powerful element pushing forward the revolutionary high tide in the whole country, and also that it has worldwide significance as a powerful element providing armed support for the soviets and promoting the world revolution.

On the basis of the above political assessment, the Joint Conference determined that the major tasks of the Party are: (1) to expand the territory of the soviets, and in particular to raise the slogan of seizing the entire province of Jiangxi; (2) to deepen the land revolution; (3) to expand the armed forces of the workers and peasants. The realization of these three tasks will bring about the successive elimination, under the Red flag, of the reactionary forces in the various southern provinces, will rally the broad popular masses together around the Red flag, and will become a great force that will push forward the revolution in the whole country. The Joint Conference also told our comrades, and all those masses presently engaged in struggle, that the realization of these three tasks will not come entirely without effort, that it can be obtained only through intense and bitter struggle, and that with the advance of the revolutionary forces the struggle will become greater and more arduous than ever before. For our opponent is not just those who rule China—the bourgeoisie and the landlord class; it is also those who rule the world—the imperialists. But the future of the difficult struggle will inevitably be that the high tide of the revolution in the whole country will help the forces of revolution in the south, so the revolutionary forces in the south will merge together with the revolutionary forces in the whole country to bury the ruling classes completely.

The Joint Conference points out that there is a severe crisis in the Party in western and southern Jiangxi. It consists in the fact that the local leading organs of the Party at all levels are filled with landlords and rich peasants, and the Party’s policy is completely opportunist. If we do not thoroughly clean up this situation, not only will it be impossible to carry out the Party’s great political tasks but the revolution will suffer a fundamental defeat. The Joint Conference calls on all revolutionary comrades within the Party to rise, overthrow the opportunist political leadership, eliminate the landlords and rich peasants from the Party, and see to it that the Party is rapidly bolshevized.

The revolutionary land law passed by the Joint Conference rejects the gradual redistribution of land and points out that, no matter where it occurs, after an uprising has driven out the despotic gentry, their lands must be confiscated.
immediately and distributed to the peasants. The criterion for the confiscation of land is not limited to the despotic gentry and landlords. Provided only that the popular masses truly demand it, the lands of owner-peasants may also be confiscated.\(^2\) As regards the distribution of land, it is pointed out that the present objective of the land revolution is to shake the foundations of feudalism and to win over the broad popular masses, and it is for this reason that every effort should be made to redistribute all arable fields, all forests, ponds, and buildings to those who need these things, and it is only those things that are not easily divided up (high mountains and large lakes) that should be managed by the soviets and will be set aside for common use by the people. The Joint Conference points out that to take an ostensibly leftist position in the present stage, and advocate the theory of so-called common production and common consumption, in reality would help the despotic gentry and support the forces of feudalism and would go against our duty to destroy thoroughly the foundations of feudalism. At the same time, as between redistribution according to labor power and dividing the land equally among men and women, young and old, the latter standard should be adopted. This is a very important tactic for winning over the broad masses of the poor peasants, and it must not be neglected. “Developing production” is not the number one criterion of our present tactics. It is “winning over the masses” that is the number one criterion of our present tactics.

In order to guide the broad armed struggle, and to guide the deepening of the land revolution, the establishment of political power, and the expansion of the organization of the armed forces within this environment of struggle, the Joint Conference has the most pressing need for a supreme leading organ. The Front Committee, which was formerly appointed by the Central Committee to guide the Fourth Army and the local work wherever the Fourth Army went, should enlarge its duties and change its organization to take on this great mission. Therefore the Fourth Army has organized an Army Committee to guide it. The members of the Front Committee are as follows: Mao Zedong, Guo Zhen, Zeng Shan, Wang Huai, Fang Zhimin, Zhu De, Pan Xingyuan, Huang Gonghue, Liu Shiqi, Peng Dehuai, Tan Zhenlin, Chen Yi, Deng Zihui, Zhang Tingcheng, Yuan Guoping, Li Wenlin, and Teng Daiyuan. Mao, Zeng, Liu, Zhu, and Pan have been appointed to the five-member standing committee, with Huang and Peng as standing committee alternates and Mao as secretary. In order to unify the leadership of southern and western Jiangxi, the Joint Conference has decided to combine the two special committees for western Jiangxi and for southern Jiangxi into one and has made up a new membership list to form the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee. At the same time, it has made up a membership list for the Army Committee of the Fourth Army and has decided to convene a southwest-

\(^2\) As pointed out above, in the note to the February 7 Land Law, this provision was removed from the law half a year later.
The Road to Guangchang
(To the Tune "Abbreviated Magnolia Blossom")
(February 1930)

Across the broad sky all is white,
Marching in the snow adds urgency. 2
Peaks tower above our heads,
Red banners blowing in the wind, we cross the great pass.

Where are we bound this time?
To the Gan River, shrouded in windblown snow.
Yesterday the order was given
For a hundred thousand workers and peasants to sweep down on Ji’an.

Our source for this poem is Shici duilian, pp. 33–34. It is another of the six poems first published together in Renmin wenxue, May 1962. Regarding the author’s note which accompanied it there, see above, the note to Mao’s Autumn 1929 poem “The War Between Chiang Kaishek and the Guangxi Warlords.”

1. Guangchang is the name of a xian in eastern Jiangxi Province. The Red Army passed through it in February 1930, on the way to Ji’an in central Jiangxi. Regarding "tune titles" (ci pai), see note 1 to Mao’s 1927 poem, “Autumn Harvest Uprising.” “Abbreviation” is another convention used in ci poetry, which involves reducing the number of syllables (or characters) used overall.

2. When the poem first appeared in 1962, this line read “Marching in the snow, no cypress green.” The final three characters were later amended by Mao to read as above, while preserving the rhyme in Chinese.

The Significance of Dividing the Troops to Win Over the Popular Masses, and Our Line

Front Committee Announcement No. 3
(issued on March 18, 1930, from Loutuling in the suburbs of Ganzhou City)

1. Analysis of the Circumstances and Plan of Action
In the area of Ji’an, Jishui, and Yongfeng, there are the three brigades of Cheng Guanyao,2 Zhu Yaohua,3 and Deng Ying, plus the remnants of Tang Yunshan’s troops. Because it is engaged in fighting Yan Xishan, the Chiang Kaishek faction cannot spare troops to send to Jiangxi, but this troop strength of over three brigades makes it impossible to advance to the north for the time being.

Jin Handing’s troops have set out for Fujian, with the objective of mounting a pincer attack with Liu Heding on Lu’s forces4 and advancing to occupy Fuzhou. The vacuum in southern Jiangxi and western Fujian gives us a good opportunity to win over the popular masses and establish links between the three provinces. Western Fujian has only the troops of Zhang Zhen, and in the slightly more distant future we can take Zhangzhou, which would bring the Red territories all the way to the seacoast. At the same time, the Guangdong-Guangxi war has become more and more intense, and the troops stationed in the East River area [of Guangdong] are only one brigade more or less, and there is a possibility of


1. Three weeks earlier, on February 26, 1930, Li Lisan had issued Central Circular No. 70, which explicitly criticized the “hide-and-disperse views” of Zhu De and Mao Zedong, and indicated that they should be preparing themselves to march toward China’s major centers, rather than developing guerrilla bases in rural areas. (For the text, see Central Committee Documents (1930), pp. 25–34.) It is not clear whether this document had not yet reached Mao, or whether he chose to ignore it. On the relation between Mao Zedong’s strategic concepts as a whole and those of Li Lisan at this time, see the Introduction to this volume.

2. Cheng Guanyao (1898–1950) was a native of Hunan, and a graduate of the Hunan Military Academy. In May 1927, he had been appointed commander of the Fifth Division of the Thirteenth Army of the National Revolutionary Army.

3. Zhu Yaohua (dates unknown) was a native of Changsha, who had risen through the ranks of the army in Hunan. From 1924 to 1927 he was a brigade commander, but since mid-1927 he had commanded a division. At this time, he was commander of the Eighteenth Division of the Guomindang Twenty-second Army.

4. Lu is Lu Xingbang, mentioned above, in the letter of April 5, 1929.
expanding the Red territories to the seven xian of the northwestern East River area. Although Ganzhou has not yet fallen, the effect on the popular masses of Ganzhou has not been small, and this has also had a considerable influence on the whole country. Any reinforcement of the defense of Ganzhou with new troops is not possible within a short period of time. Before new troops arrive in Ganzhou, there is no way that the Seventeenth Regiment of Jin's forces can leave Ganzhou.

Given the circumstances outlined above, the actions of the Fourth Army for a period of three months should be to split up in different areas for guerrilla actions, the regions for guerrilla actions being: in southern Jiangxi, the xian of Ganxian, Yudu, Rujin, Huichang, Nankang, Xinfeng, Anyuan, and Xunwu; and in the East River area,\(^5\) the xian of Wuhua, Xinning, Zhengshun, Meixian, Pingyuan, Jiaoling, and Dapu; in western Fujian, the xian of Shanghang, Wuping, Changting, Ninghua, and Liancheng. The region of guerrilla actions for the Second Column of the Sixth Army, for three months, should be Wan'an, Dongxiang in Ganxian, Beixiang in Yudu, Dongxiang in Xingguo, Nanxiang in Ningdu, and the xian of Guangchang and Shicheng. The region of guerrilla actions for the First Column of the Sixth Army is the xian of Ji'an, Anfu, Fenyi, Yichun, Xinyu, Xiajiang, Jishui, Yongfeng, Le'an, and Xin'gan. The region of guerrilla action for the Third Column of the Sixth Army is Xixiang in Taihe and the xian of Suichuan and Wan'an. The Twenty-second Column of the Red Guards should coordinate its actions with those of the Second Column of the Sixth Army and be responsible for completing the Red districts in the whole xian of Xingguo, Beixiang in Yudu, and the whole xian of Ningdu. The Nineteen guerrilla unit is then responsible for completing the Red districts of Guangchang, Nanfeng, and Yihuang. For the Fifth Army of the Red Army, the first step should be to coordinate actions with the Second and Third Columns of the Sixth Army to complete the work upstream along the Gan River (in the xian of Taihe, Suichuan, Shangyou, and Wan'an), and the second step should be to return to the base territory of the Fifth Army in the border region of Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi, to widen the Red territories in eastern Hunan and southern Hubei, and northern Jiangxi, and also to open the roads between northern Jiangxi and western Jiangxi.

The significance of splitting up the troops for guerrilla action is to be better able to win over the popular masses, better able to redistribute the land and establish political power, and better able to enlarge the Red Army and the local armed forces. Under current circumstances, if we were to adopt the tactic of concentrated action with large forces, it would obviously be a line of purely military action, which would go against the great task of winning over the popular masses and expanding the soviet territories. After a period of dividing the troops for guerrilla actions, we should then concentrate our actions, because of the needs of a different kind of circumstances, and to seize southern Fujian and develop such places as eastern Jiangxi. Thus, we should oppose the idea of absolute concentration, while at the same time opposing also the idea of the absolute division of the troops.

2. Expand and Be Thorough at the Same Time

To try to expand without trying to be thorough is a line of serious opportunism. In the past, in such places as southwestern Jiangxi and the East River area, it was a grave mistake to wait a very long time before redistributing the land and establishing soviets and to overlook the organization of Red Guard units. When engaged in guerrilla actions, it is also difficult for the Red Army to make this mistake of trying to expand and not trying to be thorough. In less than three to five days after reaching any location, it was on the move again, having put out a bit of propaganda and organized a few very tiny peasant-worker associations and a few immature budding armed groups. But as soon as the Red Army moved off, they immediately crumbled. This kind of organization cannot count as organization. There have indeed been places like this, in which some propaganda was carried out, but no organizational work was done, as in the xian of Nankang, Dayu, Huichang, Rujin, and Shicheng. In some there originally was no organizing at all, and in some there was originally a little organizing, but only very little. In such places it would be a waste of effort to attempt to do thorough organizational work. In such places we naturally can only do some propaganda work and distribute the grain supplies of the big gentry, to make something of an impression on the popular masses, and then take off. But in other places, such as the xian of Ningdu, Yudu, Anyuan, Xunwu, Changting, and Wuping, the situation is entirely different. Not only do they already have Party and mass organizations, there are small areas and even large areas that are openly Red territory, that have a long experience of armed struggle. When the Red Army reaches these xian, it should give well-planned assistance to the Party and to the popular masses of the already existing Red territories to organize political power, to set up armed forces, to redistribute the land, to strengthen the organizational and fighting ability of the Party and other groups, to expand the original territory throughout the entire xian, and to push into neighboring xian. For example, in southern Jiangxi, we should expand in the four xian of Ningdu, Yudu, Anyuan, and Xunwu and make them completely Red, and in western Fujian, the xian of Wuping and Changting should be made entirely Red. In this way, embracing Rujin, Huichang, and Shicheng as the center, our plans to go on and tie Fujian and Jiangxi together will be successful. The Red territory at Xunwu and the East River Red territory are already connected, so in this way these three provinces will be successfully joined. If we do not do our work thoroughly in these five or six xian, but merely mount a single guerrilla attack in the style of viewing the

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5. The xian enumerated here, in the East River area of Guangdong, are located in the northeastern corner of that province, not far from the boundary with Jiangxi.
flowers from horseback, as we did during the forty-five days of work in southern Jiangxi last year, then who knows when the task of linking Fujian, Guangdong, and Jiangxi together will ever be realized. To specify that within a fixed period of time our best efforts will be concentrated in a territory, to enlarge this territory and at the same time do a thorough job in this territory, is a very effective work method. When the various units of the Red Army split up to work separately, a fixed period of time should be allocated for a specific territory. For those territories in which the work should be thorough more work time should be allocated, and for those territories in which the work is not to be thorough, less work time should be allocated. Within a particular territory (such as the Third Column of the Fourth Army in Yudu), which places are to be allocated more time and which places are to be allocated less time, should also be planned, for only then will the work be even more effective.

3. Development through Partnership

Our experience with the line of progress through partnership clearly demonstrates that work done in this way is effective. The concept of working in partnership with an existing small piece of Red territory to develop and establish a new small piece of Red territory, and then further encouraging it to develop must become fully established, for previously it did not exist. Past experience that was not like this was a complete waste of effort. The creation of the large piece of Red territory on the Hunan-Jiangxi border came about because, at the time of the Great Revolution, the mass struggle in the xian of Chaling, Lingxian, Lianhua, Yongxin, and Ningshan had a few remnants of Party organization. It was only by working in partnership with these already existing bases that development was possible. In Suichuan there was never any foundation, and the result of trying forcibly to fabricate one was that nothing came of it. In July, the Fourth Army split up and detached its troops for guerrilla actions in western Fujian, and the First Column from Kanshi and Lanjia crossed over and went up along the Ting River, going back and forth repeatedly in the border area of Shanghang and Yongding, always in working partnership to develop a few bases, working to “open up contact” and “connect.” As a result, the work of the First Column was especially effective on that occasion. In the area of Longtan and Longmen, the Third Column operated in partnership with a region that had already undergone struggle, helping the peasants with their work, so it too achieved results. Unfortunately it had not been working very long when it abruptly went off to central Fujian, and consequently it was far less effective than the First Column. The Yanshi-Gutian area, to which the Second Column went, had no base at all, so it was a totally wasted trip, with no results to speak of. This time, when the Fourth Army came to Jiangxi and divided its troops among the four places of Ningdu, Le’an, Yongfeng and Tengtian, it was only the Fourth Column in Ningdu that was highly effective (during the twenty days in Ningdu, the Fourth Army not only enlarged the Red territory but made its principal contribution by rectifying the opportunism of the Party in Ningdu, carrying out the important tasks of redistributing the land, organizing a soviet, and establishing Red Guards). Apart from this, the other three units did not achieve any results in expanding the Red territories, because there were no existing organizations in those three places. Although the Third Column sent a small detachment to Jishui, unfortunately the Party of the Third Column had developed this region too late and was not yet able to send out very many staff members to put a lot of effort into the work there. Although we shall certainly not abandon our efforts, the above examples are quite enough to show us that the slogan “development in partnership” is undoubtedly correct. Nevertheless, we will certainly not tie the feet of the Red Army or prohibit it from taking a single step into territory that is entirely White. There are times when the army has to enter territory where there is no existing base, because of its significance for the whole country or for other unavoidable reasons, such as “influencing the situation, and solving the economic problem,” or “retreating,” and so on. This does not, however, correspond to the principles of our work policy. Our principle is undoubtedly “development in partnership,” which is, as we have always said, “wavelike advance and expansion.”

At this point something must also be said about how to deal with the problem of local Party groups and the popular masses “requesting troops.” Some comrades have not taken very seriously local Party or popular mass requests for Red Army troops to fight local bullies or militia. They do not realize that when the local popular masses ask for troops this is a good work opportunity. For when the masses take charge, and all the arrangements and planning are done by the masses themselves, if the Red Army avails itself of this opportunity to help them out, the development of the struggle is exceptionally rapid. When we disregard the requests of the masses and just arrange the work subjectively, excellent opportunities to develop will be lost. This is an individualist way of working and is also incorrect.

4. Armed Peasants

A major condition for enlarging the Red districts is the armed forces of the peasants. If peasant armed forces cannot be created, the so-called task of doing thorough work is only an empty phrase. When a guerrilla unit reaches an area in which there is hope for doing thorough work, for one thing the existing armed peasant forces must not be taken over to enlarge the Red Army (only in the heart of a Red territory when part of the land struggle has already been thorough and there is less need for the use of armed forces may a portion of the local military forces be brought together in a planned way and turned into Red Army units). When conditions are such that the fighting strength of the Red Army is not large and there is a sense of having suffered losses, we must definitely still take rifles from the Red Army and use them to arm the popular masses. Not only must we
give them rifles but we must sometimes even give them ammunition. Not only must we turn over ammunition to them but we must sometimes even give them military personnel. When the Red Army is not strong, and really cannot give away rifles and ammunition and personnel, every effort must be made to capture arms from the despotic gentry and from small enemy units with which to arm the peasants. On the whole, then, guerrilla units always work together with local armed forces, and anyone who does not think that arming the local populace is a most urgent task, anyone who does not take the local armed forces just as seriously as his own forces, is an opportunist who has rejected the popular masses.

5. Training Local Cadres

The experience in struggle of the Red Army party units is somewhat richer and somewhat more progressive than that of some of the local party units in agricultural regions. At the same time, as a local struggle develops, the shortage of working personnel and incorrect ways of working become increasingly apparent. Thus the guiding organs of the Red Army party units unquestionably must take on the responsibility of training people to become cadres in newly developing regions, and the idea of short training classes for Party members and training classes for leaders of the popular masses should be instituted in accordance with prior experience.

6. Local Party Actions Should Be Coordinated with Those of the Red Army

When last year the Fourth Army engaged in guerrilla actions in the area of southern Jiangxi and the East River, the southern Jiangxi Special Committee focused its attention on the daily struggle in the West River area and provided no guidance at all to the enthusiastic popular masses who were being roused by the Red Army in the East River area, letting them cool down. Mechanically holding onto the slogan of the greater Jiangxi-Guangdong area being the central territory, they ignored the political function of the Red Army in the East River area and ignored the great significance of connecting the three territories of southern Jiangxi, the East River, and western Fujian, demonstrating thoroughgoing opportunism. In various places of southern Jiangxi there were quite a few turtle-like cadres who did not stick their heads out until the Red Army had already been in their areas for quite a while, who when requested to start an armed struggle were frightened out of their wits. Some, who were a little more positive, still could not make use of the opportunity provided by the guerrilla actions of the Red Army to intensify their work for developing the struggle. The phenomenon in such places of the local party actions not being coordinated with the actions of the Red Army was the major reason for the lack of effectiveness of the work done. This phe-

omenon was worst in southern Jiangxi, and the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee must correct it.

7. The Relationship between Red Army Party Units and the Local Party Units

The Army Committee of the Red Army holds joint meetings with the local special committee to resolve problems, and from the xian committee on down, work may come directly under the direction of the Army Committee. A Red Army column committee holds joint meetings with xian committees to resolve problems and may direct the work from the district committee on down. A Red Army detachment committee holds joint meetings with local district committees to resolve problems and may direct the work of the local branch offices on down. A Red Army company committee holds joint meetings with the local branch office to resolve problems. A special committee may direct the work of a column committee, but may not totally tie down the actions of those Red Army columns that are more than just local in nature. The Front Committee, at the column level, will delegate an inspection team to meet jointly with special committees to resolve problems and will have the authority to exercise direction from the xian committee on down.
Directive on Lessons to Be Derived from the First Attack on Ganzhou

(March 19, 1930) 1

This order is to be carried out. Be it known that there are only two ways to take a city—the surprise raid and the attack in force. In its recent attack on the city of Ganzhou, our army, having resolved to attack in force, employed the method of the surprise raid. Because of the influence of the shortcomings described below, it was impossible to attain the desired results, and this is truly a matter for regret. Herewith are listed, in broad outline, for future reference, the shortcomings and lessons to be learned from this battle.

1. Inaccurate Assessment of the Enemy Situation

Reports came in from various sources, some saying that there were no enemy [forces] in the city except for a local Security Guard Regiment about a hundred strong, and some saying that there was only one enemy battalion in the city. This led the commander to the erroneous conclusion that the enemy forces consisted of only one battalion, whereas in fact the enemy’s entire Seventieth Regiment was in the city (consisting of three battalions, with three infantry companies and one machine-gun company in each battalion). Because of this, the allocation of forces and the plans for attacking the city were full of underestimations and inadequacies.

2. Failure to Reconnoiter the Terrain in Advance

The day before, when the First and Second Columns arrived in the vicinity of the city gates, the enemy closed the gates to engage in stubborn resistance. At the time, our side had not yet resolved to attack the city, so the senior commanders did not lead the subordinate commanders to reconnoiter the terrain on the out-

skirts of the city. As a result, when the Fourth Column arrived near the city’s southern gate the next day, it was unable at the time to occupy an advantageous position, in preparation for later scaling the city walls. As for artillery and machine gun positions, the sector of fire was not selected in advance, nor were shooting distance and other measurements taken.

3. Lack of Thorough Preparation in Advance

When our army reached the area around Maodian and Dongtian, instruments for scaling the city walls (such as bamboo ladders, etc.) had not yet been prepared, and this caused great haste when the moment arrived.

4. Absence of Unanimous Resolve at Higher and Lower Levels

During battle, when the officers and soldiers of the various units suddenly discovered that there was actually a whole regiment of enemy forces inside the city, one unit wavered in its resolve to attack the city, and failed to carry out the order to attack.

5. Inaccurate Battlefield Reporting

The battlefield report is actually the basis upon which senior commanders assess the enemy situation and make decisions adapted to the circumstances, so it is inappropriate to underestimate the enemy or overestimate oneself, and also to . . . 2 During this battle, at one time it was reported that another attack was about to be launched, and then it was reported that the attack could not be made, thus chopping and changing, without any accurate . . . 3 at all, making it difficult for the commander to handle the situation.

6. Failure to Launch the General Assault on Time

According to the order to attack the city, the general assault on the city was originally to be carried out at 3:30 A.M. on the 16th. By 4:30 A.M., however, the Fourth Column had not arrived at the designated reserve position between the southern and eastern gates, thereby missing the time for the general assault. By the time firing began outside the south gate, dawn was already breaking, so that the city walls could not be scaled successfully.

7. Inappropriate Command

The commander of one unit fell into recklessness in the pursuit of victory, without giving sufficient consideration to the terrain and making a poor choice of

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1. We have translated this document from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 138–40, where the source is given as Junshi wenxian (Documents on Military Affairs), published in 1942 by the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Party. This collection is not available to us.

2. Six or seven characters are missing here.

3. Four or five characters are missing here.
the point of attack. Thus attacks were carried out in areas that should not have been attacked (such as the main road facing the gate tower) and at the wrong times (such as during the day instead of at night), and opportunities for attack at appropriate places and times were missed.

Only major [shortcomings] are briefly treated under the above headings. As for partial shortcomings on the battlefield on the part of the various units, each unit should call its own meeting of officers to discuss and criticize them, and a report must be made to headquarters. It is so ordered.

Army Commander Zhu De
Political Commissar Mao Zedong
March 19, 1930

Order on Rectifying Military Bearing and Discipline
(March 21, 1930)

This order is to be followed. Given that the purpose of our army’s work here is to win over the masses and to train ourselves, it follows that all rules regarding military bearing and discipline must be strictly observed. Even the slightest slackening will have adverse effects on the masses. We have therefore issued repeated orders in the hope that officers and men alike will follow the Three Rules of Discipline and the Six Main Points for Attention in order to make widely known to the ordinary masses the spirit and principles of the Red Army. This will benefit the revolution and is also what the officers and men are happy to do. Therefore, anyone who contravenes military discipline and bearing, no matter to what degree, will be subject to thorough investigation. It is especially forbidden to prowl around in the prostitutes’ quarters, to avoid contracting a pernicious disease, with all kinds of evil consequences, which does harm to one’s own health as well as serious damage to the public good. Especially as it is

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 141–42, where it is taken from the same 1942 documentary collection cited in the note to the previous text.

1. This is order No. 3 of the Fourth Red Army Headquarters, promulgated at 5 P.M. on March 21.

2. Published accounts of the origin of these principles diverge substantially. According to the latest and most authoritative sources, Mao formulated the Three Main Rules of Discipline on October 24, 1927, as he was about to lead his forces up the Jinggangshan. The Six Points for Attention were put forward on January 25, 1928, and Mao formally promulgated the entire set of principles in April 1928. At that time, the Three Main Rules of Discipline were: (1) Obey orders in all your actions; (2) Don’t take anything from the workers and peasants; (3) When attacking the local bullies, turn over [whatever you take from them]. The Six Points for Attention were: (1) Put back the doors [you have taken down for bed boards]; (2) Put back the straw [you have used for bedding]; (3) Speak politely; (4) Pay fairly for what you buy; (5) Return everything you borrow; (6) Pay for anything you damage. In January 1929, Mao added two more Points for Attention: (7) Don’t bathe within sight of women, and (8) Defecate only in the latrines. In 1930, Mao formulated another principle, which replaced either the seventh or the eighth rule: Don’t search the pockets of captives. The resulting Three Main Rules of Discipline and Eight Points for Attention remained in force with minor variations until 1949, and were reissued in standardized form on October 10, 1947. See Jiang Siyi (ed.), Zhongguo gongchandang jundui zhengzhi gongzuo qishini an shi (History of Seventy Years of Political Work by the Army of the Chinese Communist Party), Vol. 1 (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1991), pp. 147–48.
Order on the Testing of Officers and Soldiers

(March 29, 1930)

This order is to be followed. In view of the fact that the appropriateness of the appointment, demotion, promotion, and transfer of officers and their deputies directly influences victory and defeat in battle and the efficacy of the work, there should be testing and evaluation so that the higher organs of command may be apprised of the work performance of officers and their deputies at various levels and may provide guidance, rectification, and education. Moreover, during the period of guerrilla warfare, the important tasks of the Red Army are to overthrow the class enemy, to arm the workers and peasants, to help establish local governments, and to expand the Red area. To accomplish such tasks, during the period of warfare it is necessary to be able to achieve unity between officers and soldiers, to advance bravely, to annihilitate the enemy, and to take his weapons to arm the peasants and workers in turn. In normal times, on the one hand, officers and soldiers must unite to engage in propaganda, mobilization, and organizational work and, on the other hand, officers in charge at all levels must train the soldiers in their own units. Therefore, given this sort of significant responsibility, the training of Red Army officers themselves and of the soldiers becomes highly important work. It has been found that the promotion and transfer of officers and their deputies in our army at present occur only after there have been sacrifices in battle, whereupon in great haste to make do, a vacancy is filled or someone is promoted from below. All of this is unplanned use of personnel. As for education, when our Red Army is not on the march engaging in battle, its forces are divided to carry out the work—as is naturally necessitated by our surroundings and our tasks. But this also makes it impossible for the army headquarters to plan systematically the education of the soldiers of the various columns. Thus planning for education of the soldiers has to be the responsibility of the officers in charge at the various levels (columns and detachments), and the army headquarters can do no more than give direction through guiding principles. Therefore, whether officers and their deputies are used appropriately, which is to say whether they have the appropriate command ability in battle, the appropriate management methods, education, and training for normal times, and particularly

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 143–47, where it is taken from the 1942 documentary collection cited in the note to the text of March 19, 1930.

1. This is order No. 5 of the Fourth Red Army Headquarters.
for mass work during guerrilla warfare, is all related to Red warfare and mass work. Among the soldiers, there are certainly many worker and peasant revolutionary elements who are brave, steady, and experienced in battle, whose ability qualifies them to be officers and deputies. In the past, however, we have never done any testing or evaluation. So there has been no plan for the appropriate appointment and transfer of officers and their deputies and no basis upon which to make promotions from the ranks, while an education plan has been even more sorely lacking. Now, with the purpose of (1) making sure that the transfer and appointment of officers and their deputies is carried out appropriately; (2) being in a position to promote and make use of rank and file soldiers who are brave, progressive, and relatively capable; and (3) achieving good results in the education and training of all the army's officers and men in a relatively planned way, the following methods have been decided upon:

1. Formulate an Educational System. In the future, [responsibility for] the education of the soldiers rests with the column. The army headquarters may only provide direction through guiding principles of education (but each column's education plan and implementation status must still be reported to the army headquarters in a timely fashion for review). [Responsibility for] the education of officers rests with the army headquarters.

2. Implement a System of Testing. From now on in education the Dalton system of testing should be frequently used, to speed up the rate of progress. The method of testing is as follows:

   Testing organization:

   (1) The testing of privates is done by company (with the participation of someone sent from the detachment).

   (2) The testing of noncommissioned officers (squad leaders and deputy squad leaders) is done by detachment (with the participation of someone sent from the column).

   (3) The testing of lower-level cadres (above the rank of deputy platoon commander and below the rank of company commander) is done by column (with the participation of someone chosen by the army headquarters).

   (4) The testing of mid-level officers and their deputies (detachment commander, deputy detachment commander, leader of units directly under the army headquarters, section chief) is done by the army headquarters.

   2. An educational method initiated by the American Helen Huss Parkhurst at Dalton High School in Dalton, Massachusetts, in 1920. It involved eliminating lectures and requiring the students to learn independently from reference books or experiments, while the teachers acted as advisers. Students worked at their own pace, and those who progressed more rapidly could graduate earlier. By 1930, a small number of primary and middle schools in China had tried this method.

3. Create Assessment Forms for Officers and Soldiers (sample forms to be issued separately).

   (1) The assessment form is divided into three parts
      a. background check
      b. test
      c. assessment

   (2) Assessment of privates
      a. background check: name, age, date joined, number of times in combat and wounded (political aspects will be formulated by the Political Department).
      b. test:
         (1) knowledge: regulations, models, orders, guerrilla tactics.
         (2) skills: drill ground operations, field operations.
      c. assessment: personality, proclivities, abilities (to be evaluated and reported by the platoon leader).

   (3) Assessment of noncommissioned officers
      a. background check (same as above)
      b. test (same as above)
      c. assessment: personality, proclivities, abilities in squad management skills, leadership in battle, and teaching and training in normal times (to be evaluated in detail by the company commander, the deputy company commander, and the political commissar).

   (4) Assessment of cadres
      a. background check: name, age, place of origin, date when appointed to the present position, experience before joining the Red Army, experience after joining the Red Army, number of times in combat and wounded, awards and punishment received, and special skills.
      b. test: (political [aspects] will be formulated separately by the Political Department) tactical principles, the science of firing weapons, major aspects of battle formation.
      c. assessment: views (whether or not they are consistent with Red Army policy and whether or not there are other ideas when faced with an unexpected situation), management and training methods, guerrilla work, command capability and decisiveness, personality (relations with and feelings toward colleagues), implementation of orders, the degree of faith the soldiers have in the person.

   (5) Assessment of mid-level officers and assistants
      a. background check: same as for cadres.
      b. test: (Political [aspects] will be formulated separately by the Political Department) the science of tactics, the science of firing weapons, topography, major aspects of battle formation.
      c. assessment: same as for cadres.
4. Education in the Various Departments and Sections

(1) Military Supplies Section: The Military Supplies section should come up with monthly examination questions to conduct Dalton-style testing on the managerial staff of the various columns. Guidance in the work should be given to the extent possible, and the method of holding meetings should be used to educate them.

(2) Medical Officers Section: The Medical Officers Section should offer, in a planned way, basic education in general medicine, pharmacology, and first aid to medical officers, nurses, medical orderlies, and stretcher bearers, and provide testing as well.

(3) Aides-de-camp Section: The Aides-de-camp Section should frequently discuss what they have learned about the administration of aides at various levels (grooms, cooks, orderlies, etc.) and give them instruction. Aides-de-camp at the column and detachment levels should frequently call together grooms, cooks, porters, and orderlies for admonitory talks.

It is imperative for all units to implement faithfully the above methods of education and to discuss implementation techniques and communicate these methods and their implications to lower levels by way of officers' meetings or unit meetings. Only in this way can the military skills of the Red Army be improved. Improvement in military skills will naturally facilitate the accomplishment of our political task. It is urgently hoped that all units will carry out this directive for the sake of the revolutionary work. It is so ordered.

Forms enclosed as below.

Army Commander Zhu De
Political Commissar Mao Zedong

March 29, 1930

Directive on Enlisting and Educating New Recruits

(March 29, 1930)

This order is to be followed. Given that the Red Army is an instrument of struggle of the workers' and peasants' revolution, at this time when reactionary political power is collapsing and the revolutionary tide is rising higher every day, more loyal and brave workers and peasants should naturally be recruited to expand the Red Army, in order to crush the reactionary forces and attain final victory. It has recently been found, however, that in obtaining new recruits, the various units intend only to recruit youngsters to run errands, and to add some porters arbitrarily, but pay scant attention to strengthening their fighting forces. Some units have even enlisted men whose five senses are defective, hunchbacks and cripples, and men who suffer from tuberculosis, venereal diseases, appendicitis, bleeding hemorrhoids, and other afflictions, not realizing that those whose senses are defective, or who are hunchbacks and cripples, not only affect the impression given by the Red Army but are not at all qualified to be soldiers. The reason is that those with eye ailments are unable to aim and shoot; those who are deaf are unable to distinguish orders; those with a collapsed nose mostly have hereditary syphilis and are susceptible to contagious diseases [in general]; those who stutter are unable to carry out the communication tasks of a soldier; as for those with ailments such as tuberculosis, venereal disease, appendicitis, and bleeding hemorrhoids, not only does their weak physical condition make them unable to fight in the army, but there is also the danger of spreading their diseases to others. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned adverse effects, this commander\(^2\) orders that attention be paid to the following when new soldiers are recruited and when they join the ranks: (1) Qualification for new recruits: must be over sixteen and under thirty years of age; height of at least 4 chi 2 cun (tailor's measure);\(^3\) must be in good health, with no serious diseases


1. This is order No. 6 of the Fourth Red Army Headquarters.
2. Ben zhang, i.e., Zhu De, who signs first as junzhangu, or commander of the army.
3. The standard chi, or Chinese foot, at this time, made up of 10 cun, or Chinese inches, was equal to 14.1 English inches or 0.3581 meters. The minimum height stipulated here thus corresponds to 1.5 meters, or slightly less than five feet.
and no defective senses. (2) Recruitment authority and procedures for examination: All battalions may recruit new soldiers at any time, but new recruits are to be added to the ranks only upon examination and qualification by a medical officer or medical unit. When troops are operating separately in guerrilla warfare (referring to the separate operation by one detachment), [recruits] are to be examined personally by the detachment commander, the political commissar, or the deputy detachment commander and must meet the qualifications in (1) to be admitted to the ranks. (3) The education of new soldiers: The principle of education should be collectivity; where there are many new soldiers, a new recruit battalion should be set up in the column, and where there are fewer, a new recruit platoon should be set up under the detachment. Only when education and training have continued for a certain period of time and reached a certain level may (new recruits) be added to the companies. After receiving this order, it must be communicated to all subordinate units and carried out accordingly by all bodies. Should there be any further negligence or recruitment of those who do not meet the above regulations, not only will rations be denied to those whose names have been added to the ranks but the officers responsible will be punished as well. Absolutely no leniency will be granted. It is urgently so ordered.

Army Commander Zhu De
Political Commissar Mao Zedong

March 29, 1930

Directive on Building up Physical Strength and Improving Shooting Skills

(April 1930)

This order is to be followed. In battle, our Red Army has neither the superior firepower to overwhelm the enemy nor chemical weaponry with which to create victory. We rely solely on our seething blood and our resolve to fight to the death in hand-to-hand combat against the enemy and to dye an area red with our blood. Thus each victory depends solely upon officers and men charging boldly forward, using our bravery to scare off the enemy. This, however, depends in turn on having great physical strength, to be able to run more than 100 li, take a dozen hills, and fight several fierce battles, all in one day. Even this is not enough, [for] we do not yet have our own ammunitions factory, or a fixed rear area. When we are short of bullets, we should use them very sparingly; only by shooting accurately can we kill and wound more enemies. If more than half our men fall behind when we advance on the run, the unity and the power of the charge will be lost. If, when we fire rapid volleys, not a single enemy is hit, we will be unable to destroy the enemy’s fighting strength, or to shake their position, still less to screen an advance. Therefore, without good physical strength, even the highest revolutionary spirit and will are of no use. Without good shooting skills, we cannot kill and wound more enemies on the battlefield, and our own side sustains more casualties as well. Consequently, to do physical exercise in order to increase the strength of our bodies and to engage in target practice to improve shooting skills are the most important thing in the Red Army’s military training at present. It is hereby ordered that in all units running during morning exercises be abolished, that [instead] calesthenics be practiced with weapons or barehanded, and that another time must be set aside for calesthenics during the weekly exercise schedule. During evening recreation hours, various exercises should be done such as foot races, soccer, maneuvers, human pyramids. . . . When there is a relatively long rest period, the idea could be considered of setting up simple equipment such as horizontal bars, hanging ropes, trapezes, swings, hanging rings, ropes for scaling walls. . . . (these kinds of equipment are

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong j uns hi wen ji, Vol. 1, pp. 150–51, where it is reproduced from the 1942 documentary collection cited in the note to the order of March 19, 1930.

1. This is order No. 8 of the Fourth Red Army Headquarters.
all portable), practicing gymnastics with this equipment, erecting obstacle courses, and practicing applied gymnastics—[such methods] are superior to foot racing. All this can be done as long as there is a rest period of over a week and an appropriate place in which to do it. There is no difficulty in having the troops do these things, and they will surely be very happy to do them. In addition, in science and skills instruction, special attention should be paid to shooting instruction. More time should be spent on shooting instruction, and shooting competitions should be held. In the future, every month or two the army headquarters will hold a competition among the different columns and units directly under the army headquarters in physical strength and shooting. Contestants will be selected to participate by each unit, and awards will be given as encouragement. (The rules for competition will be made and issued at the time). Each column and each unit directly under the army headquarters should start preparing now and know that this is the most important way to improve the fighting power of the Red Army. It is expected that the officers responsible will communicate this to the rank and file and make every effort to ensure and supervise its implementation. It is so ordered.

Army Commander Zhu De
Political Commissar Mao Zedong

Guidelines for the Work of Propaganda Personnel

(April 26, 1930)

Item 1. All propaganda personnel must have a set of equipment and use white (or black) coloring material to write slogans stipulated by this office, at any time and in any place on walls that are easily seen by people traveling on the streets and roads.

Item 2. In addition to writing on walls each and every one of the slogans from the book of slogans stipulated by this office, longer slogans must be written out on colored paper and pasted up in places where they are easily seen by people traveling on the streets and roads.

Item 3. Whenever a town is reached, the main slogans stipulated by this office are to be written on sheets of red cloth and hung in the middle of the street.

Item 4. Propaganda teams must frequently designate specific personnel to take all the propaganda materials and a pot of paste, and paste the propaganda materials where they may be easily seen by people traveling on the streets and roads.

Item 5. All propaganda personnel, no matter whether with an army unit on the move or with an army unit stationed somewhere, must carry propaganda materials and distribute them in an orderly fashion whenever they encounter the masses.

Item 6. In White districts where reactionary propaganda has caused the people to flee in fear, all propaganda personnel must see to it that propaganda materials are placed so that they may be seen when the people return. For example, paste propaganda materials on the streets and roads, in schools, in factories, in shops, and in soldiers' quarters.

Item 7. From among the propaganda team, designate a certain number of propagandists who are good speakers to conduct oral propaganda. Whenever and

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong Ji, Bujuan, Vol. 3, pp. 95–97, where it is reproduced from a documentary collection published in China in 1979.
wherever, they should hoist a propaganda banner and use various tools to attract
the masses, call the masses together and address propaganda to them, and also
look for those among the masses who are relatively receptive to the propaganda
and talk with them individually. For example, when there is only a very small
crowd, talk with them individually.

Item 8. From among the propaganda team, designate those propaganda person-
nel who are both artistic and good speakers to be in charge of presenting propa-
ganda in costume, and when there is a day or more of rest, go to work in places
where there are more people and also find a way to call a large mass meeting.

Item 9. When starting work [in a particular area], every propagandist should be
careful to make a social survey of the area in question and should report the
results of such investigations to the statistics section daily, to make up overall
statistics.

Item 10. All propaganda personnel should at all times take care to examine the
situation regarding the local bullies and all reactionary elements and quickly
report them to the defense office to find a way to deal with them.

Item 11. When fighting the local bullies, it is essential to delegate propagandists
to accompany the security section and make propaganda and also to aid the
security section in its work. (As in the case of distributing confiscated grain to
the poor peasants.)

Item 12. When holding large mass meetings, propagandists should take respon-
sibility for setting up the meeting place, for calling the masses together, and for
maintaining order at the meeting. Before and after holding meetings, do inten-
sive propaganda among the masses.

Item 13. When a battle is not going well, or we are in strategic retreat because
the enemy is attacking us, all propagandists must write a lot of propaganda
slogans that are addressed to the enemy troops and distribute a lot of propaganda
material meant for the enemy troops.

Item 14. In time of battle, all propagandists must help in carrying and attending
to wounded soldiers and also hire the masses from the vicinity of the battle-
ground to carry the wounded to the first-aid stations for treatment.

Item 15. At the end of every battle, all propagandists must focus on looking after
enemy soldiers and talking with them and making propaganda to them indi-
vidually.

Item 16. After hostilities are concluded, you should assist in hiring masses from
areas near the battleground to bury the dead soldiers.

Item 17. All propagandists, at all times and in all places, should pay attention to
maintaining troop morale.

Item 18. All propagandists, at the end of each day of work, must report the
circumstances of work during that day to the team leader, to be put down as a
written report and turned over to the section leader for inspection.

Issued by the Political Department of the
Fourth Army of the Red Army