MAO'S
ROAD TO POWER
Revolutionary Writings
1912-1949

Stuart R. Schram, Editor
Nancy J. Hodes, Associate Editor
Volume V
Toward the Second United Front
January 1935—July 1937

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The Cover

The calligraphy on the cover is the first page of Mao’s own contemporary manuscript of his concluding remarks at the Party Congress of the Soviet Areas, on May 7, 1937. It corresponds to the first paragraph of this text, as translated below on page 651.
An East Gate Book

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Translations of the materials included in this volume have been drafted by many different hands. Our team of translators has included, in alphabetical order, Hsuan Delorme, Gu Weiqun, Li Jin, Li Yuwei, Li Zhuqing, Lin Chun, Pei Minxin, Shen Tong, Su Weizhou, Tian Dongdong, Wang Xisu, Wang Zhi, Bill Wycoff, Ye Yang, Zhang Aiping, and Zheng Shiping.

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 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.

With this volume, covering the years 1935 and 1936, and the first seven months of 1937, we move into the period when, for the first time, Western journalists were able to meet and interview Mao Zedong. The first and most celebrated of these interlocutors was Edgar Snow, who conducted a number of lengthy interviews with Mao between July and September 1936. Although substantial portions of these documents have long been available, the complete texts
of all five of them are published here for the first time, on the basis of Snow’s own manuscripts, preserved in the Edgar Snow Papers in the University Archives of the University of Missouri, Kansas City. We are extremely grateful to Mrs. Lois Wheeler Snow for authorizing us to reproduce these materials, and we wish to express our thanks also to David Boutros and his colleagues at the Archives for their assistance to us in making use of them. In the spring and summer of 1937, Snow’s first wife, Helen Foster Snow (Nym Wales) also succeeded in visiting the Communist capital, which by then had been moved from Bao'an to Yan'an, and interviewed Mao on several occasions. Her papers are held partly at the Hoover Institution in Stanford, and partly in the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University, which now holds the copyright. We are grateful to Helen Snow’s niece, Mrs. Sheril Foster Bischoff, and to Harvard Heath, the archivist in charge of this collection, for allowing us to make use of Nym Wales’ interview of July 4, 1937, with Mao.

This project was launched by Roderick MacFarquhar, Director of the Fairbank Center until June 30, 1992. Without his organizing ability and forceful advocacy, it would never have come into being, and his continuing active participation has been vital to its success. His successor, Professor James L. Watson, likewise took an interest in our work, and Professor Ezra Vogel, director of the center from July 1995 to June 1999, has consistently manifested sympathy and support for the project.

The editor, Stuart Schram, wishes to acknowledge his very great indebtedness to Benjamin Schwartz, a pioneer in the study of Mao Zedong’s thought. Professor Schwartz carefully read the manuscripts of earlier volumes of this series, and made stimulating and thoughtful criticisms of the introductions. More recently, he has continued to offer insightful comments on the themes raised by the materials translated. For any remaining errors and inadequacies, the fault lies once again with the editor.

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.

Apart from Mao’s strong Hunanese patriotism, which inclined him to admire

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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 Toen,’ March 1917, pp. 111–12.
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."2 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.3 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 back-side on the body of China,”4 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 “Jieji douzheng, jieji douzheng, jieji 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 pre-capitalist 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 1923–1926. Soon, however, he moved away from this perspective, and even before urban-based revolution was put down in blood by Chiang Kaishek 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 Jinxin, 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." This pattern of revolution 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.

There were periods during the years 1931–1934 when Mao Zedong was reduced virtually to the position of a figurehead by the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, dominated in large part by the Moscow-trained members of the so-called "Internationalist" faction. At other times, he was able to maintain a substantial measure of control over the military tactics of the Red Army, and to develop his skills both as a theorist and as a practitioner of the art of war. Even when he was effectively barred from that domain, he continued to pursue the investigations of rural conditions which had long been one of his trademarks. Such enquiries into the conditions in a particular area served as the foundation for an approach to revolution stressing the need to adapt the Party's tactics to the concrete realities of the society in which it was operating.

The defeat of 1934 weakened the position of Mao's rivals for the leadership. In meetings of the Politburo held in December 1934, in the course of the Long March, Mao was supported for the first time in over two years by a majority of the participants. At the conference held at Zunyi in January 1935, Mao began his comeback in earnest. Soon he once again played a dominant role in decisions regarding military operations, though his rise to unquestioned dominance in the Party was a long process which reached its culmination only in 1945.

In the course of the northward march from Zunyi to Shaanxi, Mao was driven at times by the continuing threat from Chiang Kaishek's campaigns of "Encirclement and Suppression" to advocate that the Red Army should fight its way to the borders of the Soviet Union, in order to obtain Soviet aid and protection. Once the survivors of the Red Army had established themselves in Shaanxi Province in 1936, Mao's perspective began to change, and a vision of the Chinese people as a whole as the victim of oppression came progressively into play. For a time, Mao's line called for overthrowing the traitorous running dog Chiang Kaishek in order to fight Japan, but soon the growing threat of Japanese aggression and strong Soviet pressure in favor of collaboration with the Guomindang led to a fundamental change in the Party's policy. The Xi'an Incident of December 1936, in which Chiang Kaishek was kidnapped in order to force him to oppose the invader, was the catalyst which finally produced a second "united front." Without it, Mao Zedong and the forces he led might well have remained a side current in the remote and backward region of Northwest China, 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. As noted above, 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.

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, in his view, 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.

5. See the relevant passages of the texts of August 7 and August 18, 1927, in Volume III, pp. 31 and 36.
7. See Volume IV, pp. xcii–xciv.
8. See below, the Introduction to this volume, and also the "Resolution on Problems of Military Strategy" of December 23, 1935.
In 1939–1940, Mao had put forward the slogan of “New Democracy” and defined it as a régime 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 policies 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 more than 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 one of the greatest challenges 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 has 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, 1935–1937

The introductions to the first three volumes of this edition were, in large measure, commentaries on the story as told in Mao's own words. Because the essential aim of this series is to make available a collection of source materials, without imposing on the reader an interpretation laid down by the editors, that is the pattern we prefer to follow. In the Introduction to Volume IV, it was necessary to depart from this model to some extent, because limitations on Mao's role during the years 1931–1934, and the fact that he was in many cases not the author of the texts to which he was obliged to put his name as chairman of the Chinese Soviet Republic, made it impossible to take Mao's own writings as the leading thread.

For rather different reasons, the first year covered by the present volume falls into the same category as Volume IV. On the whole, the problem is not that texts signed by Mao cannot be confidently attributed to him but, rather, that the available firsthand documentation for 1935, including writings both by Mao and by others, is exceedingly scanty. There are at least three explanations for this fact. First, the Red Army was constantly on the march, in difficult conditions hardly conducive to the making and preservation of written records. Second, the period of the Long March remains an extremely sensitive one for historical writing in China because many of the leading actors are, or were until very recently, still alive, and they (and their families) are concerned about the possible impact on their reputations of the limited documentation which does exist regarding their role in various crucial decisions. Finally, some of those statements by Mao Zedong which are available reveal, or suggest, that he occasionally expressed views scarcely compatible with the account of his position in the orthodox Chinese historiography, even today. As a result, the record of Mao's utterances at many important meetings in 1935—which may well include even more heterodox statements by him than those which appear in this volume—is locked away in the archives in Beijing, and we are obliged to summarize his views on the basis of the excerpts contained in the official chronology of his life, and a variety of other sources, to provide a setting for those Mao texts which are available.

Beginning with the Wayaobao Conference of December 1935, on the other hand, the documentary record in Mao's own words is much more extensive,

1. Mao Zedong nianpu 1893–1949 (Chronological Biography of Mao Zedong, 1893–1949), ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiu she (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), Vol. 1. Since Mao is the central figure in this edition, our short title for this work is simply Nianpu; in the case of other such chronologies, the name of the subject is included in the short title.
though by no means complete. From this point onward, therefore, the character of this Introduction becomes more like what it was in the first three volumes. That does not mean, of course, that our view of events is based exclusively or primarily on Mao’s own perspective, without recourse to other sources, but the presentation and analysis of Mao’s writings is central to our discourse.

1. The Long March: Mao and His Rivals during the Struggle for Survival

The Introduction to Volume IV ends with a brief account of the meetings on December 12, 1934, in Tongdao, and on December 18, 1934, in Liping, at which the future direction of the Long March was discussed, and the question of responsibilities for the collapse of the Central Soviet Area began to be raised. At these conferences, for the first time in two years, Mao’s views regarding military strategy were supported by a majority of the participants. It was decided to move westward toward Zunyi in Guizhou Province, and not to turn north into Hunan, to join up with other Red forces believed to be located there, as advocated by the Comintern military adviser, Otto Braun (Li De), and the dominant figure in the Party leadership, Bo Gu (Qin Bangxian).

2. The sources regarding the events of the Long March, which provide the context for Mao’s views and Mao’s role as discussed here, are many and various, both in Chinese and in Western languages. The first published account, Mao’s own narrative to Edgar Snow as reproduced in Red Star over China, though not altogether accurate or objective, is an important historical document. Other autobiographical accounts of participants include that of Zhang Guotao, cited below, and Otto Braun, Chineseische Aufzeichungen (1932–1939) (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1973), translated as A Comintern Agent in China, 1932–1939 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982) (hereafter Braun, Comintern Agent). This latter work can usefully be read in conjunction with Freddy Litten’s monograph, Otto Braun’s frühes Wirken in China (1932–1935) (Otto Braun’s Early Activities in China, 1932–1935) (Munich: Osteuropa-Institut München, Working Papers no. 124, 1988) (hereafter Litten, Early Activities). Dick Wilson’s book, The Long March 1935 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), based primarily on often out-of-date English-language sources, is today of little interest. Harrison Salisbury’s vivid account, The Long March: The Untold Story (New York: Harper and Row, 1985) (hereafter Salisbury, Long March), though sometimes careless about details and strongly influenced by the orthodox Chinese view of Mao, contains much valuable information, thanks to the extraordinary access from which he benefited. With the support of Yang Shangkun, he was able to retrace the entire route of the march and to interview many survivors.


On January 1, 1935, while halted at Houchang, a locality some 30 miles south of the Wu River, the Politburo held a meeting and adopted a resolution reiterating the view Mao had expressed at Liping to the effect that the Party should expand into southern Sichuan. Two days later, after building a floating bridge on the Wu River, Red Army units began to cross, and by January 7, the walled city of Zunyi had been taken. The leaders, including Mao Zedong, arrived on January 9 and remained in Zunyi until the 19th. During this period, the enlarged session of the Politburo commonly known as the Zunyi Conference met from January 15 to 17.

It has long been known that this gathering was of major importance, but until the early 1980s so little reliable documentation was available that there was great confusion about what actually took place, and even about the dates of the meeting. Some writers, including the editor of this series, asserted that at Zunyi Mao had become, either in name or in fact, chairman of the Politburo. While Mao did not achieve dominance in the Party until 1938, and was not given the title of chairman until 1943, the improvement in his fortunes which had begun in December 1934 was nonetheless carried forward significantly. He did not become the unchallenged leader overnight, but the prospect of such preeminence began to open before him.

Until a little over a decade ago, the only document available regarding the proceedings at Zunyi was a Politburo resolution entitled “Summing up the Campaign against the Enemy’s Fifth ‘Encirclement and Suppression,’” believed to have been adopted at Zunyi. While this contains much useful information, the names of key participants in the conference were represented in it by blanks, and earlier speculations as to their identity have frequently turned out to be wrong.

Power: The Anti-Japanese National United Front, 1935–1945 (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1988) (hereafter Shum, United Front), also deals at some length with events in 1935. A comprehensive account by a Chinese author with full access to all the relevant documentation can be found in Jin Chongji, Mao Zedong zhuankan, 1893–1949 (Biography of Mao Zedong, 1893–1949) (Beijing: Zhongyue weixian chu ban she, 1996) (hereafter Jin, Mao). It has been announced that an English translation will be published shortly. Other Chinese materials, consisting of memoirs, and of articles and documents published in specialized periodicals dealing with Party history, will be cited below as the occasion arises.


7. This document was translated by Jerome Chen from one of the rare Chinese-language sources then available in his article “Resolutions of the Tsunyi Conference,” China Quarterly, no. 40 (October–December 1969), pp. 1–38. The Chinese text was reproduced in 1971 in Mao Zedong ji, Vol. 4, pp. 379–97. Regarding the date of this resolution and the circumstances of its adoption, see also Kampen, Rise of Mao, p. 70.
Our knowledge of what happened was greatly expanded by the publication in China in January 1985, on the fiftieth anniversary of these events, of important documentary materials. The most widely distributed collection was a slim volume including, in addition to the resolution just mentioned, a brief telegraphic account sent to Zhang Guotao’s Fourth Front Army on February 28, 1935, and an outline of the decisions taken at Zunyi prepared by Chen Yun in late February or early March for circulation to Red Army units, which does name some previously unmentionable names.8 Like the resolution adopted at Zunyi, these two items are not by Mao, so they do not appear below in the body of this volume, but English translations are conveniently available.9

On the basis of these and other newly available materials, the course of the proceedings has become clear in broad outline, though there are divergences among those who have recently written about Zunyi regarding some important points.10 Bo Gu, who had effectively controlled the Central Committee since September 1931, spoke first. As might have been expected, he argued in his political report that the strategic line followed in resisting the Guomindang’s Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” for which he and Otto Braun bore primary responsibility, was correct. The defeat which led to the Long March was, he argued, the result of “objective factors” such as the strength of the Guomindang, supported by the imperialists, and the lack of coordination between revolutionary movements in the White area and the operations of the Red Army.11

Zhou Enlai, who had been in overall charge of military operations since he supplanted Mao in this capacity at the Ningdu Conference of October 1932,12 next presented the military report. Understandably, he defended the strategic line for which he, together with Bo Gu and Otto Braun, was responsible, but he showed much greater flexibility than Bo, acknowledging errors in its application, such as fighting the Guomindang’s blockhouses with blockhouses.

Then came the counterattack. Many sources state that it began with a speech by Mao, but a recent authoritative account indicates that before Mao spoke, Zhang Wentian (Luo Fu) made a statement presenting the views agreed upon by Zhang himself, Mao, and Wang Jiaxiang, and this version is undoubtedly correct.13 Mao followed with a systematic criticism of the military leadership during the previous period, arguing that the main cause of defeat lay in tactical errors such as the adoption of a purely passive defense and fighting on fronts and blockhouses rather than mobile warfare. Otto Braun’s tactics of “short, sharp thrusts” had cost the Red Army dearly. All these methods, Mao emphasized, ran directly counter to the principles which had previously brought victory to the Communist forces.14 Whether Zhang or Wang took the lead in supporting Mao’s attack on Bo Gu is a disputed issue.15 There is no doubt, in any case, that these two “Returned Students” played a decisive role in the removal of their fellow member of the “International Faction” from the top position in the Party.

On the basis of interviews with participants in the Long March, as well as published memoirs, Salisbury argues that on the road from Jiangxi to Zunyi, Mao had held extensive conversations with both men and drawn them closer to his position.16 Apart from Mao’s own persuasive powers, his rapprochement with Zhang Wentian and Wang Jiaxiang resulted also from the fact that Wang Ming had informed the Central Committee in November 1934 that the International viewed Mao favorably as an experienced leader.17 The outcome of the Zunyi Conference was in harmony with that assumption. At the Politburo meeting itself, Mao was made a member of the Standing Committee. Bo Gu and Otto Braun were removed from the military leadership, which was placed in the hands of Zhou Enlai and Zhu De. On February 5, Zhang Wentian replaced Bo Gu as the “person with overall responsibility” for the leadership of the Party. On March 4, the Frontline Headquarters was reestablished, with Zhu De as commander-in-chief and Mao as political commissar, and began exercising its functions immediately.18

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8. See Zunyi huiyi wenxian (Documents Regarding the Zunyi Conference) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1985). An amplification collection of documents was published in Guizhou, under the title Zunyi huiyi ziliao zhuanye (Selected Materials on the Zunyi Conference) (Guiyang, 1985). Both these volumes also contain an “Investigation Report” regarding the circumstances of the Zunyi conference, which had been checked and approved by the surviving participants: Chen Yun, Deng Xiaoping, Nie Rongzhen, Yang Shangkun, Wu Xiuxian, and Li Zhiuan.


10. In addition to Yang’s article, cited in the previous note, and Kampen, Rise of Mao, pp. 68–74, see Kampen’s comment, “The Zunyi Conference and Further Steps in Mao’s Road to Power,” China Quarterly, no. 117 (March 1989), pp. 119–34, as well as Yang, From Revolution to Politics, pp. 107–24; Salisbury, Long March, pp. 119–26; and Litten, Early Activties, pp. 73–82.


12. See the Introduction to Volume IV, pp. IVi-ix.

13. Jin, Mao, p. 341. See also Kampen, Rise of Mao, p. 72. Litten, Early Activities, pp. 88–89, makes the same point, citing an article published in China which quotes Deng Xiaoping, who was present at Zunyi, to this effect.


15. See Yang, “The Zunyi Conference,” and Kampen’s comment in reply, cited above.


17. See Sheng, Battling Western Imperialism, pp. 20–21, quoting an article by Yang Kuisong. Sheng argues that this message from the Comintern also encouraged Zhou Enlai and Zhu De to throw their support to Mao.

18. See below, the two orders signed by Zhu De and Mao Zedong dated March 5, 1935.
On March 10, Mao was outvoted at a meeting of the leadership, which decided to launch an assault on a point which in Mao's view was too strongly defended. At further discussions on the next day, however, the majority was persuaded to reverse this decision. From these events Mao drew the conclusion that decisions in the midst of a battle should not be taken by a large number of people. He therefore proposed on March 22 that, to ensure unified command, a new three-man group responsible for military leadership be established. This group, set up shortly afterward, consisted of Zhou Enlai, Mao Zedong, and Wang Jiaxiang. Wang had been severely wounded shortly before the start of the Long March, and Zhou's authority had been weakened by the defeat in the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.” As a result, although Zhou was formally in charge, Mao soon emerged as the effective “number one” in the military domain.

To be sure, the future of the Chinese Communist Party would involve political as well as military decisions, and in early 1935 Mao did not yet have the preponderant voice in political matters. But to the extent that fighting would be the most important single task between departure from Zunyi and arrival in Shaanxi at the end of 1935, Mao's primacy in the military domain offered the opportunity to establish himself as the man who could lead the Party to victory.

The two months, from mid-January to mid-March, during which the leadership changes noted above were made, saw a great deal of fighting, but did not begin auspiciously. As indicated in the telegram of January 22, 1935, to Zhang Guotao translated below, the original intention was to cross the Yangzi to the north in the vicinity of Luzhou and to proceed northward in order to join forces with Zhang's Fourth Front Army, which was then occupying a base area in Sichuan. But, on the way there, the forces of Mao and his comrades were defeated at Tucheng on the Chishui (Red River), which marked the boundary between Guizhou and Sichuan. The First Front Army then crossed the Chishui to the west on January 29, crossed back again on February 18–19 to return to northern Guizhou, and successfully took Loushan Pass on February 28, 1935 (an exploit commemorated in the poem thus titled, translated below).

On March 16–17, Mao's forces crossed once more to the west and entered Sichuan, but then crossed back on March 21–22 and drove south into Guizhou and thence to eastern Yunnan. The First Front Army proceeded to advance in a wide arc through Yunnan, crossed the River of the Golden Sands into Sichuan in early May, and reached Huili, where an important meeting was held on May 12, 1935.

These backward and forward movements were intended to deceive Chiang Kai-shek, who had personally come to preside over the final destruction of the “Communist bandits,” and in Mao's view they had achieved their end, but some commanders, including Peng Dehuai and Lin Biao, felt that they were exhausting the Red Army's own forces in the process. Lin Biao actually put forward a written proposal in Huili that Mao be relieved of his direct responsibility for field operations. “You are a mere child,” Mao responded bluntly. “What do you understand?” Mao suspected that Peng Dehuai was the instigator of Lin Biao’s initiative and in later years he would hold this against Peng. Defending himself at the Huili meeting, Mao declared that this proposal went against the spirit of the Zunyi Conference. Zhu De and Zhou Enlai spoke in support of Mao, praising his skill in evading the enemy and successfully crossing the River of Golden Sands, thereby breaking the Guomindang's encirclement. The meeting endorsed the strategy of proceeding northward in order to combine forces with Zhang Guotao's Fourth Front Army.

After a difficult passage through the territory occupied by the Yi minority, the legendary crossing of the Dadu River, and the long climb over the Jinjin Mountains, the First Front Army made contact with the Fourth Front Army on June 12, 1935. The two armies celebrated their union on June 17, but Mao Zedong and Zhang Guotao did not meet until June 25. Meanwhile, on June 16, a telegram signed by Zhu De, Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and Zhang Wentian was sent to Zhang Guotao and his fellow leaders of the Fourth Front Army, proposing that in the future the two armies should occupy the three provinces of Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu, establish soviet regimes there, and send a force to occupy Xining at an appropriate time. When the two leading groups found themselves face to face at Lianghekou on June 25, Mao and Zhang embraced, the armies cheered one another, and there was great outward cordiality at the banquet that evening, but it soon became apparent that there was little substantive agreement on the direction of march or on any other issue.

Zhang Guotao and Mao were, of course, both founding members of the Chinese Communist Party, who had participated in the First Congress of 1921. During the period of the First United Front, Zhang and Mao had on occasion supported each other, but Zhang harbored resentment against Mao because of

23. See below, the telegram of June 16, 1935, and also Braun, Comintern Agent, p. 121.
24. Zhang Guotao (1897–1979), zi Teli, was a native of Jiangxi. As a student at Beijing University, he played a leading role in the May Fourth demonstrations. At the First Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in July 1921, he was elected a member of the Central Committee, and, from that time forward, he was a major figure in the Party.
25. For example, at the Second Congress of the Guomindang in 1926 Mao endorsed Zhang’s argument in favor of the need to keep membership in the Communist Party secret in areas suffering from Right-wing repression. See Volume II, pp. 351–52.
an incident at the Third Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1923. On this occasion, Mao, according to Zhang, had initially supported him on the need to keep control of the labor unions firmly in Communist hands, but had in the end changed his position and voted in favor of the more conciliatory policy of the Comintern representative. Zhang suggests in his memoirs that Mao was influenced by opportunist motives.26 In the aftermath, Mao was indeed elected a member of the Central Bureau, and secretary of the Central Executive Committee, while Zhang was dropped from such high positions.

While this ancient grievance may have affected the relations between the two men, the crucial source of conflict between them was that both sought power for themselves. Zhang Guotao had been a highly successful leader of the Fourth Front Army in the Henan-Hubei-Anhui (E-Yu-Wan) border area, and then, when forced to relocate after the Fourth "Encirclement and Suppression," in Sichuan. In his report of January 1934 to the Second Soviet Congress, Mao had praised the achievements of the Fourth Front Army in these campaigns.27 Mao, for his part, though deprived of real power in the final period of the Jiangxi Soviet Republic, had continued to occupy the ceremonial post of chairman and was, as noted above, now in the process of asserting himself once more in a leading role.

An obvious source of conflict was the fact that while Mao and the other leaders of the First Front Army enjoyed legitimacy, because their occupancy of the top Party posts had been endorsed by Moscow, the Fourth Front Army possessed far greater military power. According to recent accounts, Zhang Guotao's forces numbered 70,000 or 80,000, while only 7,000 to 10,000 remained of the First Front Army after the losses caused by enemy action and the many perils of the journey from Jiangxi to Sichuan.28

On June 26, 1935, the Politburo met in Lianghekou. Zhou Enlai presided and gave the opening report, calling for a unified command structure of the two armies, which would lead them north to establish a base in Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu. Mao expressed his agreement with Zhou's report and made five points: (1) The Red Army should exert every effort to go to a new area and establish a base there. In a Sichuan-Shaanxi-Gansu base, it would be possible to create a more solid foundation for the soviet movement. Things should be explained to comrades of the Fourth Front Army, so that they would agree to this plan rather than heading for Chengdu. (2) The nature of the war should be neither decisive defensive engagements, nor flight, but attack. (3) We should see which are the localities where Chiang Kai-shek can threaten our vital interests and smash them first. (4) We should concentrate our forces to attack in the main direction. (5) The problem of unified leadership should be handled by the Standing Committee [of the Politburo] and the Military Affairs Commission.29

Zhang Guotao agreed that there were arguments in favor of a Sichuan-Shaanxi-Gansu base, but suggested as alternatives a new base in the Sichuan-Gansu-Xikang border area, or a move westward toward Xinjiang in order to establish contact with the Soviet Union. Zhang indicates in his memoirs that the Politburo meeting only lasted three hours in the morning of June 26 and that Zhou Enlai came to him at same afternoon with a telegram calling for both armies to move northward, which he accepted because he was reluctant to set himself against all the other members of the Politburo. According to the recent official biography of Mao Zedong, the discussion of this issue nevertheless continued for three days, and the final decision to endorse Mao's plan to go north was made only on June 28. The Politburo meeting continued on June 29, when Zhang Guotao was elected deputy chairman of the Military Affairs Commission, and his principal military subordinates, Xu Xiangqian and Chen Changhao, were made members of the commission.30

Although the contents of the June 28 decision corresponded broadly to Mao's views, it had been shaped in the course of collective discussions, and there is no indication in the sources that it was drafted by Mao, so it does not appear in the body of this volume. The opening passage sums up the message:

1. After the rendezvous between the First and Fourth Front Armies, our general strategic policy is to concentrate our main force to attack toward the north and destroy large numbers of enemy forces in the course of mobile warfare. We shall first seize the southern part of Gansu to establish the Sichuan-Shaanxi-Gansu Soviet Base Area, so that the Chinese soviet movement can be placed on a more solid and broader foundation and we can seek victory in the northwestern provinces of China and ultimately throughout China.

2. In order to carry out this general strategic policy, we must first, in our campaigns, concentrate our main forces to destroy and smash Hu Zongnan's forces, take Songpan, and control the areas north of Songpan in order to enable the main forces to advance victoriously toward southern Gansu.31

The plans for the action against Hu Zongnan were drawn up by Zhou Enlai,

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27. See Volume IV, pp. 662–63.


but Zhang Guotao, whose Fourth Front Army was in the best position to carry out the attack, was entrusted with their application. In the view of Chinese historians, reflected in Harrison Salisbury's account, Zhang carried out this operation in a dilatory fashion which amounted to deliberate sabotage, because he really wanted to go west rather than north. The First Front Army pressed forward, but Mao did not want to attack Songpan on his own. On July 10, he sent Zhang Guotao a telegram urging that the Fourth Front Army hasten northward, but Zhang showed no inclination to do so. Mao was therefore obliged to compromise. At a Politburo meeting held in Luhua on July 18, 1935, Mao and the other leaders of the First Front Army reluctantly agreed that Zhou Enlai, who was seriously ill, should resign as general political commissar of the Red Army and be replaced by Zhang Guotao. As a corollary of this decision, Mao was obliged to abandon his own formal authority over military strategy, but he still had considerable influence in this domain because of his personal prestige. He accepted this compromise in preference to Zhang Wentian's suggestion that Zhang Guotao should take over as secretary general. As Teiwes has put it, Zhang, thinking Party power was empty, was happy to accept the offer of military leadership, but in the long run Mao's role on the Central Committee would stand him in good stead when the two armies finally split.

At the request of Zhang Guotao and the Fourth Front Army, another Politburo conference was held on August 4–6 in Shawo, near Mao'sergai, to discuss general political issues and the composition of the leadership. Zhang Wentian, who chaired the conference, read out a resolution which had been drafted in advance, criticizing Zhang Guotao for abandoning the northern Sichuan base and for his reluctance to carry out the proposed northern expedition. Zhang countered by arguing that the Central leadership, having lost the entire Central Soviet Area in Jiangxi and most of the Red Army, was in no position to claim that its line was correct. In the end, a new compromise resolution was drafted, stressing the need for “class love” between the two forces.

In a speech on this occasion, Mao declared that the Northwest was characterized by the fact that it was the place where both the ruling classes and the imperialist forces were weakest. Moreover, because it was close to the Soviet Union, Soviet political and material assistance could be obtained there. In a victory for Mao, the northward march was once again proclaimed.

In fact, the possibility of Soviet assistance, and of offering the Chinese Red Army temporary refuge in the Soviet Union, had been evoked earlier in Moscow. In September 1934, the Soviet authorities had considered building a secret cadre school for the Chinese Communists in Central Asia, and providing military aid including airplanes and heavy artillery.

On August 20, yet another conference was held in Mao'sergai. In the absence of Zhang Guotao and Zhu De, who had left for the south, this Politburo meeting adopted a resolution, drafted by Mao, elaborating on the line laid down in the document of June 28, quoted above. It called for exploiting the contradictions among the various warlords and for encouraging the non-Han peoples, numerous in that area, to establish their own “people's republics.” It reiterated Mao's view that it would be “extremely disadvantageous” for the main forces to cross the Yellow River to the west and penetrate into the remote areas of Qinghai, Ningxia, and Xinjiang, as Zhang Guotao had suggested. The document ended with an appeal to “summon up Bolshevik determination and heroism” and to “turn Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu Red.”

At the end of August, after a terrible journey through the desolate marsh country known as the Grasslands, the First Front Army arrived at the town of Baxi. At a meeting of the Politburo on September 2, Mao declared that the First Front Army needed a period of rest and reorganization. The strategic orientation, he said, had already been firmly established; they must go eastward, toward regions well settled by the Han, where it would be easier to obtain provisions. (The areas traversed during the previous month or two had been sparsely populated, mainly by Tibetans and other national minorities.) After arriving in Gansu, conditions would be favorable for expanding the Red Army. The key issues were strengthening the leadership, and applying the Three Rules and the Eight Points for Attention.

On September 3, Mao and his comrades received a telegram from Zhang Guotao stating that floods would not permit his troops to advance farther toward the north or to join forces with the First Front Army and proposing that the entire Red Army withdraw to the South. The Fourth Front Army had, indeed, encountered serious floods and other difficulties, but it had long been obvious that Zhang Guotao did not accept the decision to march northward and welcomed any excuse for setting it aside. Now he made this intention absolutely clear.

37. See below, the translation of this decision.
38. The most graphic account of this ordeal is given in Salisbury, Long March, pp. 266–71.
This message caused particularly great anxiety because it had recently become known that the Guomindang armies of Hu Zongnan and other commanders were approaching, and the First Front Army was thus exposed to the danger of facing them alone. Mao therefore sent an urgent telegram to Zhang Guotao on September 8 declaring that if his forces moved southward, their future would be “in great jeopardy,” and urging him to change his course and move northward.\(^{41}\) The following day, Zhang Guotao responded with another telegram to those commanders from the Fourth Front Army who were then also in the vicinity of Baxi, and to the Central Committee, asserting: “the left and right columns (i.e., the Fourth and First Armies) can absolutely not operate separately.”\(^{42}\) According to several accounts, Zhang Guotao also sent a secret telegram to his own subordinates, Chen Changhao and Xu Xiangqian, then traveling with the First Front Army, urging them to “launch a thorough inner-Party struggle.” The telegram was handed to Ye Jianying, who showed it to Mao.\(^{43}\)

Mao convened an emergency meeting of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, which agreed to adhere to the original course, and then hastened to the nearby locality where Zhou Enlai and Wang Jiaxiang were being cared for. Yang Shangkun and Ye Jianying joined them there at dawn. The First Front Army troops were already on the march. After making a last attempt to persuade those units of the Fourth Front Army present in Baxi to accompany the First Front Army northward, and sending a peremptory telegram to Zhang Guotao reiterating the previous orders, Mao and his comrades slipped away. For his part, Zhang Guotao began to move south.\(^{44}\)

Pausing for two or three days, on September 12–14, in Ejie, a locality a relatively short distance north of Baxi, Mao convened a conference of the Politburo and of all those members of the Central Committee still traveling with the First Front Army. The previous denunciations of Zhang Guotao were reiterated, this time with enthusiastic support from everyone, including the Returned Students and even Otto Braun.\(^{45}\) The telegram to Zhang Guotao was, however, couched in relatively mild terms, and Mao, mindful of the fact that Zhang controlled the greater part of the Red Army, did not ask that he be deprived of his Party membership. In line with a proposal by Peng Dehuai, the remnant forces still accompanying Mao, after the loss not only of the Fourth Front Army but of First Front Army units which had been traveling with it, were reorganized into two columns, baptized the Shaanxi-Gansu Detachment of the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Force of the Red Army, with Peng as commander, Lin Biao as deputy commander, and Mao as political commissar. As to what these much diminished forces could or should do, Mao adopted in his report to this conference a stance which savored of desperation:

The Party Center insists on the previous orientation, that is, the basic policy of continuing to go north. The “Supplementary Resolution” says that we should go to the east of the Yellow River. But this orientation should be somewhat altered. Now we should employ guerrilla warfare to fight our way to the border of the Soviet Union. This orientation is the basic orientation at present. In the past the Party Center opposed such a policy and advocated that, after the union of the First and Fourth Front Armies, we should create a soviet in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Sichuan border area. But things are different now. At present, we have only the main forces of the First and Third Army Groups of the First Front Army. Therefore, we must raise this issue clearly, make use of guerrilla warfare, break through and establish contact with the International, obtain guidance and assistance from the International, rest and reorganize our troops, and then expand them… We are not an independent communist party. It is wrong to refuse absolutely to ask for help. We are in any case one branch of the International. We can first establish a base area on the border near the Soviet Union, and then develop toward the east. Otherwise, we will have to fight a guerrilla war endlessly. We must not turn ourselves into a turtle inside an urn. The Central Committee must go to a place from which it can direct the revolution in the whole country.

In his concluding remarks at the end of this conference, Mao declared:

Our strategic orientation at present has been changed from the Sichuan-Shaanxi-Gansu plan. The reasons are, first, that the Fourth Army is already divided, and Zhang Guotao has gone south, thus causing rather heavy losses to the Chinese revolution. Nevertheless, we are definitely not going to be downhearted, but are moving forward in a big way… Northern Shaanxi and northeastern Gansu are the places where we should go.\(^{46}\)

As noted above, Mao Zedong had already expressed an interest in obtaining

\(^{41}\) See below “The Army of the Left Wing Should Change Its Route and March Northward,” September 8, 1935. (Since the junction of the two armies in June, the forces accompanying Zhang Guotao, which were on a route to the west of that followed by those of Mao and the Party leadership, had been known as the “Left Wing,” and those with Mao as the “Right Wing.”)

\(^{42}\) Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 471.

\(^{43}\) Yang, From Revolution to Politics, pp. 158–59, and Salisbury, Long March, pp. 274–76. Li Xianian, in an interview with Salisbury, recalled that the phrase used by Zhang Guotao was chedi kaizhan dangnei douzheng, which we have translated “launch a thorough inner-Party struggle.” Jin, Mao, p. 362, also refers to a separate telegram to Chen and Xu, which “sought to split and harm the Central Committee.”

\(^{44}\) Salisbury, Long March, pp. 277–281; Yang, From Revolution to Politics, pp. 159–60.


Soviet aid, but this is one of the very few recorded instances when Mao, as a Chinese patriot, looked to Moscow not merely for support but for the salvation of the Chinese revolution. The extremely dangerous situation in which he believed the First Front Army found itself suffices to explain this reaction. Ten days later, in Hadapu, which had been reached after a victorious battle to take Lazikou Pass, Mao adopted a somewhat different line:

We want to go north; Zhang Guotao wants to go south. Zhang Guotao says we are opportunists, but in the last analysis, which of us is opportunist? At present, Japanese imperialism is invading China, so we want to go north to resist Japan. First we want to go to northern Shaanxi, where there is Liu Zhidan’s Red Army. Our line is correct. It is true that our Northern Vanguard Brigade is a bit small now. But that also means that we constitute a smaller target. We need not boast or brag, but we should not be pessimistic either. Our numbers remain greater now than they were in early 1929, when the Fourth Red Army came down from the Jinggangshan. We have now changed our name to the Shaanxi-Gansu Brigade, with Comrade Peng Dehuai as commander-in-chief, and myself as political commissar.48

One reason for the change in tone was that, as noted by Mao, he and his comrades had discovered the existence of other Red Army units in the northern provinces. From Guomindang newspapers found at the Hadapu post office, Mao had learned that the Twenty-fifth Red Army, led by Xu Haidong, and the Twenty-sixth Red Army, led by Liu Zhidan, had established a base area in Shaanxi.49 At a Standing Committee meeting in Bangluozhen on September 27, the decision to establish a base area on the border of the Soviet Union was modified, and it was decided to head for northern Shaanxi and expand the Soviet area there. This change in direction did not, however, imply the abandonment of the goal of breaking through to the Soviet Union and receiving support from it, as will be seen below.

The following day, at a meeting of army commanders, Mao addressed five topics: (1) the seriousness of Japan’s invasion of the north; (2) the state of affairs of the base area and the Red Army in northern Shaanxi; (3) economic and political conditions for turning the north into a new anti-Japanese front; (4) avoiding battle with the Guomindang and rapidly going to concentrate forces in northern Shaanxi; and (5) forcefully rectifying discipline, paying ample attention to mass work, carrying out propaganda about the Red Army’s intention of resisting Japan, and recruiting new fighters. He called on the whole Vanguard Brigade
to break through the last remaining obstacle on the Long March and go forward to meet with the comrades in northern Shaanxi.50

On October 14 or 15, emissaries from the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Armies, which had combined to form the Fifteenth Army Group, turned up to welcome Mao and his comrades to Shaanxi. After a series of battles, culminating in Peng Dehuai’s victory over two Guomindang cavalry units on October 21, 1935,51 Mao and his comrades arrived in Wuqizhen on October 22, 1935. This marked the effective end of the Long March.

Summing up the changing perspectives during the final weeks of the march, Mao declared that same day at a Politburo meeting in Wuqizhen:

At the Eje Conference, we broke with Zhang Guotao. Our slogan at that time was to fight our way into northern Shaanxi and to make contact with the Soviet Union by means of guerrilla warfare. The Bangluozhen Conference (participated in by the members of the Standing Committee) changed the decision of the Eje Conference. Because we obtained new information, and came to know that there was such a big Soviet area and such a big Red Army in northern Shaanxi, we changed our decision, and decided to maintain and expand the Soviet area in northern Shaanxi. At the Eje Conference, we thought that after the junction [with the Red Army in northern Shaanxi], we would go to a location near the Soviet Union. At that time, we had no thought of maintaining and expanding the northern Shaanxi Soviet area. Now we must approve the changes made at the Bangluozhen Conference, and direct the revolution in the whole country from the northern Shaanxi Soviet area.52

Mao further declared that, having marched 2,000 li since leaving Eje, the Shaanxi-Gansu Detachment had completed the task of coming to this area. Now, he said, since the headquarters of the revolution was located there, it would be the target of attacks by the counterrevolution. The task now was therefore to preserve and expand the northern Shaanxi Soviet area, so that it could effectively lead the revolution in the whole country. The three provinces of Shaanxi, Gansu, and Shanxi were, he said, the most important areas for developing the revolution, and Wuqizhen was the center. During the first period it was necessary to go west, then south; when the Yellow River was frozen, they could go east. Great attention should be paid to relations with comrades to the west and north, who should be met with a happy and joyful attitude. At present, the world revolution had advanced to a new stage, and everywhere there were clashes with imperialism. Japanese imperialism had taken control of the whole of North China, there was a high tide of the counterrevolutionary movement, the anti-imperialist

47. An account of this battle can be found in Salisbury, Long March, pp. 282–84. See also below, the order to Peng Dehuai, “Dispositions for Destroying the Enemy at Lazikou,” dated September 16, 1935.
48. Extract from Mao’s report to a meeting of cadres in Hadapu on September 22, 1935, as given in Nie, Memoirs, p. 290.
51. See below, the orders dated October 13, 16, 17, and 19, and Mao’s poem in praise of Peng Dehuai, written on October 21, 1935.
movement was brewing in the whole country, the masses in northern Shaanxi urgently desired revolution, and this was a favorable condition for smashing the enemy’s “Encirclement and Suppression.” Good leadership was also essential to achieve this goal. At the end of the meeting, Mao’s report was unanimously approved, and the conclusion of the Long March was formally proclaimed.\(^{53}\)

At a further meeting of the Standing Committee on October 27, 1935, it was decided to introduce a division of labor: henceforth, Mao Zedong would be responsible for military work, Bo Gu would be in charge of soviet work, and Zhou Enlai would be responsible for the Organization Department and for military work in the rear.\(^{54}\) In a talk of November 5, 1935, Mao declared:

Starting from Ruijin in Jiangxi, we have been marching for over a year. Each of us, on his own two feet, has travelled 25,000 li. This is truly a Long March such as has never been seen in the past. The number of our troops is somewhat smaller than in the past, but those who remain are the flower of the Chinese revolution. All of you have gone through severe tempering and testing. Those who remain must not be simply as one against ten, but one against a hundred, or against a thousand. From this day forward, we must unite as one with the North Shaanxi Red Army and the people of northern Shaanxi. We must be models of unity, and together we must carry through the great task of the Chinese revolution, and open a new horizon for the Chinese revolution.\(^{55}\)

II. Facing Three Challenges

Although the Long March was over, and the Central Red Army no longer faced the threat of annihilation that had dogged it for a year after the departure from Jiangxi, three major political problems confronted Mao. First, the conflict with Zhang Guotao, far from having become less acute as the two armies moved farther apart, had grown sharper. On October 5, Zhang had named a new Central Committee, Central Government, and Central Military Commission, and proclaimed the exclusion from the Party of Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Qin Bangxian, and Zhang Wentian.\(^{56}\) This development, while it was obviously offensive to Mao and posed acute problems to those leaders such as Zhu De who were under Zhang Guotao’s control, did not require an immediate response, since the First and Fourth Front Armies were separated by hundreds of miles, and there was no prospect of contact between them in the near future. It did, however, represent a potential threat to Mao’s power.

Second, there remained the possibility, indeed the probability, that Chiang Kai-shek would launch yet another “Encirclement and Suppression” against his now much weakened Communist adversaries as soon as the necessary forces could be assembled, and the political and logistic problems involved could be solved. Finally, there was the problem of continuing Japanese aggression against China, which had served as the justification for the northward movement of the Red Army. This threat was constantly growing in magnitude and was now much closer at hand.

Mao and his comrades had been calling for resistance to Japan since the earliest days of the Jiangxi Soviet Republic, but the line taken had always been that put forward in the “Declaration of War on Japan” of April 15, 1932: The only way to fight Japanese imperialism was through “national revolutionary war,” and because of the Guomindang government’s shameless capitulation to Japan, the overthrow of Guomindang rule was a precondition for such a national revolutionary war.\(^{57}\) The very same line persisted in the summer of 1935. A text opposing Japan’s annexation of North China issued on June 15 denounced “Traitor Chiang Kai-shek” as “the most diligent trailblazer for Japan in swallowing up China,” and declared that the government of the Chinese Soviet Republic had sentenced “the treacherous Japanese running dog” Chiang Kai-shek to death.\(^{58}\)

In other words, in the summer of 1935, Mao still proposed to struggle simultaneously against the Japanese and against Chiang Kai-shek. It was formerly believed that a declaration issued from Mao’sergai on August 1, 1935, during the Long March marked the first change in this position of categorical opposition to Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang. While still bracketing the “Japanese bandits” and “traitor Chiang” together, this text called for a union of all Chinese patriots, including those in the Guomindang imbued with “national consciousness,” to form a “government of national defense.”\(^{59}\) It is now well established, however, that this declaration was drafted by Wang Ming in Moscow, in the context of the Seventh Comintern Congress, which stressed the importance of a united front against fascism, and its contents were not even known at the time to either Mao or Zhang Guotao. As late as mid-November, Mao and his comrades issued a manifesto again denouncing Chiang as “the biggest traitor and collaborator in China’s history” and declaring that the Japanese imperialist invasion could not be stopped without overthrowing “Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang.”\(^{60}\) Later in November, an interview by Mao was published reiterating this position.\(^{61}\)

\(^{53}\) Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 481–82.

\(^{54}\) Ibid., p. 483.


\(^{57}\) See Volume IV, pp. 206–14, and many other texts in the same volume.

\(^{58}\) See below, the “Declaration Opposing Japan’s Annexation of North China and Chiang Kai-shek’s Treason” dated June 15, 1935.

\(^{59}\) For the text, see Central Committee Documents, Vol. 10, pp. 518–25.


\(^{61}\) See below, “Rebuttal of Chiang Kai-shek’s Absurd and Shameless Defense of His Treason,” interview with a correspondent of Red China, November 25, 1935.
Meanwhile, a representative of the Chinese delegation to the Communist International, Lin Yuying, arrived in Wayaobao and informed Mao and the others of the contents of the “August 1 Declaration” and of the new Comintern line in general.62 Almost immediately, the Central Committee aligned itself with the Comintern by issuing a new manifesto, offering to unite with all those willing to resist Japan and oppose Chiang Kai-shek, even to the extent of forming a “united anti-Japanese army and a government of national defense.” There was no explicit reference, as in Wang Ming’s declaration of August 1, to Guomindang members endowed with “national consciousness,” but the proclaimed willingness to sign operational agreements “with any political group, armed force, social group, or person whatsoever” left open the possibility of coming to an agreement with right-minded members of the Guomindang.63

Another consequence of Lin Yuying’s report on the line of the Seventh Comintern Congress was a change in the policy of the Central Committee toward the intermediate classes in Chinese society, and in particular toward the rich peasants. Mao agreed that when the land was redistributed, the rich peasants might receive land of the same kind as the poor and middle peasants, instead of bad land, as had been the previous practice. He added, however, that when the poor and middle peasants demanded the equal distribution of the rich peasants’ land, this measure must be carried out.64 Circumstances, and continued prodding by the International, would lead him to modify this position further.

Lin Yuying also brought news of Stalin’s willingness to provide material support to the Chinese revolution. As noted above, Moscow had envisaged in September 1934 aiding the Chinese Red Army by supplying them with airplanes and heavy artillery. In August 1935, on the eve of Lin Yuying’s departure for China, Stalin told him explicitly that he was in favor of expansion by the main forces of the Chinese Red Army toward the northwest and the north, thus moving closer to the Soviet Union.65

Lin Yuying also informed Mao and his comrades, as well as Zhang Guotao, that the situation was too critical to permit any division within the Chinese Communist Party, and that Mao and Zhang must be reconciled. Telegraphic contact had continued, in spite of everything, between Mao and Zhang, and through this medium Lin conveyed to Zhang Guotao that two Central Committees could not be tolerated. Reacting to a rather brutal exchange of messages between Zhang and the Party Center, Lin stated unequivocally in a telegram of January 24, 1936, to Zhang Guotao and Zhu De that the International agreed with the political line of the Central Committee, and that the Chinese Communist Party ranked first among all the members of Comintern apart from the Soviet Union. Zhang, he stipulated, should change the name of his leading organ to the “Southwest Bureau.” This organ would be directly subordinated to the Chinese delegation to the International; any disputes with the Central Committee about matters of principle would be resolved by the International.66 For the time being, Zhang refused to dissolve the organs he had established. It was only half a year later that he finally dropped his claim to legitimacy in exchange for a promise from Lin that a Party congress would eventually resolve all organizational issues.67 In the end, the Seventh Party Congress was not convened until 1945, and when Mao and Zhang once again met face to face in 1936, their positions in terms of relative military strength had been reversed as compared to what they had been in the autumn of 1935.

Almost at the moment when Lin Yuying arrived in the Shaanxi soviet area, Mao had left on November 20, 1935, in the company of Peng Dehuai, Lin Biao, and Nie Rongzen, to carry out a campaign in the vicinity of Zhiliuzhen against the Guomindang forces in the area, with the aim of consolidating the new base and establishing the prestige of the Red Army.68 Having achieved victory, Mao

62. Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 489; Yang, From Revolution to Politics, p. 182; Salisbury, Long March, p. 261; Shum, United Front, pp. 51, 53. Various dates for Lin’s arrival, ranging from mid-November 1935 to early 1936, are given in these sources. The editors of the Nianpu opted simply for “the middle ten days” (zhong xun) of November. Yang Kuisong, who has made extensive use of the Chinese and Soviet archives, writes that Lin arrived “about November 18,” and this is probably as good a guess as any. Lin Yuying (1897–1942), also known as Zhang Hao, was born in Huanggang xian, Hubei, which was also the birthplace of his younger cousin, Lin Biao. He joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1922 and studied in Moscow in 1924–1925. He was elected an alternate member of the Central Committee at the Third Plenum in 1930. Shortly thereafter, he went back to Moscow as a delegate of the Party to the International and remained there until he was sent to China, via Inner Mongolia, to convey the line of the International to Mao and his comrades.

63. See below, the “Manifesto on Resisting Japan and Saving China,” dated November 28, 1935.

64. See below, Mao’s “Letter to Zhang Wentian on Changing the Policy Toward Rich Peasants and Other Questions,” December 1, 1935, commenting on a resolution adopted by the Central Committee on December 6, 1935 (text in Central Committee Documents, Vol. 10, pp. 583–88), and also the Order of the Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Soviet Republic, dated December 15, 1935, which provided that the portion of rich peasants’ land rented out at high rates should be confiscated in its entirety.


66. For the exchange between Zhang and the Party Center, see Zhang’s telegram of December 5, 1935, and the Central Committee decision of January 22, 1936, of which the substance was communicated to Zhang, in Saih, Road to Power, pp. 740–41. In a telegram of January 1, 1936, to Zhu De, who was then serving under Zhang, Mao declared that, under the leadership of the International, the Chinese Communist Party had been completely Bolshevized and that Zhu and his comrades must report all policy decisions to the Center and obtain approval for them. (See Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 502; Lin’s telegram of January 24 is summarized in Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 508.)


68. See below, the battlefield telegrams dated November 20, 22 (2), 23 (3), 24, and 26. For an account of the Zhiliuzhen campaign, see Yang, From Revolution to Politics, pp. 181–82.
wrote on November 26 to the principal victim of this campaign, Dong Yingbin, the commander of the Fifty-seventh Division of the Northeastern Army, stating in part:

The Northeastern Army, like the Red Army, is assuredly made up of people from within China’s borders, so why should there be ill will or enmity between them? Today we promise you, honorable commander: (1) If the Northeastern Army does not attack the Red Army, the Red Army will not attack the Northeastern Army. (2) If your honorable army, or any other unit of the Northeastern Army, is willing to resist Japan and oppose Chiang, then regardless of whether or not they have fought the Red Army in the past, the Red Army is willing to conclude an agreement to fight Japan and Chiang Kaishek together. (3) The Red Army treats the officers and soldiers of the Northeastern Army well; not only does it make it a rule not to kill them, but it gives them employment or lets them go back to their units.69

In a report of November 30 to high-level cadres, Mao declared that the primary goal of this policy of treating captured enemy officers well was to disrupt the enemy armies. He noted once again the emergence of a conflict within the Guomindang between the Chiang and anti-Chiang factions, but placed the emphasis rather on the need to overthrow “the traitorous Guomindang” as such, as well as the “head traitor, Chiang Kaishek.” In the same report, he returned to the theme of obtaining support from the Soviet Union and called for expanding the Soviet area into the five provinces of Shanxi, Shaanxi, Gansu, Suiyuan, and Ningxia, “thus completing the task of becoming one with the Soviet Union and the people’s Republic of Mongolia.”70

On the following day, Mao referred explicitly to his letter to Dong Yingbin, noted that it had been “widely publicized,” and presented it once again as part of an “extensive campaign of disrupting the White armies.”71 The new situation created by relentless Japanese aggression would progressively compel both the Communists and the Guomindang to reconsider and modify their positions, but there were still few signs of such a trend in the decisions taken at the Politburo meeting held at Wayaobao in late December 1935, which laid down the Party’s overall policies for 1936.

The first document adopted on this occasion was the “Resolution on Problems of Military Strategy” of December 23, 1935.72 This resolution shows un-

69. Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 490. This letter does not appear below because we do not have access to the complete text.
71. See below, the letter to Zhang Wentian dated December 1, 1935.
72. See below, the translation of this document. As indicated in Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 497–98, it was drafted by Mao for the Central Committee, on the basis of the report which he had presented to the meeting.

ambiguously that, although he had been informed of the Comintern’s new united front line, Mao’s heart was still in the policy of “combining civil war with national war,” and overthrowing “the head traitor who is helping Japan destroy China—Chiang Kaishek.” In this perspective, he continued to see the task of “fighting a way through to the Soviet Union” as the central strategic task of the Red Army. At the same time, he called for efforts to attract “soldiers from the White armies and young students who are caught up in the anti-Japanese tide.”

One route for making contact with the Soviet Union was through Mongolia; another led through Xinjiang. It was therefore natural that this resolution should stress the importance of supporting the struggles of the Mongolian and Muslim nationalities. This concern found expression also in an appeal to the people of Inner Mongolia, calling on them to “preserve the glory of the epoch of Genghis Khan” by struggling for independence together with the Red Army.73

The “Resolution on the Current Political Situation and the Party’s Tasks” adopted on December 25, 1935, was not drafted by Mao, and therefore does not appear below, but a slightly abridged translation is conveniently available.74 According to this resolution, the attempt of the Japanese imperialists to turn China into a colony had brought about a fundamental change in the political situation, and the whole world was on the eve of war and revolution. The Soviet Union, which was preparing to strike back at Japanese imperialism and overthrow it, was the most powerful ally of the Chinese revolution. The broadest possible united front, both from below and from above, was indispensable, though the “chief traitor and collaborator, Chiang Kaishek” could not be part of it. Members of all classes should be drawn into the united front; “no single patriotic Chinese should be left out.” A government of national defense and a united anti-Japanese army must be established. Among all the Communist parties of the world, apart from the Soviet Party, China’s was the most advanced.

Not entirely without justification, Otto Braun sees in this resolution, which he claims was drawn up largely by Mao, a recrudescence of the apocalyptic position which Mao had espoused in 1930, when he hailed the imminent advent of a revolutionary high tide in the whole world, supported by the Soviet Union.75 If this was in fact Mao’s strategic perspective, Stalin had no intention whatsoever of falling in with it.

The third major policy statement at the Wayaobao conference was Mao’s report to Party activists on December 27, 1935, translated below. The only available text of this is the one published in the Selected Works, which has undergone the editorial changes made in all of Mao’s writings published there,

73. See below, the “Proclamation of the Central Soviet Government to the People of Inner Mongolia,” dated December 10, 1935.
74. See Saich, Rise to Power, pp. 709–23.
75. Braun, Comintern Agent, pp. 154–56. For Mao’s statements in 1930, see the Introduction to Volume III, p. ix.
but still no doubt conveys much of the substance of what he said at the time. Like the Political Resolution, which states that “even among the ranks of landlords and compradors, there is no total unity,” the report as we now have it notes that “the upper petty bourgeoisie, and the rich peasants and small landlords” support Cai Tingkai and the Nineteenth Route Army, which is now playing a relatively progressive role, and concludes that “those in our Party who hold the view that the entire landlord and bourgeois camp is united and . . . cannot be changed by any circumstances are wrong.” Splits in these classes, and in the national bourgeoisie, can, Mao argues, lead to a split in the Guomindang. Thus, while Chiang Kaishek, the chieftain of the “camp of traitors,” is irredeemable, a portion of the Guomindang can join the revolution.

Otto Braun is right, however, in stating that, at this time, Mao saw the united front strictly as a force created and led by the Chinese Communist Party, to be used for defeating “the domestic . . . counterrevolutionary forces” (i.e., the Guomindang) as well as the Japanese, and not as an alliance among equals. In an often-quoted formulation, Mao declared that the Long March was “a manifesto, a propaganda team, a seeding machine,” which had “announced to some 200 million people in eleven provinces that the road of the Red Army is their only road to liberation.” Thus, while denouncing “closed-doorkism” and calling for collaboration with classes other than the workers and peasants, Mao showed no disposition to deal with other independent political forces on a basis of equality. And in the conclusion of his report, Mao hailed a rising tide of just wars in China and the world, which would, he said, provide “a necessary condition for China’s victory in the war against Japan and in the Chinese revolution.”

This vision of an imminent worldwide revolutionary explosion was exhilarating, but hardly realistic. Mao’s overall strategic view at this time was, in large measure, the mirror image of that held by Chiang Kaishek. Mao argued that victory over Japan was impossible without overthrowing Chiang’s gang of traitors. Chiang, for his part, had long held that China could resist Japan only when the internal Communist enemy had been extirpated. Nevertheless, despite these utterly irreconcilable public positions, some tentative steps had already been taken on both sides to explore the possibility of collaboration in the face of the Japanese threat.

Early in 1935, the Chinese military attaché in Moscow, Deng Wenyi, had reported to Chiang Kaishek that the Soviet Union was seriously interested in supporting China’s resistance to Japan, and Chiang had immediately sent Deng back to Moscow to promote improved relations with the Soviet Union. In addition to a number of Russian generals, Deng had met with Wang Ming, then the leader of the Chinese delegation to the International, and proposed to him bilateral negotiations between the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party. Wang replied that such discussions should take place in China. In November 1935, Lu Zhenyu, a university professor in Beijing closely linked to the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, went to Nanjing with a mandate from Liu Shaoqi, then in charge of work in the White areas. Pan Hanhian, who was later to play a major role in negotiations between the two parties, also met with Deng Wenyi in Moscow.

These initial negotiations came to nothing because the Guomindang demanded the effective dismantlement of the Red Army, but the first contacts had been made. If 1935 had been the year during which the Chinese Communist Party, after barely saving itself from destruction, established a new base in the Northwest, 1936 would be the year when Communists and Nationalists, despite hostility and reluctance on both sides, began moving toward a rapprochement.

The impetus in this direction was reinforced by the events which had taken place in Beijing in December 1935. Japanese pressure on five North China provinces to declare independence from the Nanjing government, and Nanjing’s apparent willingness to accept these Japanese demands, led to large-scale demonstrations by university and middle school students in Beijing on December 9 and 16. Although these actions were initially spontaneous, Communists (many of them under cover) played a leading role. In a speech on the fourth anniversary of what had become known as the December Ninth Movement, Mao declared that this action of the students was as important as the May Fourth Movement. Just as May Fourth had opened the way to the Northern Expedition and to the “First Great Revolution” of 1924–1927, December Ninth had prepared the way for the War of Resistance against Japan. “How happy we were,” he declared, “to learn the news of the December Ninth Movement in Beijing on December 10th in the midst of our celebration of the victories [of the Red Army at Fuxian in November 1935].” As early as January 1936, Mao had declared that China’s students had “always played a glorious role in the history of the national salvation movement,” and that the “current great national salvation movement” was “particularly praiseworthy.” These young people, he added, were “the hope of the Chinese nation,” and the Chinese Soviet Government was determined to give them all possible support. With the passage of time, he came to attach even

76. Otto Braun claims (Braun, Comintern Agent, p. 153) that the changes are so extensive that the Selected Works version “cannot be considered an authentic document.” This is certainly an exaggeration, for in many respects the position taken in the report is not far removed from that of the Political Resolution, of which we do have a contemporary text.
77. Saich, Road to Power, p. 712.
78. See the first section of the report, as translated below.
79. See below, the final section of Mao’s report, entitled “International Support.”

80. Yang, From Revolution to Politics, pp. 237–38; Shum, United Front, pp. 67–68; Li Haiwen, “Xi’an shibianqian guogong lijiangdang jiechu he tanpande lishi guocheng” (The historical course of contacts and negotiations between the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party before the Xi’an Incident), Wexian he yanjiu, 1984 annual volume, pp. 350–52 (hereafter Li Haiwen, “Before the Xi’an Incident”).
81. See, in Volume VII of our edition, the talk of December 9, 1939, entitled “The Great Significance of the December Ninth Movement.”
greater importance to them. By May 1937, he had concluded that the December
Ninth Movement had inaugurated “a new period in the Chinese revolution.”

A letter of January 25, 1936, signed by Mao and a number of his comrades
and addressed to the officers and men of the Northeastern Army, called once
more for the overthrow of the “traitor, Chiang Kai-shek,” but hailed the
Northeastern Army’s “glorious history of resisting Japan” and invited it to join
in organizing a government of national defense and a united anti-Japanese
army. Zhang Xueliang and his troops, Mao argued, should join “us descendents
of the Yellow Emperor” in fighting to the end for the independence and libera-
tion of China.

In an interview published a few days later, Mao adopted a somewhat more
flexible stance toward Chiang Kai-shek. While denouncing Chiang’s continued
refusal to confront Japan, Mao declared that if Chiang were ever to show
himself truly ready to resist Japan, the Chinese Soviet Government could “nat-
rally join hands with him on the battlefield.” Proof of the Communists’ will-
ingness to do this, he said, provided by “the fact that although in the past the
Nineteenth Route Army had also made war on the people and the Red Army, as
soon as that army started to resist Japan the Red Army immediately began to
 cooperate with it.” The Chinese Soviet Government, he added, “definitely has
no reservations about and makes no exceptions to the principle of uniting peo-
ple to resist Japan regardless of party affiliation or previous relationships,” but
the burden of proof was on Chiang to demonstrate that he really wanted to
cooperate and to fight Japan.

At a Politburo meeting on January 17, a division of labor somewhat
different from that adopted in October 1935 had been introduced: Peng
Dehuai and Lin Yuying were to work in the Politburo; Mao Zedong, Zhang
Wenxian, Peng Dehuai, Lin Yuying, and He Kaifeng were to work in the Red
Army; and Zhou Enlai, Qin Bangxian, and Deng Fa were to constitute the
Central Bureau, with Zhou as secretary. In accordance with this decision,
Mao accompanied the Red Army when it set out in February on the so-called
Eastern Expedition, of which the ostensible aim was to proceed through
Shanxi Province to Hebei to fight the Japanese. It was during this campaign

82. See below, Mao’s talk of January 1936 with a correspondent of Red China Press,
and his speeches of May 3 and 7, 1937, to a Party congress of the soviet regions.

83. See below, “Letter from the Red Army to All Officers and Men of the Northeast
Army Concerning Its Willingness to Join with the Northeast Army in Resisting Japan,”
January 25, 1936.

84. See below, “Talk with a Correspondent of Red China Press,” first published on
January 29, 1936.

85. See the record of this meeting in Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 506.

86. This enterprise had been discussed at a Politburo meeting on January 10, where
Mao had outlined the strengths and weaknesses of Yan Xishan’s position, and stressed
the advantages to be obtained from an incursion into Shanxi in terms both of expanding the
soviet areas, and of capturing material and food supplies. (See Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 504–5.)
that, on seeing the Great Snowy Mountains for the first time, Mao wrote perhaps
his most famous poem, “Snow,” translated below.

The Communist forces enjoyed mixed fortunes in their battles with Yan
Xishan, the warlord long dominant in Shanxi, and with the forces Chiang
Kaishek sent into the province to join in the attack, and, in the end, the Red
Army retired to Shaanxi in April. The expedition did, however, permit the capture
of large quantities of money, grain, and munitions, as Mao had earlier foreseen.
It also yielded more intangible benefits by convincing Zhang
Xueliang that the Communists were serious about fighting Japan, thereby
contributing to the establishment of a united front.

In January 1936, Pastor Dong Jianwu (known to Edgar Snow as the “Pastor
Wang” who helped him get to Bao’an) had set out from Shanghai for
Wayaobao, carrying a letter from Song Qingling to Mao Zedong and Zhou
Enlai indicating that the Guomindang was prepared to enter into negotiations.
He traveled together with Zhang Zihua, who had been sent to Nanjing in December
1935 by the Shanghai Party organization to make contact with Zeng Yangfu, a
member of the Guomindang Central Executive Committee. Zeng had also indicated
his party’s willingness to hold talks, and Zhang was carrying documents
confirming this. On February 9, 1936, Zhang Xueliang arranged to fly the
two men to Bao’an and sent them onward with a cavalry escort to Wayaobao, where
they arrived on February 27. Because Mao was absent on the Eastern Expedi-
tion, they met with Bo Gu (Qin Bangxian) and other members of the leadership.
From them, Bo Gu learned that Chiang Kai-shek was willing to consider the
possibility of cooperating with the Communists to fight Japan.

Bo sent a telegram to Mao in the field, who had in fact already heard of the
meeting between Dong and Zeng and Zhang Xueliang the day before it occurred.
Mao replied on March 4 with two telegrams, translated below. The first laid
down three basic conditions for negotiations: “(1) Cease all attacks on the Red
Army and allow the Red Army’s main forces to assemble in Hebei, first of all to

The order for this campaign had been issued on January 19, 1936, over the signatures of
Mao, Zhou Enlai, and Peng Dehuai, but it was kept secret from all except high-level
cadres until the Red Army had reached the Yellow River and was poised to cross into
Shanxi. It was made known to the troops only on February 12. (See Nianpu, Vol. 1, p.
507.) The full text of the original order is not available; the order of February 12
prescribing that it should be presented and discussed on February 13 and 14 is translated
below. On the progress of the campaign, see below, a large number of orders dated
February and March 1936.

87. Yang, From Revolution to Politics, pp. 187–89.
90. See the summary of a telegram from Mao and Peng Dehuai to Li Kenong dated
February 28, 1936, in which he mentioned the meeting on February 27 in Wayaobao
and stated that, according to reports, Chiang Kai-shek and Chen Guofu were now advocating
union with the Reds to resist Japan, rather than uniting with Japan to fight the Reds.
(Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 516.)
check the advance of Japanese imperialism; (2) Political freedom; and (3) Release the political prisoners.” In the second, addressed to Dong Jianwu, Mao welcomed “the awakening … on the part of the Nanjing authorities,” declared that he wished “to start concrete and practical negotiations with the Nanjing authorities,” and urged Dong to return immediately to Nanjing to discuss “these matters of vital importance.”

Later in March, Dong Jianwu met with Zhang Xueliang in Xi’an and showed him this document. He then returned to Shanghai and reported to Song Qingling on his mission. Zhang Zihua, for his part, crossed the Yellow River and reported to Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. Thereafter, he made a number of round trips between Nanjing, Xi’an, and North Shaanxi, during which he informed Zhang Xueliang of the contacts between the Nanjing authorities and the Communists. Zhang Xueliang’s comment was: “If the [Guomindang] Central Committee can have contacts with the Communist Party, so can we.”

Meanwhile, Liu Shaoqi, as head of the Northern Bureau, had been building on the momentum of the December 9th Movement to regain a foothold in the cities, and extend the Communist Party’s influence among intellectuals, students, and cultural figures. As a result, by the spring of 1936 the Party was playing a key, if largely covert, role in the whole National Salvation Association.

At a Politburo meeting on March 27, 1936, Mao gave a report in which he stated that, under pressure from the masses, divisions had begun to appear within the “ruling clique” of the Guomindang. The Communist Party should strive to conclude a firm alliance with the national reformists and the national revolutionary forces. “The peculiarity of the Northeastern Army,” he declared, “is that it has lost its territory; consequently, its sentiments in favor of resisting Japan are very intense, and it is willing to cooperate with us.” A plenipotentiary negotiator should therefore be sent to meet with Zhang Xueliang. The Politburo approved this proposal, and decided to entrust this mission to Zhou Enlai.

On March 1, only a few days before the meeting on which the reports brought from Shanghai and Nanjing by Dong Jianwu and Zhang Zihua, Mao had put his name to yet another manifesto denouncing Chiang Kai-shek as a subservient lackey who fawned on foreign powers. A month later, he used even stronger language, castigating Chiang as a “vicious traitor chieflain” who was supporting the Shansi warlord Yan Xishan in “obstructing the Red Army’s resistance to Japan.”

Nevertheless, the changes adumbrated on March 27 would soon begin to manifest themselves, though Mao’s position remained extremely ambiguous.

On April 6, Mao sent a telegram to Zhang Xueliang informing him that Zhou Enlai, accompanied by Li Kenong, would arrive in Yan’an (then called Fushan) on April 8. Zhou arrived on schedule and met on April 9 with Zhang Xueliang. Only four persons participated in these talks: Zhou Enlai and Li Kenong on the one side, Zhang Xueliang and Wang Yizhe on the other. Zhang declared at the outset, “Resisting Japan and suppressing the Communists are incompatible” and accepted all the conditions put forward by Mao on March 4. He argued, however, that since Chiang Kai-shek represented the greatest force in China, an anti-Japanese united front without him would not be viable. He therefore proposed that the Communists give up the slogan of overthrowing both Chiang and Japanese imperialism, in favor of a policy of forcing Chiang to resist Japan. Zhang wanted, he said, to resist Japan without opposing the Communists and unite with the Communists without opposing Chiang. Zhou replied that these were difficult questions, and he would have to consult the Central Committee.

On April 14, Mao Zedong and Peng Dehuai, who were with the Eastern Expedition in Shanxi, sent a telegram to Zhou Enlai giving him exclusive responsibility for negotiations with Zhang Xueliang and Wang Yizhe, and another to Wang Yizhe confirming that Zhou would play this role. Meanwhile, on April 9, Mao and Peng had sent a telegram to Luo Fu arguing that the most advantageous strategy was “to carry out an expedition against Chiang under the banner of a call to resistance against Japan.” Although it would eventually be possible and desirable for a national defense government to order an expedition against Chiang,” the propaganda slogan for achieving such a government was that of “stopping the civil war.”

On April 25, a Central Committee manifesto in favor of forming an anti-Japanese national united front listed the Guomindang first among all those numerous People’s Red Army to the East to Fight the Japanese and in Disrupting the Anti-Japanese Rear Areas,” April 5, 1936.

91. See below, “On the Three Basic Conditions for Talks About Joint Resistance to Japan,” addressed to Bo Gu and Zhou Enlai, and “Views Regarding Negotiations with the Nanjing Authorities,” which was to be transmitted to Dong Jianwu by Bo Gu.

92. Li Haizhen, “Before the Xi’an Incident,” p. 354.


95. See below, “Manifesto Protesting Against the Action of the Traitors Chiang Kai-shek and Yan Xishan in Obstructing the Movement of the Vanguard Army of the Chinese

96. See below, “Telegram from Mao Zedong and Peng Dehuai to Wang Yizhe and Zhang Xueliang,” April 6, 1936.

97. Wang Yizhe (1896–1937), a native of Jilin, was at this time the commander of the Sixth-seventh Army under Zhang Xueliang. He was shot to death during the “second Xi’an Incident” undertaken by radical young officers on February 2, 1937 (see below).

98. On this meeting, see Li Haizhen, “Before the Xi’an Incident,” p. 355; Shum, United Front, p. 68; Zhang Kuiting, “Zhou Enlai yu Zhang Xueliang de jiaowang bei youyi” (The Contacts and Friendship Between Zhou Enlai and Zhang Xueliang), Danshe wenxian, no. 3 (1991), pp. 51–52 (hereafter Zhang Kuiting, “Zhou Enlai and Zhang Xueliang”); Yang, From Revolution to Politics, p. 221; and Zhou Enlai nianpu 1898–1949 (Beijing: Zhongyuan wenxian chubanshe, 1990), pp. 305–6 (hereafter Zhou Enlai nianpu).

99. Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 535. For brief biographies of Zhang Xueliang and Wang Hucheng, see below, the relevant notes to the directive of November 30, 1935, on the Zhubuzhen campaign.

100. See below, the telegram of April 9, 1936, “At Present We Should Unite to Resist Japan, and Not Issue an Order Calling for an Expedition Against Chiang.”
ese national united front listed the Guomindang first among all those numerous parties and organizations to which it was addressed.\textsuperscript{101} And on May 5, after returning from the Eastern Expedition, Mao Zedong and Zhu De addressed a telegram to the “National Government in Nanjing” and its Military Affairs Commission, as well as to all military forces, newspapers, parties, and organizations, complaining once again that “Mr. Chiang Kaishek” had sent more than ten divisions into Shanxi to block the Red Army’s advance against the Japanese, but concluding that “given the present national crisis, a decisive battle between the two sides ... would only damage China’s strength for national defense, and bring joy to Japanese imperialism.” Therefore, it was stated, the People’s Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army had been withdrawn to the western shore of the Yellow river, in the hope of hastening the “final awakening of Mr. Chiang Kaishek and the patriotic military men under him.” The telegram ended with a call for a ceasefire within one month and the rapid beginning of peace negotiations.\textsuperscript{102}

Likewise in May, Chen Lifu, whom Chiang had already entrusted with the responsibility for negotiations with the Soviet Union,\textsuperscript{103} informed Zeng Yangfu and Chen Xiaocen orally of four conditions for talks with the Communists: (1) The Communist armed forces were welcome to join in the war against Japan; (2) During such warfare the Communist forces would receive the same treatment as the Central Army; (3) If the Communists had any political views, they could be put forward through the organs for the expression of popular opinion already established; and (4) The Communists could choose an area for trying out their political and economic ideals. These points were passed on to Lu Zhenyu and Zhang Zihu.\textsuperscript{104}

\section*{III. Toward the Xi'an Incident}

The counterpoint between blunt attacks on Chiang Kaishek’s behavior and attempts to initiate negotiations with him continued into the summer of 1936.

\textsuperscript{101} Although Mao is said to have been informed that this document, dated April 25, was about to be issued, it cannot be attributed to him and is therefore not translated below. The Chinese text can be found in Dierci guogong hezuode xingzheng (How the Second Guomindang-Communist Cooperation Took Shape) (Beijing: Zhongyang dangshi ziliao chubanshe, 1989), pp. 95–96.

\textsuperscript{102} See below, “Circular Telegram on the Cessation of Hostilities, Peace Negotiations, and Joint Resistance Against Japan,” May 5, 1936.

\textsuperscript{103} Chen Lifu (1900–), a native of Zhejiang, was as this time the director of the Guomindang’s Bureau of Investigation, and head of the Organization Department. He had been one of the promoters of the New Life Movement and was a close and trusted supporter of Chiang Kaishek, on whose behalf he had negotiated with the Soviet ambassador, Bogomolov, with a view to the conclusion of a non-aggression pact.

\textsuperscript{104} Li Haiwen, “Before the Xi’an Incident,” p. 356. For Chiang’s own account of contacts between the Guomindang and the Communists at this time, see Chiang Kaishek, Soviet Russia in China (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Cudahy, 1958), pp. 77–78 (hereafter Chiang, Soviet Russia in China).

During this period of uncertainty as to the intentions of the Nanjing authorities, and as to the position which should be adopted toward them, Mao repeatedly stressed the advantages of dealing with the Northeastern Army. Returning to this theme at a Politiburo meeting of May 28, 1936, he declared, “The work with the Northeastern Army consists first of all in uniting with it politically.”\textsuperscript{105}

Even as the first steps were taken toward a dialogue with the Guomindang authorities, Mao also continued to stress the importance of establishing direct links with the Soviet Union. In late April, he had sent Deng Fa to Moscow to request Soviet aid, including a plan for bilateral military coordination against the Japanese, and immediate Soviet supplies of rifles, ammunition, machine guns, antiaircraft guns, canons, and bridging equipment to cross the Yellow River.\textsuperscript{106} A telegram signed jointly by Mao with Zhang Wentian, Lin Yuying, and others, sent on May 20, 1936, after the Eastern Expedition had given place to the Western Expedition, called for close cooperation between the Red Army and the Northeastern Army, in order to establish a northwestern government of national defense, fight through to the Soviet Union, and conclude an anti-Japanese treaty of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union and Outer Mongolia.\textsuperscript{107} On May 25, Mao wrote, “Outer Mongolia and the Soviet Union have signed a treaty of mutual military assistance. The International is hoping that the Red Army will get closer to Outer Mongolia and Xinjiang.”\textsuperscript{108} On the same day, he issued a declaration to the people of the Muslim nationalities in Gansu and elsewhere, calling on them to “unite with Turkey, Outer Mongolia, the Soviet Union, and other nationalities and countries that sympathize with the complete liberation of all the various Chinese nationalities” and offering to arm a “Muslim Anti-Japanese Army.”\textsuperscript{109}

Mao returned to these themes again and again. A telegram of June 29 declared that the task of opening up a route to the Soviet Union “must be completed this year.”\textsuperscript{110} And an order of July 1 emphasized that many new recruits would be required to make use of the substantial quantities of arms which Moscow had promised.\textsuperscript{111}

Radio communications between the Chinese Communists and Moscow had been broken ever since the Guomindang secret service destroyed the underground radio station in Shanghai in August 1934. From the time of the Zunyi Conference, Mao took the lead in efforts to restore this link, and in June 1936, the necessary equipment was finally obtained. The first telegram from the Chi-
Chinese Party to Moscow was sent on June 16, 1936, and the first one from Moscow was received on July 2. In his telegram of July 22, 1936, translated below, Mao gave July 6 as the date on which radio communication had been restored.112

In the summer of 1936, Mao also made further efforts to broaden the appeal of the Soviet movement to various classes and categories in Chinese society. On the one hand, he addressed an appeal to the Gelaohui, or Elder Brother Society, a secret society strong in his native Hunan, to which he had attributed in 1919 an important role in the Revolution of 1911.113 In his appeal of July 36 to the Gelaohui, he repeated this praise. The Gelaohui, like other secret societies, drew much of its membership from marginal groups or those in rebellion against the existing society. As Mao wrote, "its members have been considered as 'people of inferior status' or calumniated as 'bandits',"114 and he went on to draw a parallel between the Gelaohui and the Communist Party:

In the past, you supported the restoration of the Han and the extermination of the Manchus; today, we support resistance to Japan and saving the country. You support striking at the rich and helping the poor; we support striking at the local bullies and dividing up the land. You despise wealth and defend justice, and you gather together all the heroes and brave fellows in the world; we do not spare ourselves to save China and the world, we unite the oppressed and exploited peoples and social strata of the whole world. Our respective views and positions are therefore not very different, and there is even more complete correspondence as regards our enemies and the road towards salvation.

During Mao's years on the Jinggangshan, the greater part of his army had been composed of such marginal or floating elements (younin). Despite their defects, they were, he had argued, "particularly good fighters."115 Now he was addressing himself to them once again.115 At about the same time, Mao participated in the drafting of a directive, following on from that of December 15, 1935, on the rich peasants, which laid down a gentler policy toward "small landlords," whose land should not be confiscated, and even toward landlords as such, who would be subject to confiscation, but who would receive a reasonable allocation of land, not necessarily poor land.116

Meanwhile, in a proclamation of June 1, Mao had once again castigated Chiang Kaishek as a "traitor chieftain" who was "utterly devoid of conscience" and had "entered into an alliance with Japan to destroy China."117 In an interview on June 8, Mao hailed the rebellion of the military rulers of Guangdong and Guangxi—who had sent their troops northward on the previous day, ostensibly to fight Japan, but in fact for the purpose of challenging and if possible supplanting Chiang Kaishek—as "objectively revolutionary and progressive." On June 12, discussing the "Southwest Affair" at a Politburo meeting in Wayaoabo, Mao asserted, "Chiang Kaishek's policy is a policy of selling out the country." A proclamation issued the same day, over the signatures of Mao Zedong and Zhu De, declared, "We express our respect and support for the patriotic soldiers and compatriots of Guangdong and Guangxi, and above all our desire to join with the Guangdong-Guangxi authorities in forming an anti-Japanese alliance and fighting together." Chiang Kaishek, on the other hand, was stigmatized as "an accomplice to Japanese imperialism's evil deeds," and the forthcoming Second Plenum of the Guomindang Central Committee was denounced as a plot to "capitulate to Japan and sell out the nation."118

When the Second Plenum actually met, however, Chiang Kaishek took a rather different line from that which Mao had predicted. In a speech of July 13, 1936, he declared that if Japan tried to force China to recognize the puppet states, it would be impossible to agree, and "the moment of final sacrifice" would have arrived.119 Mao's response to this prudent but firm language was positive, and from this time on his position regarding collaboration with the Guomindang began to change.

The arrival of Edgar Snow in Bao'an on the very same day of July 13120 gave

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119. On this turning point in the Guomindang's policy, see Domes, The Revolution Postponed, pp. 641–44. Apart from Chiang's own speech on this occasion, Domes also quotes extensively from a secret memorandum of August 4, 1936, which urges caution and patience in dealings with Japan so long as the Chinese army has not been further strengthened, but concludes with the categorical statement: "If Japan or 'Manchukuo' carries out further attacks on Beijing, Tianjin, Suiyuan, Shansi, Shandong, or Shanghai, or anywhere else in China, armed resistance must be undertaken, regardless of the consequences which may ensue." See also Li Haisen, "Before the Xi'an Incident," p. 356.
Mao an exceptional opportunity to place his latest ideas before the public. In a series of long interviews conducted on July 15, July 16, July 18 and 19, and July 23, Mao expounded in considerable detail his views on China’s relations with the capitalist countries, the problem of Japanese imperialism, China’s internal affairs, relations with the Soviet Union, and other topics. Of these four interviews, only that of July 16 on Japanese imperialism has hitherto been published in more or less complete form. The other three are reproduced below from Edgar Snow’s own revised typescript.\textsuperscript{121}

On July 15, in response to Snow’s opening question about the Chinese Soviet government’s policy toward capitalist countries, Mao declared:

In discussing questions of policy, I must ask you to bear in mind always that the fundamental issue before the Chinese people today is the struggle against Japanese imperialism. Our Soviet foreign policy is decisively conditioned by this struggle . . . . Japanese aggression is menacing not only China, but also world peace, especially the peace of the Pacific . . . . Thus, the problem of Japanese aggression is not only a Chinese problem but one which should be solved by all nations fronting the Pacific.

America and Britain in particular, said Mao, might offer assistance to China in her anti-Japanese struggle, and if they did, “the strongest bonds of sympathy and friendship would be established” between China and these countries, and they would be offered advantages in trade and other respects after the war was victorious. The isolationism advocated by some people in the United States would, he was persuaded, be abandoned, “and America will awaken to her real responsibility in the Pacific in combating the direct menace to American ideals and interests by Japanese imperialism.”

In conclusion, Mao declared:

A question before all foreign powers is whether China is to become completely colonized, or to resist the invader and become a sovereign country. In the latter case the opportunities for foreign cooperation in China would become very great, for China would be free, and the Chinese an independent people, with an independent economy, culture, and political organization. Such a China could be a great force for good in the world, and an ally on the side of justice and the development of world culture . . . .\textsuperscript{122}

In his interview of July 16 about the struggle against Japanese imperialism, Mao declared that the “central necessity” for defeating Japan was the achieve-

\textsuperscript{121} The July 16 interview appeared in the \textit{China Weekly Review} of November 14, 1936. For details regarding Snow’s manuscript, which has been made available to us by the archives of the University of Missouri at Kansas City, with the kind permission of Lois Wheeler Snow, see below, the source note to the interview of July 15, 1936.

\textsuperscript{122} See below, the interview of July 15, 1936.

\textsuperscript{123} See below, the interview of July 16, 1936.

\textsuperscript{124} See below, “Interview with Edgar Snow on Internal Affairs,” July 18–19, 1936.
Finally, in an interview of July 23, devoted mainly to relations with the Soviet Union and China’s potential influence on revolution in the colonies, Mao declared that, after ten years of imperialist aggression, Nanjing was finally beginning to realize that the Soviet Union was a true friend and that “the Guomindang can resist imperialism only by reuniting with the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party,” as in 1925–1927. Asked by Snow whether, if the Chinese revolution were victorious, there would be “some kind of actual merger of governments” between Soviet China and the Soviet Union, Mao repeated his earlier statements that the Communists were “not now seeking the hegemony of power, but a united China against Japanese imperialism.” Moreover, he said, the Third International was not an administrative organization, and could not be seen as a “dictator” in countries where there were Communist parties. Soviet China, he said, was in no sense “ruled by Moscow or by the Comintern.” And he added, “We are certainly not fighting for an emancipated China in order to turn the country over to Moscow!”

Though this statement was set in the context of an argument against the view that the Soviet Union sought to subvert and dominate other countries, it stands as an early expression of Mao’s disinclination to accept Soviet tutelage. While he had to accept the fact that, for the time being, China was a junior partner in the world revolution, and must take orders from Moscow, this did not, in his view, signify blind obedience. Moreover, China herself could play the role of a vanguard. At the end of the interview, asked by Snow whether the victory of a Red movement in China would rapidly lead to revolution in other Asiatic colonial or semi-colonial countries, and whether China was thus the “key” to world revolution, Mao responded in the affirmative. “The Chinese revolution,” he said, “is a key factor in the world situation, and its victory is heartily anticipated by the people of every country, and especially by the toiling masses of the colonial countries. When the Chinese revolution comes into full power the masses of many colonial countries will follow the example of China and win a similar victory of their own.” But, he repeated once again, the “seizure of power” was not the aim of the Chinese Communists; they wanted to “stop civil war, create a people’s democratic government with the Guomindang and other parties, and fight for... independence against Japan.”

At a Politburo meeting on July 27, Mao declared that, while the three previously defined aims of establishing a base in the west, waging guerrilla warfare in the east, and establishing an anti-Japanese united front remained in force, the third of these should now take first place. On August 10, at a crucial session of the Politburo, Mao delivered a report on the relations between the Communist Party and the Guomindang and on the united front. Chiang Kai-shek’s basic strategy toward Japan had not changed, according to Mao, but there was a substantial change in his tactics, to include limited war with Japan, and in future this might also influence his vacillating strategic outlook.

Recalling the five conditions put forward by the Communists in March, and the four points made in reply by Chen Lifu in his conversation of May with Zeng Yangfu and Chen Xiaocen, Mao noted the rather differently worded four points put forward by the Guomindang in the aftermath of the Second Plenum: (1) Abide by the Three People’s Principles; (2) Obey the orders of Chairman Chiang; (3) Abolish the Red Army and integrate it into the National Army; and (4) Abolish the soviets, and turn them into local governments. In the interests of unity, Mao indicated, the Communist Party was willing to enter into discussions on this basis. Chiang’s overall orientation had changed, he said, and therefore it was possible to negotiate with Nanjing:

In the past, there were no contacts between us. Now there has been some change. Now he, too, is talking about a united front, and perhaps he will turn [the National Government] into a government of national defense. But he must ... cause the masses to change their attitude toward him and make Japan retreat. If he wants to make use of this national movement, we do not want to adopt a hostile attitude.

We must recognize, he said, that Nanjing is a powerful force in the national movement. If we really want to attain the goal of resistance to Japan, we must follow such a middle course, and we can hold discussions with him. “Our sole demand is that he truly resist Japan.” In his concluding remarks to the Politburo meeting, Mao noted that Chiang Kai-shek always spoke of first uniting the country and then resisting Japan; we want him first to accord anti-Japanese democracy. The slogan “In order to resist Japan, we must first oppose Chiang” was, he said, no longer appropriate; the program now was “Oppose the traitors selling out their country in the context of the united front.” At the same time, he called for vigilance and for asserting the principle of maintaining independence and keeping the initiative.

Almost immediately, however, Mao and his comrades found themselves confronted by new telegraphic instructions from Moscow which required them to go much further in conciliating Chiang. As noted above, regular contacts between the International and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party had been reestablished in July 1936, and in late July the Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Communist International discussed the tactics which should be applied in China. At a meeting on July 23, 1936, Georgi Dimitrov declared that the Chinese Communists had been fighting very coura-

125. See below, the interview of July 23, 1936.
127. Jin, Mao, pp. 409-10, and Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 567-68. Mao’s report, as summarized by Jin, states that the new four points were contained in “a letter from the Second Plenum (erzhong quanhui luixin).” No information about the sending of such a letter has been found in other sources.
geously against much larger Guomindang forces, but were not “sufficiently mature politically” to deal with the complex situation which had arisen in China. In the face of a threat to the very existence of the Chinese nation from Japanese imperialism, the Chinese Communist Party’s line of hostility to Chiang Kaishk was “at least two or three years behind the times” and must be changed. The slogan of a “Soviet People’s Republic” should be replaced by that of an “All-China Democratic Republic,” and stronger efforts should be made to induce Chiang to join the anti-Japanese front.128

These and other points were conveyed to Mao and his comrades in a tele-
gram of August 15, 1936. In this missive, Moscow criticized the Chinese Com-
munist Party’s failure to give proper weight to class factors in trenchant terms:

What makes us particularly uneasy is your decision to admit to the Party all those who want to join it, regardless of their social origins ..., and your communication regarding your intention of accepting even Zhang Xueliang in the Party ....

We think it is wrong to place Chiang Kaishk on the same plane as the Japanese invaders. Such an orientation is politically incorrect, for the principal enemy of the Chinese people is Japanese imperialism, to the struggle against which everything else must be subordinated at the present stage. Moreover, it is impossible to carry out simultaneously a successful battle against the Japanese invaders and against Chiang Kaishk .... For serious armed resistance against Japan the participation of Chiang Kaishk’s army, or of the greater part of it, is essential.

From all this it follows that you must set a course toward the suspension of hostilities between the Red Army and the army of Chiang Kaishk, and toward an agreement with the latter regarding a struggle with the Japanese aggressors ....

You must maintain contacts with Zhang Xueliang, and use these contacts to develop our work within his army ..., and to conduct extensive propaganda among the mass of the soldiers, and the officers, regarding the anti-Japanese national front. You cannot regard Zhang Xueliang himself as a reliable friend. Especially since the failure in the southwest, Zhang Xueliang may very well waver once again, or even sell us out ....

The Comintern therefore considered Mao’s statement in support of the “anti-Chiang actions of the Southwest Clique” as erroneous.129 The importance of establishing an anti-Japanese national united front, including the Communist Party, the Guomindang, and other organizations, all subordinate to a unified command, was strongly emphasized. The concrete measures recommended were as follows:


129. See below, the translation of Mao’s “Talk on the Southwest Incident,” dated June 8, 1936.

The best thing would be for the Chinese Communist Party to issue a declara-
tion advocating the establishment of a unified Chinese Democratic Republic in the whole country, the convening of an all-China national assembly, and the establishment of a government of national defense for all China. This is the best method under the present circumstances for uniting all the democratic forces of the Chinese people to defend their native land and resist the Japanese bandits. The Chinese Communist Party could proclaim that whenever an all-China democratic republic is set up, the Soviet areas would become part of it, and would participate in the Chinese National Assembly, as well as applying on their own territory the democratic system established for the whole country.

It was also explicitly recommended that the Chinese Communist Party and the Red Army should send to the Guomindang a proposal for initiating collabora-

tion:

We consider that the Chinese Communist Party and the headquarters of the Red Army should make a formal proposal to the Guomindang and to Chiang Kaishk for the immediate cessation of military actions, and the signature of a concrete agreement for negotiations regarding joint resistance to Japan. The Chinese Communist Party and the headquarters of the Red Army should proclaim that they are prepared to send a delegation immediately, or to receive a delegation from the Guomindang and Chiang Kaishk in the soviet areas.

The Comintern telegram ended with a blunt sentence: “We await your delega-
tion, so that we can form a proper judgement of the entire course you have adopted regarding these questions, and give you a detailed answer.”

Ten days later, on August 25, Mao drafted for the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party a letter to the Guomindang basically in harmony with these instructions from Moscow. While criticizing Chiang for his failure to stop the civil war immediately, Mao nonetheless declared, “the nation’s rise or fall depends entirely upon your honorable party” and proposed “realistic negotia-
tions” at any time.131 The next day, Mao wrote to Pan Hanhian declaring that “the heart of our policy is to work with Chiang to resist Japan” and urging that Zhang Xueliang maintain unity with Nanjing.132

130. For the text of this telegram see The Comintern and China, pp. 266–69; Chinese in Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu (Research on the History of the Chinese Communist Party), no. 2, 1988, pp. 86–87; extracts in Yang Kuosong, Xi’an shibian xintan. Zhang Xueliang yu zhonggong guanzhi yanjiu (A new enquiry into the Xi’an Incident. A study of the relations between Zhang Xueliang and the Chinese Communist Party) (Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi, 1995), pp. 165–67 (hereafter Yang, Xi’an Incident). This is the most recent and most authoritative study of the Xi’an affair.


132. See below, the letter to Pan Hanhian dated August 26, 1936.
On September 1, the slogan of “forcing Chiang to resist Japan,” proposed to the Communists by Zhang Xueliang in his April meeting with Zhou Enlai, was finally adopted. On the same day, Zhou Enlai wrote to Chen Guofu and Chen Lifu, expressing the hope that the two Chen brothers would speak again to Chiang Kai-shek about the cessation of attacks on the Red Army and uniting with the Soviet Union and the Communists to resist Japan. On September 8, in a telegraphic order to Zhu De, Zhang Guotao, and Ren Bishi, Mao and the other top leaders made plain that “Resist Japan” and “Oppose Chiang” were incompatible: “You should not raise any slogans about overthrowing the Central army or any Chinese armed forces. On the contrary, you must raise slogans about joining together to resist Japan.”

On September 15 and 16, at an enlarged meeting of the Politburo, Mao spoke several times, with particular emphasis on the class basis of the united front. During the First Great Revolution of 1925–1927, he noted, the national bourgeoisie had participated, but in 1927 it betrayed the revolution. Now, because of the worsening economic crisis, and Japanese oppression, the national bourgeoisie might once again go over to the side of the revolution. Our alliance with the bourgeoisie in 1925–1927 was the first time such a thing had happened in the world, he said. At that time, the united forces were in fact led by the Communist Party, and today it is even more indispensable that we should lead. The democratic republic which the International has ordered us to establish is of a bourgeois-democratic character, but it is not a Western-style democratic state like that which the Guomindang talks about. Instead, it is a state of the workers and peasants, with the participation of the bourgeoisie. In the months and years to come, Mao found himself obliged to adopt a much less assertive approach, but after the victory of 1949, the state form which he defined in “On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship” was remarkably like that described here.

On September 23, Mao met once more with Edgar Snow for a fifth interview, and made use of this opportunity to explain the factors which had led the Chinese Communist Party to adopt the new attitude toward the Guomindang government expressed in the August 25 letter. The first of these, he said, was the seriousness of the constantly intensifying Japanese aggression, which could be countered only by a united effort of all Chinese forces, of which the Guomindang was the strongest. The second was the response by the Chinese people, “as well as many patriotic officials,” to the Communists’ call for union against Japan. The third was the fact that “many patriotic elements, even in the

Guomindang,” now favored renewed collaboration with the Communist Party, “because of the peril to our national existence.”

The instrument of such a union Mao characterized, once again, as a democratic government of national defense, based on universal suffrage, and a war council on which the Communists would be represented. Mao declared that he was “not opposed to the development of capitalism now in China,” but argued that the interests of the workers and peasants would have to be safeguarded. In response to Snow’s question as to whether the establishment of a united front on this basis would in effect mean an immediate declaration of war on Japan, Mao responded: “Yes, quite possibly if the reunion [of Communists and Guomindang] were proclaimed today, war might begin tomorrow.”

In a concluding section of this interview, not included in the published version, Snow asked Mao whether Chiang could accept the proposals for a United Front only if he really intended to go to war against Japan. Mao replied, “Yes, that is the fundamental proposition . . ., and that is why Chiang Kai-shek wavers and delays and may try to avoid an agreement altogether.” Snow then enquired what events of the last two or three months had brought about this new Communist policy, “which must certainly be regarded as the most important decision in your party’s history for a decade,” given that the conditions Mao had cited to justify it had existed for several years. To this Mao replied:

The immediate cause is the great acceleration in Japanese aggression, the severe new demands of Japan, capitulation to which must enormously handicap any attempts at resistance in the future, and the popular response to this deepening Japanese invasion in the form of a great people’s patriotic movement. These conditions have in turn produced a change in attitude among certain elements in Nanjing. Under such circumstances it is now possible to hope for the realization of such a policy as we propose, whereas had it been offered in this form a year ago or earlier neither the country nor the Guomindang would have been prepared for it.

At present negotiations are being conducted, and while the Communist Party has no great positive hopes of persuading Nanjing to resist Japan it is nevertheless possible. As long as it is, the Communist Party will be ready to cooperate in all necessary measures. If Chiang Kai-shek prefers to continue the civil war the Red Army will also be ready to receive him.

Thus, even as he endorsed and put forward the new line advocated by Moscow, Mao did not hide his skepticism regarding it.

A few days before this interview, Mao had written to Song Qingling, expressing his “boundless respect and admiration” for her and lamenting the fact that, although the appeal to stop the civil war and resist Japan prevailed in the whole

133. See below, the “Directive on the Problem of Forcing Chiang Kai-shek to Resist Japan” of September 1, 1936.
134. See Li Haiwen, “Before the Xi’an Incident,” p. 357.
135. See below, the order of September 8, entitled “‘Resist Japan’ and ‘Oppose Chiang’ cannot be raised simultaneously.”
137. See below, “Interview with Edgar Snow on the United Front,” September 23, 1936. Regarding the impact of Snow’s interviews on events, see also Shum, United Front, pp. 75–82.
country, “Mr. Chiang, the man who commands the huge army, and the Central Committee of the Guomindang still have no intention of repenting thoroughly of what they have done.” To rectify this situation, Mao declared, “We depend on someone like you, who, with her position and influence as a member of the Central Committee of the Guomindang, can really do something concrete and practical about it.” Mao therefore announced that he was sending Pan Hanian to discuss with her the organization of the united front and asked Song Qingling to arrange for Pan to meet with key figures in the Guomindang with whom she had “a fairly close relationship” such as Song Ziwen, Li Shizeng, Cai Yuanpei, and others. He had, in fact, written since August, and would continue to write, to a wide range of friends and acquaintances from the period of the First United Front and even from his student days in Changsha. In his letter of September 22 to Cai Yuanpei, he asked Cai to convey his regards to more than eighty leading figures in intellectual and political circles, including such diverse individuals as Liu Yazi, Shao Lizi, Wang Jingwei, Chen Gongbo, Dai Jitao, Chen Guofu, Song Ziwen, Guo Moruo, Hu Shi, and Zhou Gucheng.

Meanwhile, Mao had continued his efforts to obtain material assistance from the Soviet Union. On August 25, the same date on which the formal letter to the Guomindang calling for a united front was dispatched, Mao cabled Moscow regarding his plan for an offensive in Ningxia, and asked for assurance that the Soviet Union would provide military aid via Outer Mongolia. Moscow replied in mid-September that the aid would be forthcoming once the Chinese Red Army had occupied Ningxia. In mid-September, Mao reported, “The International has sent us a telegram agreeing to the occupation of Ningxia and the western part of Gansu. After our troops have occupied the region of Ningxia, they can give us assistance.” A few days later, he added that the key point was Ningxia, not western Gansu. Spelling out what was meant by “assistance” in the telegram of the International, he indicated that Moscow had been informed of the need for help from “Soviet aircraft and artillery” in taking the cities, and the reply had indicated that such support would be forthcoming. “We will be able to obtain the weapons for taking the cities, and we will then take them,” he concluded.

On October 2, the Central Committee sent another cable spelling out the aid which the Chinese expected from the Soviet Union, including airplanes and heavy artillery. By this time, however, Stalin had realized that overt assistance to the Chinese Communists in the Northwest might encourage the Guomindang to seek peace with Japan. Moscow therefore replied on October 18 that the aid would be purchased and delivered not directly, but through a “foreign company.” It would amount to some 600 tons of materiel, but airplanes and heavy artillery would not be included. These materials could not be sent more than 100 kilometers beyond the borders of Outer Mongolia. This must have been a blow to Mao and his comrades, but they undertook the Ningxia campaign nonetheless. By the end of October, Mao was obliged to report that his forces had been defeated. The Executive Committee of the International replied that the campaign should in any case be called off; one of the reasons given was, that if the Japanese learned of the Soviet action, a severe confrontation between Japan and the Soviet Union might arise. Nevertheless, in response to Mao’s desperate plea, the Soviets agreed to send U.S.$550,000 in cash, of which $150,000 was sent via Song Qingling in Shanghai and reached the Chinese Communists early in December.

In October, the remnants of Zhang Guotao’s Fourth Army finally made contact with the forces of the Party Center, and on December 2, Zhang Guotao and Mao Zedong met face to face in the provisional Red capital of Bao’an. The vicissitudes which had reduced Zhang’s army to only some ten thousand men represent a controversial topic which cannot be taken up seriously here. In any case, whether the Western route forces had been decimated because Mao planned it that way in order to strengthen his position vis-à-vis Zhang, or whether Zhang’s misfortunes resulted from his own mistakes, the various components of the Red Army were once again united.

By the autumn of 1936, Mao and his comrades had thus already established tentative but significant contacts both with officials of Chiang Kai-shek’s government, and with the two military leaders in the Northwest, Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng. Between September and December, efforts were made to pursue these negotiations, but increasing difficulties were encountered in dealing with the Guomindang.

On September 24, Pan Hanian left for Shanghai, carrying, in addition to the August 25 “Letter to the Guomindang” and a letter from Zhou Enlai to Chen Guofu and Chen Lifu, an eight-point draft agreement on resisting Japan and saving the nation which had been drawn up by Mao. At about this time, Zeng

138. See below, the letter to Song Qingling dated September 18, 1936.
139. See below, the letters to Song Zheyuan, Fu Zuoyi, Yi Lirong, Cai Yuanpei, Zhang Naiqi, Li Jishen, Yu Xuezhong, and others.
140. See below, “Deployments for the Occupation of Ningxia,” September 14, 1936.
141. It should be noted that the province of Ningxia under the Republic was substantially larger than the Ningxia Hui (Muslim) Autonomous Region today and had a much longer frontier with Mongolia.
144. For a detailed account and analysis based on the documentary sources, see Yang, From Revolution to Politics, pp. 190–218. Salisbury, Long March, pp. 311–23, tells the story more or less in accordance with the official Chinese historiography, but his narrative is enlivened by firsthand reminiscences from a number of participants, including Li Xianfan and George Hatem.
145. According to Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 589–90, Mao had drafted the agreement on cooperation against Japan in September. Jin, Mao, p. 412, says Mao prepared it around September 20, in the aftermath of the Politburo meeting of mid-September.
Yangfu once again invited Zhou Enlai to come to Guangzhou for negotiations, and, in a telegram to Zhu De and others dated September 27, Mao noted that Zhou Enlai was “preparing to leave in response to Nanjing’s request.” In a secret telegram of October 8, he informed Zhu De, Zhang Guotao, and other leading comrades that Zhou Enlai would fly to Guangzhou on condition that his security could be guaranteed.

In another telegram to Zhu De and others, dated October 1, 1936, Mao declared that it was “difficult for the Red Army commanders to engage in the work to establish a united front with the White army” because “it is not very easy for ordinary comrades to understand the complex situation of need to fight and, at the same time, needing to maintain peace.” This complex and contradictory situation was indeed difficult for both sides to understand and to deal with. Moreover, it soon became apparent that Chiang Kai-shek, his hand strengthened by the defeat of the rebels in Guangdong and Guangxi, was little inclined to permit meaningful discussions.

A number of documents in this volume chronicle the increasing frustration of the Communist leadership in seeking an agreement with Chiang Kai-shek during the last three months of 1936. In a telegram of October 17, 1936, to Zhu De and Zhang Guotao, Mao and others stated tersely, “The negotiations with Nanjing have taken a critical downward turn.” Apart from the developments in Guangdong and Guangxi, an important factor inciting Chiang to turn away from an agreement with the Communists was his discovery, during a first visit to Xi’an in late October 1936, that Zhang Xueliang had met with Zhou Enlai and favored an anti-Japanese united front including the Communists. In a speech to officers in Xi’an, Chiang declared, “Resistance against Japan requires the

referred to above. It appears below under the date of October 11, when it was incorporated into a telegram to Zhu De, Zhang Guotao, and others soliciting their opinions. See also Li Haiven, “Before the Xi’an Incident,” pp. 357–58.

146. See below, “Strongly Raise in the Talks with Nanjing Guomindang-Communist Cooperation and a Halt to the Civil War.” According to Li Haiven, “Before the Xi’an Incident,” p. 358, the decision of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee that Zhou should go was taken on October 8, but countermanded on October 14.

147. See below, “Strive to Begin Negotiations Quickly with Major Nanjing Representatives,” October 8, 1936.

148. See below, “We Must Actively Establish an Anti-Japanese United Front with the Guomindang Forces,” October 1, 1936. A Communist Party directive of June 20, 1936, had called for such a two-track policy in dealing with the Northeastern Army. The method was to rely mainly on “patient political persuasion,” but “necessary military actions” were to be taken against those sections of the Northeastern Army lacking in political consciousness, in order to teach them a lesson and smooth the way for later political work. See Saich, Rise to Power, p. 743.


suppression of the Communists first; those who do not suppress the Communists are the same as those who do not fight the Japanese; and the Communists are great traitors.”

On November 9, Mao telegraphed Zhang Zihua (who, as noted above, had been involved in dealings with the Guomindang since December 1935) asking him to inform Chen Lifu that a new Japanese attack was imminent. The Nanjing authorities must honor Chiang Kai-shek’s promise at the Second Plenum not to make further concessions to Japan, and send representatives to hold talks with the Communists. But when Pan Hanhian presented the Party’s eight-point program for negotiations to Chen Lifu on the following day, Chen, on the basis of instructions from Chiang, replied that the Communists could retain a maximum of 3,000 men in the Red Army and that all officers above the rank of division commander would have to go abroad. On November 12, Mao declared in a telegram to Pan Hanhian, “Mr. Chiang’s fierce attacks lately cannot but cause suspicion among Red Army commanders.” If Nanjing refused to accept the existence of the Red Army, there was “no point in having Enlai go there.”

In a telegram of November 22, Mao stated that the aim of Chiang’s current massive attack against the Soviet areas was “to destroy the Red Army and the people of the Soviet areas altogether.” In another telegram of the same date, Mao laid it down that only an organized movement to push for an end to the attacks on the Red Army would be capable of “forcing Chiang to end his extermination of the Communists. This is the key to the current anti-Japanese united front.”

On December 1, 1936, Mao and a number of the other leaders addressed themselves directly to “the honorable Mr. Kai-shek,” complaining that, while “the people of the whole country have demonstrated their utmost fury toward the Japanese bandits, . . . you, sir, devote all your energies to a civil war of mutual slaughter.” All that was required, they wrote, was “a change of mind and a change of heart” by Chiang Kai-shek, and he would become “a glorious hero in the resistance against Japan, respected by all and honored forever by history.”

In the face of these difficulties encountered in dealing with Chiang Kai-shek, Mao had written on October 5, 1936, to Zhang Xueliang, deploring the continuing Guomindang attacks on the Red Army and announcing that the Communists


153. See below, “Telegram to the Soldiers of the Red Army and the People of the Soviet Area,” and “Forcing Chiang to End His Annihilation of the Communists Is the Key at the Moment,” addressed to Pan Hanhian, both dated November 22, 1936.

154. See below, the letter to Chiang Kai-shek dated December 1, 1936.
would initiate a cessation of attacks on the Guomindang armies as a demonstration of good faith. Only when attacked by Guomindang troops would they return fire in self-defense. In this context, he urged Zhang not only to put an immediate stop to attacks on the Red Army by the North West Armies but to “convey our views to Mr. Chiang Kai-shek for a speedy policy decision for both sides to send formal representatives to negotiate the concrete conditions for stopping the war and resisting Japan.”155 During Chiang Kaishek’s visit to Xi’an in November, Zhang did, as already noted, speak out in favor of cooperating with the Communists. Not only were his arguments dismissed out of hand, but on November 23, 1936, Chiang took the deliberately provocative action of ordering the arrest of the leaders of the National Salvation Movement, as a gesture of goodwill toward Japan.156

Zhang Xueliang persevered nonetheless, writing a letter to Chiang Kaishek on November 27, 1936, which constituted a passionate appeal for the mobilization of his Northeastern Army to join the fight against Japanese imperialism then going on in Suiyuan Province.157 Mao, for his part, put his name to a letter of December 1, 1936, to Chiang Kaishek conveying a very similar message. The Red Army, said the letter, shared “the emotions of the officers and soldiers of your forces in the Northwest”—in other words, of the armies of Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng; these armies, Mao wrote, were “unwilling to see Chinese kill Chinese” and would “rather surrender their guns to the Red Army.”158 Collusion of Zhang and Yang with the Communists was exactly what Chiang Kaishek was afraid of. In any case, his response, when he returned to Xi’an on December 4, 1936, was a peremptory demand that Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng participate wholeheartedly in the suppression of Communism.

During the autumn of 1936, Mao had devoted such time as he could spare from other activities to writing his first book-length study of military tactics, entitled “Problems of Strategy in China’s Revolutionary War.” This work, which is translated below, is too long and complex to be analyzed in detail here. A substantial portion of the text is devoted to a review of the experience of the five “Encirclement and Suppression” campaigns of 1930–1934, naturally with a view to demonstrating the correctness of Mao’s own strategy. These matters, which are abundantly documented in Volume IV and discussed in the Introduction to that volume, will not be taken up further here.

Two points in Chapter 1, “How to Study War,” are of particular interest. Discussing the lessons which should be learned from the experience of revolutionary war in the Soviet Union and in China, Mao wrote in 1936 that while Soviet experience merited “somewhat greater respect” than “other foreign things,” particular respect should be accorded to China’s own experience of revolutionary war. Revising this text in 1950, he inverted this judgment: China’s experience deserved respect, but Soviet experience must be accorded particular respect. Another theme, to which Mao would return frequently, makes its appearance in this work. The present great worldwide revolutionary war, declared Mao, would be the final war, ushering in an era of perpetual peace throughout the world.

It is of interest to note that, in discussing the importance of a strategic retreat when confronted by a superior force (Chapter 5, section 3), Mao cites examples not only from the traditional novel Water Margin, and from the Spring and Autumn Annals, but from the military history of the First World War, which he still remembered no doubt from his student days in Changsha twenty years earlier. Finally, the work ends (Chapter 5, section 9) with a discussion of “wars of annihilation” as an aspect of the strategy of an inferior force:

A game of “comparing treasures” not between two dragon kings, but between a beggar and a dragon king, would be rather ludicrous. For the Red Army, . . . the basic policy orientation is a war of annihilation. Only by annihilating the enemy’s vital forces can the “Encirclement and Annihilation” campaigns be broken and the Soviet areas expanded. Inflicting casualties is a means that we adopt to annnihilate the enemy . . . Against a powerful enemy, a battle in which he is routed is not basically a decisive thing . . . Such conditions as popular support, favorable terrain, a vulnerable enemy force, and surprise are all indispensable for achieving annihilation.159

On December 10, Zhang Xueliang received a telegram from Mao Zedong regarding the current state of negotiations with Nanjing. In the most recent talks between Pan Han-nian and Chen Lifu, Mao indicated, Chen had agreed that the permitted size of the Red Army could be increased from 3,000 to 30,000, but demanded concessions in return. Emphasizing that the Communists could not accept Chiang’s capitulationist foreign policy, Mao declined

155. See below, the letter to Zhang Xueliang dated October 5, 1935.
158. See below, the “Letter to Chiang Kaishek” of December 1, 1936, signed by Mao and a number of other military and political leaders, including Zhu De, Zhang Guotao, Zhou Enlai, Peng Dehuai, and Lin Biao.

159. See below, “Problems of Strategy in China’s Revolutionary War,” December 1936. In addition to the five chapters in the existing version, Mao had the intention of writing on other topics, but was prevented from doing so by the political situation which arose in the aftermath of the Xi’an Incident. He therefore decided to publish the text as it stood in early December 1936, which appeared in mimeographed form for internal use in May 1937 and in a printed edition in 1941.
that he would not reduce the Red Army by a single soldier and would accept its subordination only to an anti-Japanese supreme command. “We want to seek peace through war,” he said in conclusion. “We will absolutely not make unprincipled compromises.”

IV. The Xi’an Coup and Its Aftermath

It was in this context that Zhang Xueliang, after much soul-searching, finally took the decision to arrest Chiang Kaishhek and hold him until he could be persuaded to change his mind. What happened in Xi’an on December 12, 1936, and during the ensuing days and weeks has long been known in broad outline, and the picture has become much clearer in the light of a variety of sources published in recent years, though important points remain obscure. This is obviously not the place to review the whole complicated story in detail, but some key issues must be addressed in order to place in their proper context the writings by Mao Zedong included in the present volume.

The action on December 12 to take Chiang and those accompanying him into custody was neither so quick and easy, nor so bloodless, as has often been suggested, but it was carried out successfully. The Communists had not been informed in advance of this undertaking, but Zhang Xueliang immediately sent a telegram to Mao and Zhou declaring that the purpose was to compel Chiang to “free the patriots” and create a “coalition government” and asking them for guidance. Understandably, the initial reaction of Mao and his comrades was one of joyful enthusiasm at the humiliation thus inflicted on the man who, during the previous decade, had killed so many of their comrades and had sought to destroy their Party. Exactly what form this enthusiasm took has been the subject of some controversy. In a 1957 publication, Edgar Snow cited a postcard sent from Xi’an describing a mass meeting addressed by Mao and others on the evening after Chiang’s arrest, at which a resolution was passed demanding a “mass trial” of Chiang Kaishhek. A longer and more lurid account along similar lines can be found in the standard Guomindang history of this period. For his part, Zhang Guotao recalls a conversation in which Mao said he wanted Chiang to be executed, “but the word ‘kill’ must not come from our lips”—Zhang Xueliang must be encouraged to take responsibility.

In the past, it was not easy to determine how much credence should be given to these fragmentary and in some cases partisan sources, and the picture is still far from clear. Several texts bearing Mao’s own signature from the days immediately after December 12 have, however, become available and are translated below. Together with the quotations and summaries contained in other recent publications, they provide a more substantial basis for discussing Mao’s position in the immediate aftermath of the Xi’an Incident.

At the Politburo meeting called on December 13 to discuss the events in Xi’an, Mao spoke first and began by stating, “This incident has revolutionary significance; it is directed against Japan and the traitors who are selling out their country . . . . The action, and the program accompanying it, have positive significance . . . . We must support it.” Although Chiang Kaishhek had lately been adopting a centrist position, Mao continued, his insistence on “suppressing Communism” in fact made him pro-Japanese. “We must,” said Mao, “make Xi’an the center of the whole country, control Nanjing, and with the Northwest as the front


161. As noted above, Yang, Xi’an Incident, is the most recent and authoritative study of the Xi’an coup and the events leading up to it. A comprehensive overview of all aspects of the affair can be found in Wu, The Sian Incident, which was subsequently updated by the author’s review article, “New Materials on the Xi’an Incident,” Modern China, 10, no. 1 (January 1984), pp. 115–41 (hereafter Wu, “New Materials on Xi’an”). An important documentary collection is Xi’an shibian dang’an shiliao xuanbian (Selected Historical Materials from the Archives Regarding the Xi’an Incident) (Beijing: Dang’an chubanshe, 1986). Many relevant materials, including Mao’s statements during Party meetings, are summarized and quoted in part in Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 620–50, and Jin, Mao, pp. 415–25. See also Shum, United Front, pp. 84–94. Among the numerous earlier studies dealing with the Xi’an Incident, several remain of interest. Lyman Van Slyke, Enemies and Friends: The United Front in Chinese Communist History (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967) (hereafter Van Slyke, Enemies and Friends), contains a concise but thoughtful and well-documented account of the whole affair (Chapter 5, pp. 75–91). John Israel, Student Nationalism in China 1927–1937 (Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1966), includes a useful survey of the impact of these events on the student movement (pp. 169–78). Charles McLane, Soviet Policy and the Chinese Communists, 1931–1946 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958) (hereafter McLane, Soviet Policy and the Chinese Communists), though out of date in many respects, contains considerable information about the Soviet reaction to the events in Xi’an (pp. 79–91). Domes, The Revolution Postponed, gives an account of the incident based in part on Guomindang archival sources and on interviews with participants (pp. 656–74).

162. See Wu, The Sian Incident, pp. 75–81.


line, influence the whole country, and become the heart of the anti-Japanese front." It was also important to cultivate British and American public opinion. According to this record, Zhang Guotao declared that the significance of the Xi’an Incident was, first of all, to oppose Japan and second to oppose Chiang. Internal chaos could not be avoided, though it could be minimized, and it was necessary to discuss how to overthrow the Nanjing government and set up an anti-Japanese government. In his concluding remarks, Mao replied that this was a truly decisive moment, when the Communists must not speak rashly. They should not oppose Chiang openly, but should point out his errors, reveal his crimes to the people, and "raise a conciliatory anti-Japanese flag."

A telegram from Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai to Zhang Xueliang, sent immediately after this meeting, began with the statement: "The fact that the prime culprit has been arrested makes for happiness shared far and wide." Mao and Zhou went on to call for "basing all actions on the popular masses" and for proclaiming to "all officers and soldiers Mr. Chiang’s crimes in selling out the country and harming the people." Another telegram to Zhang and Yang sent the following day hailed once again the arrest of the "prime culprit," called for the establishment of a unified "Northwest Anti-Japanese Joint Army" with Zhang Xueliang as commander-in-chief and Yang Hucheng and Zhu De as his deputies, and demanded a purge of the "pro-Chiang elements" among the troops. On December 15, Mao declared in a secret telegram to Peng Dehuai that, while the Red Army was reacting to a civil war launched by the enemy rather than taking the initiative, "when the enemy’s main force is advancing toward Xi’an, our forces should adopt a grand strategy ... and strike at the enemy’s head, the Nanjing government."

Another telegram, addressed on December 15 to the Guomindang and the National Government in Nanjing, declared that Mr. Chiang’s detention was the result of his "three grossly erroneous policies" of "capitalization in foreign affairs, use of military force in domestic affairs, and oppressing the people." "How can it be said," the telegram continued, "that those persons within the Guomindang who are patriotic and brave are still subject to Mr. Chiang’s orders?" Those who wanted to dissociate themselves from Chiang and the pro-Japanese clique should "stop the civil war, remove Mr. Chiang from office, and hand him over to the judgment of the citizens." The "judgment [caipan] of the citizens [guomin]"

171. "Letter from the Red Army command to the Guomindang and to the National Government on the Xi’an Incident," December 15, 1936, signed by Mao and by the other main Party and Red Army leaders.

sounds somewhat milder than a "mass trial," and in the four telegrams just cited there is no explicit reference to the execution of Chiang Kai-shek, but in political terms the message is essentially the same: "Yes, we want a united front, including the Guomindang, but not under Chiang’s leadership."

While it was entirely understandable that many Communist leaders, perhaps including Mao, should wish to take advantage of the events in Xi’an to exact revenge from the man who had so long sought their ruin, to do so was not a viable political option. In China itself, Chiang’s arrest immediately provided the pretext for the organization of a punitive expedition by He Yingqin and other pro-Japanese elements in the Guomindang, not in the hope of saving Chiang but, rather, with the aim of replacing him by a figure more acceptable to Japan if he did not survive. Evoking this perspective, the telegram of December 15 to the Guomindang argued that, while no one could predict how fate would allocate victory or defeat, the resulting conflict might lead to the destruction of the whole country. Thus to risk all on a single desperate gamble was almost certainly not something which, after a few days’ reflection, Mao would have wished to do. In any case, the Soviet reaction to events in Xi’an soon made any such policy untenable.

A day or two after the Xi’an Incident, Mao had sent a telegram to Moscow asking for guidance. On December 14, editorials in _Pravda_ and _Izvestiya_ denounced the action of Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng as a Japanese plot. The Nanjing government, the Soviet press argued, had increasingly shown "its readiness and ability" to lead China’s defense against Japan. Despite the existence of regular communications with Moscow, these authoritative statements appear to have reached Bao’an only after a week’s delay, at about the time when instructions from the International were finally received.

A telegram from Mao to Zhang Xueliang dated December 17, 1936, stated, "We have already made several reports to a distant place [i.e., Moscow], but have not yet received any reply." Mao reckoned that if Moscow saw the Xi’an Incident not simply as a military action, but as "linked to the popular masses," the Soviet authorities would "express their sympathy." He warned, however, that "the government in a distant place, in response to the demands of foreign relations, may not be able to support us openly as yet." In order to establish a high-level channel of communication with Zhang Xueliang, a delegation headed by Zhou Enlai had left on horseback on December 15 for Yan’an. There they were met on December 17 by an emissary from Zhang Xueliang and transported to Xi’an in Zhang’s personal airplane. As early as

172. See McLane, _Soviet Policy and the Chinese Communists_, pp. 82–84.
173. See below, "Telegram from Mao Zedong to Zhang Xueliang," December 17, 1936.
December 16, Mao had declared in a telegram to Yan Xishan, “There must be a peaceful resolution to the current situation; on no account should there be renewed civil war, inviting our own destruction.” On December 18, in a telegram from Xi’an, Zhou Enlai stated clearly, “The goal of the pro-Japanese faction is to bring about civil war, not to save Chiang.” In the light of this and two other telegrams from Zhou, Mao discussed the situation with Zhang Wentian and Bo Gu, and it was agreed that they should support the freeing of Chiang Kaishek under certain conditions and bring about a peaceful solution of the Xi’an Incident.

At a Politburo meeting called by Zhang Wentian on December 19, Mao gave a report of which the main theme was that hitherto all the attention in Nanjing had been focused on Chiang. In fact, said Mao, “The main problem at present is the problem of resisting Japan, not the problem of the individual Chiang Kaishek.” He called for opposing the expansion of the civil war and for a peaceful resolution of the Xi’an Incident. Referring to the Soviet editorials characterizing the Xi’an Incident as a Japanese plot, Mao said that Japanese claims that it was manufactured by the Soviet Union and Soviet claims that it was manufactured by the Japanese were both absurd. Under these circumstances, the Chinese Communists should say that they had not yet received instructions from the International. In his concluding remarks, Mao noted that the Xi’an Incident had been greatly influenced by the Red Army. Only if the civil war was halted would it be possible to fight Japan. To achieve this end, “we must win over Nanjing, and above all win over Xi’an.”

At this meeting, the Politburo adopted a directive, translated below, which took a position regarding the Xi’an Incident markedly more critical of Zhang and Yang than during the previous week:

Because of the fact . . . that this action was carried out in many respects in the style of a more or less military secret plot, and detained Nanjing’s highest responsible person and principal commander, Chiang Kaishek, it put Nanjing in the position of being an enemy of Xi’an and thus created the possibility of a new large-scale civil war, which would be extremely dangerous for the Chinese nation. Thus, this action has also impeded the joining together of the nationwide anti-Japanese forces.

Two possible future developments were noted: civil war, which would cause many Nanjing moderates to become pro-Japanese and thus favor the aggressors; and an end to “Communist suppression,” accompanied by united resistance against Japan. To bring about the second outcome rather than the first, the Party

must support a peaceful resolution of the conflict between Nanjing and Xi’an on the basis of a union against Japan, show sympathy for Xi’an, and prepare for a defensive war when He Yingqin’s “punitive army” attacks.

On the same day, Mao sent off a number of telegrams, of which three are translated below. One of these, addressed to Chen Lifu and others in Nanjing, and Zhang, Yang, and others in Xi’an, while pointing out that it was “the patriotic and enthusiastic gentlemen of Xi’an” who had taken the lead, called on both sides to refrain from attacking each other and to wait for a peace conference that should be called immediately by Nanjing, to which the Communists would also send representatives. Meanwhile, all parties, factions, and armies should “draw up a draft resolution for resisting Japan and saving the nation, and discuss the question of dealing with Mr. Chiang Kaisheng.” As Van Slyke has pointed out, “dealing with” [chuchu] Chiang was a much less threatening procedure than “judging” him, as demanded a few days earlier, but it still treated him as a passive actor to be manipulated, rather than as the leader of the nation. At the same time, Mao sent a terse but pithy telegram to Pan Hanhian, of which the full text reads: “Please consult with Nanjing about the possibility of, as well as the minimum conditions for, a peaceful solution to the Xi’an Incident, so that the tragic calamity of the destruction of the state may be avoided.”

While these two messages both spoke of compromise, Mao’s telegram to Zhou Enlai on the evening of December 19 stressed rather the polarization between the “Chinese traitors and rightists of Nanjing” who were trying to create a situation of civil war, and “the forces in Xi’an resisting Japan, the Red Army, the Chinese people, . . . factions opposing Chiang within China, and the pacific countries of the world,” who opposed civil war and supported resistance to Japan. Thus the rhetoric and the situation were finely balanced.

On the following day, the directive from Moscow to the Chinese Communist Party, sent on December 16, finally arrived. The text of this important document in the Soviet archives reads as follows:

In reply to your telegrams, we recommend that you adopt the following position:

1. Whatever Zhang Xueliang’s intentions, objectively his action can only

178. Ibid., pp. 418–19.
179. See below, “Central Committee Directive Concerning the Xi’an Incident and Our Tasks,” December 19, 1936.
180. See below, “Telegram from the Chinese Central Soviet Government and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist party Concerning the Xi’an Incident,” December 19, 1936.
181. Van Slyke, Enemies and Friends, p. 82 and note i.
182. See below, “Consult with Nanjing Regarding a Peaceful Solution to the Problem of the Xi’an Incident,” December 19, 1936.
183. See below, “Eliminate the Enemy Coming from the East in Coordination with the Forces of Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng,” December 19, 1936.
be harmful to the union of the forces of the Chinese people in an anti-Japanese united front and intensify the Japanese aggression against China.

2. Since this action has taken place, and one must take account of the real facts, the Chinese Communist Party takes a resolute stand in favor of a peaceful solution to this conflict on the following basis:

a. Reorganize the government by drawing into it several representatives of the anti-Japanese movement, favorable to China's unity and independence.

b. Guarantee the democratic rights of the Chinese people.

c. Put an end to the policy of annihilating the Red Army, and establish cooperation with it in fighting Japan.

d. Establish relations of cooperation with countries sympathetic to China's liberation from the attacks of Japanese imperialism.

Finally, we advise you not to raise the slogan of uniting with the Soviet Union. 184

The final sentence of this text underscores once again the desire of the Soviet Union not to be seen as explicitly involved in Chinese affairs.

Various versions of this important telegram have been published in China, in the Soviet Union, and elsewhere. The text as cited in the Nianpu and in the authorized biography of Mao comprises the whole of point 2 of the document, but omits the introductory sentence and the first point. 185 The version which appears in the volume regarding the secretary-general of the Comintern, the Bulgarian Georgi Dimitrov, reproduces the telegram exactly as it appears in the archives, but omits the final sentence about not raising the slogan of unifying with the Soviet Union. 186 The Bulgarian account says that the telegram of December 16 was edited and signed by Dimitrov, in the name of the Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, but since it also indicates that Dimitrov worked in "close and continuous contact with the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union," Stalin had obviously approved it.

The account of the Soviet directive given in an article originally published in Moscow in 1969 summarizes the main points correctly, but gives a different twist to the comment on the authors of the Xi'an Incident. "The Comintern," we read, "made the point that the Party should view cooperation with Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng as an important step leading to the formation of an agreement for a united anti-Japanese front with the Nanjing Government." 187

Obviously, the blunt statement that their action could only be harmful to the Chinese people and to the anti-Japanese united front was felt to be embarrassing, because it echoed the Moscow line at the time according to which the Xi'an affair was a "Japanese plot."

None of the available texts of this telegram, including that reproduced from the Comintern archives, contain the blunt order to release Chiang, which, according to an informant cited by Edgar Snow, caused Mao to "fly into a rage," swear, and stamp his feet. 188 Party historians in China confirm that at some point Mao was greatly angered by such a peremptory telegram, but argue that this was not because he wanted to see Chiang killed but because Stalin was treating him as foolish and irresponsible enough to entertain such an idea.

Zhang Guotao's memoirs contain summaries of a telegram drafted by Mao on December 12 and of a Soviet reply which Zhang dates December 13. The date of Moscow's reply given by Zhang is manifestly wrong, but the substance may be of interest. According to Zhang, Mao requested Comintern approval for the advice which the Chinese Communists had given to Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng to "split with Chiang resolutely." The Soviet reply, said by Zhang to have been written by Stalin himself, dismissed the Xi'an Incident as a Japanese intrigue, which the Soviet Union could not support. What China needed was a nationwide anti-Japanese united front, which only Chiang was capable of leading. 189 This was clearly the crucial point for Stalin, who gave priority to Soviet diplomatic interests in the Far East, namely, the need for a strong China as an ally against the Japanese threat, over the goal of revolution, though he undoubtedly thought that Mao's tactics were self-defeating.

On December 21, Mao once again telegraphed Pan Hannian, instructing him to put before Chen Lifu the conditions which had now been formulated by the Communists. These resembled very closely the list in the December 20 directive of the International, and included (1) the entry of leading anti-Japanese personalities into the Nanjing government; (2) an end to all military operations, and recognition of the status of Xi'an; (3) the abandonment of the policy of suppressing the Communists and union with the Red Army to resist Japan; and (4) a guarantee of democratic rights and cooperation with all countries sympathetic to the anti-Japanese movement in China. When these conditions were "fully guaranteed," the "people in Xi'an" should be persuaded to "free Mr. Chiang Kai-shek and support him in uniting with the whole country and fighting Japan together." 190 The same day, Mao sent a telegram to Zhou Enlai in Xi'an urging

184. The Comintern and China, p.270.
186. Georgi Dimitrov, pp. 207-8, citing the Comintern archives.
188. Snow, Random Notes, p. 2. Snow identifies his informant only as "X." Wu, The Sian Incident, p. 232, note 7, implies that the person in question was Song Qingling.
189. Zhang, Memoirs, pp. 482-83. Zhang's account of Mao's Machiavelian approach to this crisis, which he argues consisted in encouraging Zhang Xueliang to kill Chiang, while taking no responsibility for such advice, is obviously biased, but may contain an element of truth as regards Mao's position in the days immediately following Chiang's detention.
190. See below, "Make Five Requests to Chen Lifu for Cooperation in the Resistance to Japan," December 21, 1936.
him to inform the members of the Huangpu faction that the pro-Japanese faction was actually plotting to kill Chiang. 191 The following day, he sent a letter to Yan Xishan, assuring him that the Communists did not seek revenge upon the Nanjing government, but were eager to mediate between it and Xi’an, since “to do otherwise would only bring great harm to the nation and great benefit to Japan.” 192

Events were now hastening toward a climax. On December 22, Song Ziwen and his sister Song Meiling (Mme. Chiang Kaishhek) flew into Xi’an in response to an invitation from Zhang Xueliang. Talks regarding the terms of Chiang’s release took place on December 23 and 24 with the participation of Zhang Xueliang, Yang Hucheng, Song Ziwen, and Zhou Enlai, and of Song Meiling on the 24th. When the talks were over, Zhou was taken by the two Songs to meet with Chiang Kaishhek, who assured him that he would cease suppressing the Communists, join with the Red Army to fight Japan, and unite China. 193

On the afternoon of December 25, Zhang Xueliang, knowing that Yang Hucheng and many of the more radical younger officers were opposed to releasing Chiang without written guarantees, decided to accompany Chiang and the two Songs on a flight to Luoyang. He did so without informing either Yang Hucheng or Zhou Enlai.

That same day at midnight, in a telegram to Peng Dehuai and Ren Bishi, Mao began by stating: “The principle of restoring Chiang’s freedom, under five conditions, . . . is the result of the negotiations we proposed. This has been completely accepted by Chiang and Nanjing’s Left-wing representatives.” Noting that he had telegraphed Zhou Enlai the previous evening saying that Chiang should not be let go before they were sure that the conditions were met and that there would be no waver ing after Chiang’s release, but he had nonetheless been released already, Mao concluded: “Judging from the circumstances, there are advantages to releasing Chiang, but whether or not the advantages have been realized . . . remains to be confirmed subsequently.” 194 At the same time, Mao continued, as he had been doing since the events of December 12, to devote attention to the military situation and to issue orders as to how He Yingqin’s offensive, which had recently scored some successes, could be stopped. 195

At a meeting of the Politburo on December 27, Mao Zedong presented a report and drew the conclusions. 196 In his report, he declared that the Communist Party’s previous judgment that the Xi’an Incident was revolutionary had proved correct, for if it had not been revolutionary, it could not have produced such positive results:

The Xi’an Incident has become the key to the change in the Guomindang. Without the Xi’an Incident, the time taken by the transformation might have been extended because a certain force was definitely required to bring about this transformation. The force of the Xi’an Incident caused the Guomindang to put an end to ten years of erroneous policies . . . As for the civil war, what brought about the end of the civil war after it had gone on for ten years? It was the Xi’an Incident. The Xi’an Incident put an end to the civil war and marked the beginning of the War of Resistance . . . . These consequences of the Xi’an Incident were not fortuitous, for the Guomindang had begun to waver some time earlier . . . . Its internal contradictions had developed to a high level, so the Xi’an Incident was able to resolve these contradictions . . . . The Xi’an Incident marks the transition between two eras and the beginning of a new stage.

While recognizing that the Xi’an Incident, despite the gains it had brought, had not solved all the problems, Mao remained optimistic. In his conclusion at this Politburo meeting, he said:

Is the civil war over or not? We must say that it is basically over. As regards the future, the question is not whether it will be one of civil war or of resisting Japan, but whether resistance to Japan will come sooner or later.

On December 26, Chiang Kaishhek issued to the press a record of his farewell talk with Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng, under the title “Admonition to
Zhang Xueliang and Yang Huchang. 197 Two days later, Mao responded with a statement on Chiang’s proclamation. This document has long been familiar and is included in the Selected Works. Although Mao characterizes Chiang’s utterance as “so ambiguous and evasive as to be a truly interesting masterpiece among China’s political documents” and takes him severely to task for calling the forces favorable to resistance against Japan “reactionary,” this statement is, like his report to the Politburo on the previous day, relatively optimistic.

Praising Chiang for his formulation “Stand by one’s word, and carry one’s actions through to the end” [yan bi xin, xing bi guo], Mao declared: “Mr. Chiang’s withdrawal of troops 198 is proof of his acting in good faith.” As will be seen from the text of Mao’s statement which appears below, he found in 1950 that this last sentence was too generous and modified it to read: “We shall see whether, after he has withdrawn his troops, Chiang will act in good faith and carry out the terms he has accepted.” Reminding Chiang that he owed his safe departure from Xi’an to the mediation of the Guomindang Left and of the Communist Party, Mao asserted, “Throughout the incident, the Communist Party... stood for a peaceful settlement... Had civil war erupted, and had Mr. Chiang been kept in custody for long, the incident could only have developed in favor of Japan and the ‘punitive group’.” At the same time, Mao warned Chiang that if he wavered in resisting Japan or delayed in fulfilling his pledges, “the revolutionary tide of the people” would sweep him away. 199

As we have already seen, Mao’s instinctive reaction during the first few days after December 12 was not such as to justify the claim that he had stood for a peaceful settlement throughout the incident. It is true that by the end of December he had basically adopted the Soviet view that Chiang Kai-shek was the sole possible leader of the anti-Japanese war, and the Communists must work with him, however difficult that might prove. Plainly, however, although Mao accepted this argument intellectually, his feelings were somewhat ambiguous and would remain so in the face of Chiang Kai-shek’s own equivocal and evasive attitude in the months following his release and the continuing influence in the Guomindang leadership of pro-Japanese and anti-Communist figures.

V. Toward the War of Resistance

On January 1, 1937, Mao complained in a telegram to Pan Hannian that the pro-Japanese faction was “obstructing with all its might the carrying out of Chairman Chiang’s new policies” and urged Pan to make contact with Chen Lifu in order to frustrate this “plot to ruin the country.” 200 At midnight on the same day, Mao observed, in a telegram to Zhou Enlai and Peng Dehuai, that the internal struggle in Nanjing was extremely intense. “The pro-Japanese faction,” he declared, “is not resigned to stepping down, and there is the danger that it will put up a last-ditch struggle to detain Li Yi [Zhang Xueliang], and stage an offensive against Xi’an.” He went on to recommend military measures to counter the designs of He Yingqin. 201

On January 5, 1937, in telegrams to Zhou Enlai and Pan Hannian, Mao reiterated the points agreed with Song Ziwen and Chiang Kaishek in Xi’an and told Pan to demand that Song Ziwen carry out the promises thus made. Unless these terms were confirmed, Mao declared, Zhou should not go to Nanjing, for if he did, he might “become a second Zhang Xueliang.” 202 Unfortunately, Song was not in a position to carry out any promises at this time. After attending the court martial of Zhang Xueliang on December 31, 1936, at which Zhang was sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment, Chiang Kaishek had gone into seclusion on January 2, 1937, in his native place of Fenghua in Zhejiang. Although he occasionally dealt with important matters, he was not in day-to-day control of events, and power in Nanjing was wielded in large measure by He Yingqin. The relatively liberal Song Ziwen had virtually no influence at all.

Faced with this situation, the Communist leadership adopted a dual approach, calling on Chiang Kaishek to take political measures to avoid civil war and, at the same time, ordering Red Army deployment based on the assumption that He Yingqin and the other hard-liners were in charge. Thus, in a circular telegram of January 8, the Central Committee expressed profound relief at Chiang Kaishek’s acceptance while in Xi’an of policies of peace and joint resistance against Japan, but added that “circumstances became perilous all of a sudden when Mr. Chiang got back to Nanjing... The pro-Japanese factions, on the one hand, detained Mr. Zhang Hanqing and, on the other, directed the central armies, which were already retreating on Mr. Chiang’s orders, to resume their attacks on Xi’an in an attempt to provoke an unprecedented civil war.” Mr. Chiang, the telegram concluded, “should come out boldly at this moment to prevent a new outbreak of civil war.” This

197. For a discussion of this much-disputed document, which is probably authentic in substance, though modified in form to suit Chiang’s purposes, and a translation of its main points, see Wu, The Shan Incident, pp. 149–51.

198. The reference is to Chiang’s personal order, on December 23, to Guomindang forces to withdraw one kilometer from the existing battle line with the forces of Zhang and Yang. See Wu, The Shan Incident, pp. 145–46.


200. See below, the telegram from Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai to Pan Hannian dated January 1, 1937.

201. See below, “Prepare to Deal with the Offensive of the Pro-Japanese Faction,” January 1, 1937, and also “The Fifteenth Army Group Should Move to Southern Shaanxi,” telegram to Peng Dehuai of January 3, 1937.

202. See below, “Demand That Chiang and Song Fulfill the Conditions Agreed Upon in Xi’an,” and “Mao Zedong’s Telegram to Zhou Enlai and Bo Gu Concerning Matters of Principle in Negotiations with Zhang Chong,” both dated January 5, 1937.
incident would serve as an important test of Mr. Chiang’s maxim, “Stand by one’s word, and carry one’s actions through to the end.”

At the same time, Mao sent a number of telegrams instructing Red Army forces to prepare to break the enemy’s encirclement by taking Shangzhou and Luanan, opening the way to the key Beiping-Hankou and Longhai railroads, and thereby “forcing Chiang to submit.” On the other hand, if the enemy did not disrupt the peace, the Red Army should not advance eastward for the time being. Summing up the relation between these two dimensions of policy in a telegram to Zhou Enlai, Mao wrote:

Our basic policy at present is to strive to maintain peace, draw Chiang and Song over to our side, arouse public opinion in the various factions and circles within the country, stir up Britain and the United States, maintain the status quo in the Northwest, and refrain from opening fire unless absolutely necessary . . . In the military arena, however, all efforts must still be made to prepare for war, with absolutely no letup.

In the light of the uncertain military situation, the Northeastern Army had concentrated its forces in the vicinity of Xi’an and, in the process, had evacuated Yan’an. The Communist Party took advantage of this development to move its headquarters from the village of Bao’an to much larger and more comfortable quarters in Yan’an. Mao Zedong arrived there on January 13, 1937, together with other members of the Central Committee and of the Revolutionary Military Commission. Two days later, he attended a Politburo meeting at which the guidelines for work in the area were discussed. Now, said Mao, we are not attacking the local bullies, so they are happy; we are protecting the merchants, so they are happy; and we have abolished vexatious taxes and levies, so the peasants are happy. In the future, we must take further steps to make the masses even happier, and the local bullies a bit less happy. We must constantly be aware of the fact that our work in Yan’an will exert an influence throughout the country.

Concerned at Mao’s failure to align himself wholeheartedly with the Guomindang under the leadership of Chiang Kaishek, Moscow sent two more telegrams to the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee on January 19 and 20, 1937. The first of these read in part:

We attach extreme importance to the peaceful settlement of the Xi’an events. Such a settlement can, however, be thwarted not only by the maneuvers of the Japanese imperialists and their agents . . . , but also because of missteps by your Party.

One can now see more clearly than ever the erroneous nature of your Party’s previous orientation, which consisted in establishing a unified front by eliminating Chiang Kaishek and overthrowing the Nanjing government . . . Despite some recent corrections in its policy, the Party has still not freed itself definitively from this erroneous orientation. In fact the Party pursues a course of splitting the Guomindang and not of cooperating with it. The very agreement reached with Chiang Kaishek and Nanjing is looked upon as an act of capitulation by Chiang Kaishek . . . Cooperation with the Xi’anists has assumed the form of a coalition aimed at Nanjing and not of joint action against the common enemy. All this plays into the hands of the pro-Japanese elements . . .

. . . The Party should openly proclaim and resolutely carry out a course of supporting all the measures of the Guomindang and of the Nanjing government aimed at ending the civil war, and at uniting all the forces of the Chinese people for the defense of the territorial integrity and the independence of China against the Japanese aggressors.

The question of cooperation with the military units of Zhang Xueliang, Yang Hucheng, and others must be subordinated to the interest of carrying out this main task . . .

We find the behavior of Agnes Smedley rather dubious. We should deprive her of the possibility of speaking in the name of the Communists, and as a person trusted by them. Her behavior should be criticized in the press.

. . . We await information about the concrete measures you have taken in the spirit of the present instruction.

The second telegram, dated January 20, suggested that the Chinese Communist Party consider introducing changes in the policy in the Soviet regions, to bring it into conformity with the situation of an imminent offensive by the Japanese. It was suggested that the Soviet government be renamed the People’s Revolutionary Government, that the Red Army be called the People’s Revolutionary Army, and that the expropriation of the rich peasants be abandoned.

Moscow may not have been adequately informed regarding the changes in policy toward the rich peasants instituted by the Chinese Communist Party in December 1935 and July 1936, or the International may have felt that even the directive of July 22, 1936, did not go far enough in protecting the rich peasants.

203. See below, “Circular Telegram of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the Central Soviet Government Calling for Peace and an End to the Civil War,” January 8, 1937.


205. See below, “Strive to Keep the Peace, Avoid Civil War, and Maintain the Status Quo in the Northwest,” January 9, 1937.

206. For a picturesque account of the difference between “pitiful little Bao’an,” where it was “hard to find a middle-school graduate,” and Yan’an, “a promising place for great events,” see Zhang Guotao, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 474–75 and 491–93.


208. Ibid., pp. 641–42.

209. The full text of these two telegrams appears in The Comintern and China, pp. 270–72. For a summary in English, see Georgi Dimitrov, pp. 208–9.
On January 21, in a telegram to Zhou Enlai, Mao reiterated that the crucial problem lay in "whether there is a guarantee that by making concessions the war will truly be terminated," and in another telegram on the same evening, he told Pan Hannian to demand such a guarantee from Chiang Kaishek. The following day, he instructed Pan Hannian to urge Chiang Kaishek to be magnanimous in his treatment of Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng, so as to put their minds at rest. Soon thereafter, Mao told Pan Hannian to ask for "something written in Mr. Chiang's own hand," in order to reassure Red Army officers. At this stage, Chiang was very little inclined to make any such gestures, especially as the Third Plenum of the Guomindang Central Executive Committee, scheduled for mid-February, was to be devoted exclusively to issues raised by the Xi'an Incident.

At a Politburo meeting on January 24, discussing the outstanding issues between the Communist Party and the Guomindang on the eve of the Third Plenum, Mao declared that it should be made absolutely clear that what the Communists were advocating was not a Spanish-style popular front but a national front. The Soviet Area, he added, could become a "special area" under the ultimate authority of the National Government even before the latter was transformed into a democratic republic. Our mistake, he said in conclusion, lay in the fact that, in putting forward the slogan of resisting Japan in December 1935, we did not abandon the anti-Chiang slogan, and we changed our policy little by little beginning in May 1936 after receiving orders from the International. Moreover, our circular telegram after the Xi'an Incident calling for handing Chiang over to the judgment of the people was also in error.

Meanwhile, an intense debate had been going on within the Guomindang elite in Nanjing regarding the attitude which should be adopted both toward the Communists and toward the Xi'an rebels. In late January, a meeting was held at Dongguan between representatives of the Central Army and of the forces of Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng, and an agreement was reached which avoided an immediate military clash. Mao took note of this latter agreement in a telegram of January 29 and also informed Pan Hannian that "for the purpose of resolutely supporting Mr. Chiang's guidelines and resolving the Northwest problem in a peaceful manner," the Communists had decided to abandon their demand to station troops in southern Shaanxi. The next day, however, in a telegram to Zhou Enlai, Mao declared, "We and Zhang and Yang . . . are a trinity . . . We cannot lose Zhang and Yang. . . . Before they agree to withdrawing their troops, we shall not act independently."

Circumstances would, however, oblige Mao and his comrades to "lose Zhang and Yang." On February 2, radical young officers in Xi'an, angry that Zhang Xueliang had not been allowed to return to Shaanxi and fearful that excessive concessions were being made to Chiang Kaishek, killed a number of high-ranking officers whom they regarded as too prone to compromise, including Wang Yizhe, who had been involved in Zhou Enlai's first visit to Xi'an in April 1936. Mao immediately sent a telegram of condolence to Wang's family, praising him as one who "worked hard to obtain . . . unity, thereby offending the minority who ignored the larger issues."

On February 10, a telegram drafted by Mao, Zhang Wentian, and others, and approved by the Politburo on February 9, was dispatched to the Guomindang Third Plenum. It proposed five points as the basis for national policy and offered four concessions in return. The five points were an end to the civil war; freedom of speech and assembly and the release of political prisoners; a nationwide conference of representatives from all parties to discuss saving the country; swift completion of preparations for a war of resistance against Japan; and improving the livelihood of the people. The four concessions offered by the Communists were abandonment of the policy of armed uprisings aimed at the overthrow of the National Government; renaming of the Soviet Government as the Special District Government of the Republic of China, and of the Red Army as the National Revolutionary Army, under the orders of the Military Commission in Nanjing; thorough democracy based on elections in the Special District; and abandonment of the policy of confiscating the land of the landlords. "We are all descendants of the Yellow Emperor," read the peroration. "Faced with national crisis, there is no alternative save to discard all our prejudices, cooperate closely with one another, and dedicate ourselves to the great common prospect of the final emancipation of the Chinese nation."

Two days later, Mao stated in a written reply to Zhou Enlai that he should

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210. See below, the telegrams of January 21, 1937, "Negotiating Principles and Military Deployment," and "Demand That Chiang Kaishek Give Concrete Guarantees That War Will Not Break Out Again After the Peaceful Solution."

211. See below, "Negotiating with Chiang Kaishek on the Question of Places to Station the Red Army, Among Other Matters," January 22, 1937.

212. See below, "Demand That Chiang Kaishek Write a Document in His Own Hand to Dispel Misgivings, So That a Thorough Peaceful Solution Can Be Secured," January 25, 1937.


214. On these developments, see Wu, The Sian Incident, pp. 155-75.

215. See below, "Telegram from Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai to Pan Hannian regarding the Question of the Decision to Abandon the Demand to Station Troops in Southern Shaanxi," January 29, 1937.


217. Regarding the "February 2 Coup," see Wu, The Sian Incident, pp. 175-78.


make clear to the Guomindang that the Communists would carry out the four items promised in this telegram only if the Guomindang carried out the five demands. "In reality," he declared, "these are our minimum conditions, and no further concessions should be made." Mao qualified this categorical statement, however, by suggesting that Chiang should first be consulted on the proposals and that points he was thought unwilling to accept should be left out.\(^{220}\)

In the end, many of the points on which the Communists had previously insisted had to be modified or abandoned, and the anti-Communist rhetoric of the Guomindang Third Plenum was rather harsh.\(^{221}\) But even though Mao and his comrades did not obtain the written guarantees they had sought, the situation had been modified to such an extent by the Xi’an Incident that they were confident Chiang Kai-shek would not launch another campaign of encirclement and suppression against them. Chiang, for his part, emerged from the ordeal with his prestige as the national leader enhanced, in part because the Communists had recognized him as such.

Mao himself provided a detailed and comprehensive review of the Xi’an Incident and the significance of the terms on which it had been resolved in a long interview of March 1, 1937, with Agnes Smedley.\(^{222}\) He clearly regarded this as a very important document and hastened to send a copy to Edgar Snow with a letter stating that it "conveyed several new developments in our policy" and asking Snow to "spread the word for us."\(^{223}\)

Mao refuted at the outset the view that the Communist Party was calling for a popular front. "What the Communist Party advocates," he said, "is a national front. This sort of national front is much more extensive than the popular fronts in France or Spain." Asked by Smedley what level of sacrifice the Communists were prepared to make in order to form the national united front against Japan, Mao evoked the concessions offered in the telegram of February 10 discussed above. In reply to Smedley’s question "Does the new policy of the United Front mean that the Chinese Communists are giving up class struggle to form the national front and have thus become nationalists?" Mao declared that it was "an instance of subjecting the interests of a part to those of the whole and subjecting the interests of a class to those of the nation." On the one hand, the landlords and capitalists should "do their best to improve the livelihood and treatment of the workers and peasants" because if these classes were exploited too cruelly, they would be unable to contribute to the struggle against Japan. But, he added, the workers and peasants "should likewise be concerned with the larger issues," and in this perspective the Communists had stopped confiscating the land.

When Smedley declared that many people "were quite taken aback" by Communist advocacy of a peaceful solution to the Xi’an Incident and asked for an explanation, Mao replied that this attitude "should have come as no surprise." Ever since Japan started its invasion of China the Communists had been ready to put an end to the civil war, for "only when China has gained internal peace can there be a war of resistance." During the Xi’an Incident, Mao added, there were people who tried hard to provoke a civil war. "Had Zhang Hanqing not sent Mr. Chiang Kai-shek back to the capital on December 25, and had the aftermath of the Xi’an Incident not been handled according to Mr. Chiang’s methods, a peaceful solution would not have been possible." In response to Smedley’s request for a comment on the commonly expressed view that "the present policy of the Communist Party is one of submission, capitulation, and repentance toward the Guomindang," Mao responded that some people did say such things, but the Japanese would not agree because they knew very well that the Communist Party’s cooperation with the Guomindang actually dealt a serious blow to Japan’s policy of aggression. The criterion of whether any policy was correct or not was, he said, the Japanese attitude toward it. If the Japanese were against it, it was revolutionary. The Communist Party, he added, was willing to adopt such a "drastic compromise" as renaming the Soviets and the Red Army and ceasing to confiscate the land of the landlords because this compromise stemmed "from a greater and more important principle, which is the necessity and urgency of resisting Japan and saving the nation." Even though the Guomindang’s progress was slow, there existed the possibility of concerted resistance against Japan. Patience and some concessions were required in order to achieve this goal, but "as long as the major principle of resisting Japan and saving the nation is not violated, everything is negotiable."

Meanwhile, talks had begun between the Chinese Communist Party and the Guomindang about the conditions under which collaboration between the two parties could be established. Initially, Zhou Enlai negotiated with Zhang Chong, a member of the Guomindang Central Executive Committee who had just attended the Third Plenum, and Fu Zhonghong, the general who had been sent by Chiang Kai-shek to establish military control in Xi’an after Yang Hucheng agreed to go abroad. No substantial results were achieved during these meetings, which took place in Xi’an in late February and early March, because Guomindang demands for control over the Red Army and the Border Area government were too draconian. They did, however, permit the two sides to become acquainted with each other’s views and produced limited agreements on such points as the size of the Red Army, which was to consist
of three divisions. Mao Zedong’s two telegrams of March 6 and 7 stating that cooperation had already been established were thus somewhat too optimistic, though he did speak prudently of a “transitional period toward the effective establishment of a nationwide united front.”

Already on March 11, Mao had declared in a telegram to Zhou Enlai that the issues then pending could not be resolved except in talks with Chiang Kaishek himself. The following day, at a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, he declared that two roads were open to Chiang Kaishek—that of the Japanese, and that of the Communist Party—and that Chiang was hesitating between them. The talks with him would therefore amount to a struggle, but they must be concluded on a basis of cooperation, not capitulation. The correct orientation was toward cooperation between a proletarian party and a bourgeois party, but the proletariat must not become the tail of the bourgeoisie.

From March 23 to 31, Mao participated in an enlarged plenum of the Politburo, at which the topics of discussion were the tasks of the Chinese Communist Party following the Guomindang Third Plenum and the errors of Zhang Guotao. On the first topic, Mao repeated once again that, at present, the contradiction between China and Japan was primary, and contradictions within the country had declined to a subordinate position. This was the reason for the change in the policies both of the Chinese Communist Party and of the Guomindang. The Third Plenum had marked the beginning of a change by the Guomindang from compromising to a war of resistance, and from autocracy to democracy.

Speaking about Zhang Guotao on March 30, Mao declared that his line was entirely erroneous, a mixture of mechanism and empiricism. Zhang, he claimed, had put forward dozens of reasons why Chiang should be killed after he was arrested on December 12. As a mechanist, said Mao, Zhang Guotao saw only the form, but not the content. He saw Japan and Chiang Kaishek as mighty demons and was unaware of the contradictions between them. Alluding to the inner-Party conflict during the last few months of 1935, Mao denounced Zhang for having tried to change the composition and policies of the Central Committee with guns. We should urge him earnestly to transform himself, Mao said in conclusion, but reject his faults. Despite these and other sweeping criticisms, Zhang retained his offices in the Party, but the climate was such that his exit from it a year later should have come as no surprise.

A striking example of Mao’s concern at this time to appeal to national sentiments is his elegiac address to the Yellow Emperor. In this text, he mixed purely traditional symbols such as “the first ancestor of the Chinese nation”; concrete references to the historical situation, such as the statement “The Ryukyus and Taiwan have been lost, Korea lies in ruins”; and current Communist policies, such as “a democratic republic, reform of domestic politics.”

Toward the end of March, Zhou Enlai flew to Hangzhou, for face-to-face discussions with Chiang Kaishek. On this occasion, Chiang spoke of his desire for a long-term understanding with the Communist Party, of which he recognized the national sentiments. He suggested, however, that such cooperation should be with him personally, rather than between the two parties. As for the concrete arrangements, there could be a single special administrative area, but the head of it should be appointed by Nanjing, on the basis of a recommendation by the Communist side. All other posts could be handled directly by the Communist Party. When Zhou Enlai argued that the best guarantee of long-term cooperation would be a common program, Chiang replied that the Communists should first discuss the matter and put forward a proposal.

On Zhou Enlai’s return to Yan’an in early April, a meeting of the Politburo was immediately convened to hear his report, and expressed its satisfaction. Zhou was asked to prepare a draft of the proposed common program, which was discussed at Politburo meetings on April 7 and 20. At the meeting on April 20, Mao declared that such a national alliance should be broad and not closed. The Communist Party did not wish to create an organization which would restrict it, so the simpler the regulations were, the better.

Despite the fact that many issues had not yet been resolved, the mood in Yan’an at this time was one of optimism. In his report of May 3, 1937, to a congress of Party representatives from the soviet regions, which had been called to ratify the new policy line adopted since the Xi’an Incident, Mao declared that the Guomindang’s Third Plenum marked the transition from the first stage of the new period inaugurated by the December Ninth Movement to the second stage. Because of the presence of the pro-Japanese faction and the vacillating

222. Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 670. Zhang Guotao gives a rather different account. According to his version, members of the Politburo turned up at his residence in early April, with a telegram from Zhou Enlai regarding the Guomindang’s terms for “surrender” and “repentance” by the Communists, which were not negotiable. Zhang says that he recommended acceptance, making a comparison, which pleased Mao, with Lenin’s acceptance of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. See Zhang Guotao, Memoirs, Vol. 2, pp. 517–20. This account, though entertaining, is obviously inaccurate in important respects, since Zhou was present in Yan’an in early April and would not have sent a telegram.
faction within the Guomindang, he asserted, the Third Plenum had made “no
definite or thoroughgoing change in policy.” Popular pressure was forcing Nan-
jing to turn away from civil war to an anti-Japanese national united front, but
though the Guomindang was moving, it was essential for the Communists to go a
step farther in criticizing the Guomindang and in pushing it into action. Rapid
reform of China’s undemocratic political system was essential to consolidate
internal peace and strengthen internal unity in preparation for the struggle
against Japan.

Citing the “four pledges” in the telegram of February 10 to the Guomindang
Third Plenum, Mao declared that these were “principled and conditional con-
cessions,” for the sake of peace, democracy, and armed resistance. Although
Communists would never abandon their ideal of socialism and communism,
they could attain this only by going through the stage of the bourgeois-demo-
cratic revolution, during which they would “staunchly put into practice” the
Three People’s Principles. He added, however, that China’s bourgeois-demo-
cratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism could be realized, “not
under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, but only under that of the proletariat.”
And he went on to state: “Our democratic republic is to be established in the
course of a national war of resistance under the leadership of the proletariat and
in the new international environment (with socialism victorious in the Soviet
Union and the approach of a new world revolution).” This can hardly have been
reassuring to the Guomindang.

In his concluding remarks to the congress, Mao reiterated the view that, after
the Guomindang Third Plenum, “peace had been attained.” That did not mean,
he added, that it had been consolidated; Japan and the pro-Japanese faction were
still endeavoring to provoke civil war in China. In these circumstances, it was
necessary to move forward to the fight for democracy. “The accumulated filth of
the past ten years” could not be cleansed overnight, and the Guomindang was
still “bent on destroying us,” but its tactics had changed from a military policy to
a political one. In conclusion, Mao stated once again: “The change from the
predominance of the bourgeoisie to that of the proletariat is a long process of
struggle... for leadership... We are for the attainment of socialism by going
through all the necessary stages of the democratic republic.”

In an interview with Nym Wales on May 15, Mao repeated many of the points
he had made at the recent congress to the effect that the future for the united
front was “hopeful.” Specifically with reference to the talks with the
Guomindang, he declared: “The most important thing is to have political guide-
lines shared by both parties... Without such... guidelines... cooperation
cannot be achieved very well.” On May 24, he stressed the importance of this
point in a telegram to Zhou Enlai. The following day, he sent another tele-
gram enumerating matters on which Chiang’s position should be probed, in-
cluding defense against Japan, alliance with Russia, and collective security in
the Pacific; and things that Zhou must strive to bring about, including the
appointment of Lin Boqu and others to the Special Region Government, and the
establishment of a general headquarters for the reconstituted Red Army, with
Zhu De as commander-in-chief.

When Zhou Enlai met once again with Chiang Kaishek at Lushan on June 4,
1937, Chiang’s attitude was radically different from what it had been in
Hangzhou. He dismissed the draft of a common program which had been pre-
pared by the Communists at his own request and instead proposed the establish-
ment of a “National Revolutionary Alliance Society” [Guomin geming
tongmenghui], composed of an equal number of cadres nominated by the
Guomindang and by the Communists, with Chiang as chairman. This organ was
to bring the two parties together to such an extent that it would deal with the
International on behalf of the Communists, and also determine policy toward
Soviet Russia. On concrete problems, his attitude was also completely different.
He was no longer prepared to allow the establishment of a Communist military
headquarters, and he invited “Mr. Mao and Mr. Zhu” to go abroad. Zhou natu-
urally rejected this last proposal out of hand. The discussions continued until June
15, but despite the intervention of Song Ziwen and Song Meiling, no agreement
could be reached.

On June 18, Zhou returned to Yan’an. The Central Secretariat examined
Chiang’s views and considered the possibility of making yet more concessions.
On June 26, Zhou received a telegram inviting him to return to Lushan for
further discussions, and, after preparing a new draft of a proclamation regard-
ning Guomindang-Communist cooperation, he left for the south on July 4. He
reached Shanghai on July 7, simultaneously with the outbreak of the Marco Polo
Bridge Incident, which would at last create the conditions for an agreement
between the two parties in the face of the Japanese threat.

During all the dramatic developments of the previous months, Mao had been
reading Soviet works on Marxism-Leninism in translation and making copious
annotations in the margins. In the summer of 1937, he lectured twice a week at
the Anti-Japanese University, presenting his own interpretation of dialectical
materialism. The course was concluded in August 1937, and in September

233. See below, “The Tasks of the Chinese National United Front Against Japan at the
Present Stage,” May 3, 1937.
234. See below, “The Tasks of the Chinese National United Front Against Japan at the
Present Stage,” May 3, 1937.
236. See below, “Two Aspects That Need to Be Addressed When Meeting with
Chiang Kaishek,” May 24, 1937.
239. See Jin, Zhou Enlai, pp. 362–63; Shum, United Front, pp. 95–96.
240. According to Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 671–72, he began writing the lectures in April,
1937 Mao’s Lecture Notes on Dialectical Materialism were published in a mimeographed edition for internal circulation. This work included the original versions of the essays which later became “On Practice” and “On Contradiction” and is therefore of great importance. Because Mao’s lectures and his reading notes are so closely related, this entire set of materials is being held over and published together in Volume VI of our edition, even though chronologically some items fall into the period covered here.

The reaction of the Communists to the Japanese attack on the Marco Polo Bridge was immediate. A telegram of July 8 to Chiang Kai-shek signed by Mao Zedong, Zhu De, Peng Dehuai, and other military commanders characterized this action as a step in carrying out Japan’s established plan for taking North China by military force, and added, “Our grief and indignation upon hearing this news are beyond description!” “Respectfully imploring” Chiang to carry out a nationwide mobilization, defend Beiping, Tianjin, and North China, and recover the lost territories, Mao and his comrades declared, “The officers and men of the Red Army sincerely wish to give their all in the service of their country under your leadership, Mr. Chairman.”241

In a context of rapidly unfolding events, relations between the Communists and the Guomindang remained finely balanced. On July 20, Mao informed Zhou Enlai, “We have decided to adopt the policy of holding no more talks with Chiang if he refuses to compromise.”242 And yet, three days later, in an important article of July 23, Mao quoted at length with approval from Chiang Kai-shek’s statement of July 17 demanding a war of resistance to the end in the face of this new Japanese aggression. This statement, he declared, and the Communist manifesto of July 8, had “this point in common: They advocate a resolute war of resistance and oppose compromise and concession.” Expressing the hope that Chiang Kai-shek would adhere to his own policy, which the Communists firmly supported, Mao proclaimed once again the resolve to “defend the homeland to the last drop of blood.” He then proceeded to lay out what he called an eight-point program, comprising mobilization of all Chinese armed forces; mobilization of the whole people, and giving the people freedom to express their patriotism; creating a government of national defense, based on democratic centralism; adopting an anti-Japanese foreign policy, and securing foreign support;

and delivered them twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, each time for four hours, making a total of 110 hours, over a period of “more than three months.” This implies that he began lecturing in late May. Jin, Mao, pp. 445–51, indicates that the lectures were delivered in July and August.

241. See below, “Telegram of July 8 to Chairman Chiang from the Senior Commanders of the Red Army Concerning the Attacks on North China by the Japanese Invaders,” July 8, 1937. On the same date, the Central Committee also issued a manifesto, which is quoted below in Mao’s article of July 23, 1937.


244. See below, “Convey to Chiang Kai-shek the Plan to Reorganize the Red Army,” July 28, 1937.

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 zhuozuo ji* (Collected Writings by Mao Zedong from the Early Period), and *Jianzhu he da geming shiqi Mao Zedong zhuozuo 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 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 years 1921–1942, appeared in December 1993, and three more, covering the period 1943–September 1949 came out in August 1996; and a six-volume edition of Mao’s military writings, *Mao Zedong junshi wenji* (Collected Military Writings of Mao Zedong), published in December 1993.

Sources. Despite the appearance of these two important collections, there is
still no complete, or nearly complete, Chinese edition of Mao’s writings from December 1920 onward. This and all subsequent volumes of our edition must therefore 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 centenary series described above, contain a large 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 shuxin xuanji* (Selected Correspondence of Mao Zedong), and *Mao Zedong xinwen zhuzuo wenxuan* (Selected Materials Regarding Mao Zedong’s Journalistic Work), both of 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, individual texts published in China for restricted circulation, and facsimiles of handwritten materials.

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 commonly 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, many 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 xianji*, 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. Volumes III and IV each included four texts of this kind. With the mid-1930s, we reach a period for which more of Mao’s writings are included in the *Selected Works*; as a result, there are six texts with variants, including one book-length work (*Strategic Problems of China’s Revolutionary War*), in the present volume, and there will be even more in subsequent volumes.

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. As in previous volumes of this edition, 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 *Xianji* 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 judgment 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, but have modified or corrected as we judged appropriate, both to improve the accuracy of the translation and to bring it into conformity with the conventions adopted in this edition. 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 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 nineteenth century, 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” (yigui), 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 or 1900s for whom no second date is given are already dead; some of them are in fact very much alive as of 1999.

As pointed out in Volumes III and IV, Mao’s writings regarding military operations for the Jinggangshan and Jiangxi Soviet periods contain references to an extremely large number of places, many of them of no particular significance. To annotate all of the place names mentioned would have imposed an intolerable burden on the printer, and on the reader. We therefore provided notes regarding geography, or the terrain, only in exceptional cases. At that time, however, the action took place primarily in a relatively limited area of Jiangxi, Fujian, and neighboring provinces, so it was possible to include in the two previous volumes maps showing the principal localities mentioned by Mao, in order to facilitate the understanding of the text. Because of the extremely extensive area in which the Red Army operated both during and after the Long March, the present volume would have required a large number of maps to cover the terrain in sufficient detail, and we must therefore refer the reader to an atlas of China—preferably one showing the place-names in use before 1949.

There are, in fact, maps in this volume, accompanying Mao’s “Problems of Strategy in China’s Revolutionary War” of December 1936. These five illustrations were included in the first printed edition of this work, published in Yan’an by the Eighth Route Army in 1941, and must therefore have been approved by Mao himself. They also appeared in editions of Mao’s Selected Works published in 1947 and 1948, but were omitted from the official edition of the 1950s. Though Mao, who spoke disparagingly to Edgar Snow of his own artistic ability, presumably did not draw them himself, they were an integral part of the text as originally published, and we have therefore concluded that they should be reproduced here. Although they are called “maps” in the various Chinese editions of the 1940s, they are in reality sketches showing the main features of the battles, rather than carefully-drawn maps. The reader who compares them with an atlas, or with the maps in Volumes III and IV of this edition, will soon note discrepancies, but they nevertheless add an element of concreteness to Mao’s account of the battles against “encirclement and suppression.”

The introductions to the volumes in this series 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 pre-1949 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 use 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*. 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.

*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 missing characters is small, each one is commonly represented in the printed Chinese text by a hollow square occupying the space which would normally be taken up by a single character. In our English version, each such square has been represented by the symbol [X], so the reader of the translation can see how much is missing. Where the gap is a long one, we have dispensed with this procedure, and conveyed the necessary information in a footnote.

Finally, like many Chinese writers, Mao tended to produce very long paragraphs, sometimes extending to several pages. Although this may seem monotonous to the English reader, we have generally followed his paragraphing exactly, because it must be presumed to reflect Mao's own sense of where the crucial turning points in his argument are to be found. We have not followed this pattern rigidly; on occasion massive blocks of text containing figures and other data have been turned into tables which are easier to follow. For the most part, however, the translations in this volume seek to reproduce Mao's original in form as well as in substance.
Three Poems to the Tune
"Sixteen Character Song" ¹

(1934–1935)²

I
Mountains,
I whip my flying steed without dismounting.
I start as I turn my head,
Just three foot three from the sky.³

II
Mountains,
Like giant waves in crashing seas and churning rivers.
Like the pressing gallop,
Of ten thousand horses rushing into battle.

III
Mountains,
Piercing the blue sky, your blades unblunted.
The heavens would fall,
Unless you propped them up.

These poems were first published in the January 1957 issue of Shikan. We have translated them from Mao Zedong shici duijian jizhu (Annotated Edition of Mao Zedong’s Poems and Couplets) (Changsha: Hunan wenyi chubanshe, 1991), pp. 48–49 (hereafter, Shici duijian). This collection remains, as it has been in previous volumes of this edition, our primary source for Mao’s poems, though it has been supplemented where appropriate by a more recent edition, Mao Zedong shici ji (Beijing, Zhongyanyang wenxian chubanshe, 1996), where these poems appear on pp. 49–51.

1. As noted in previous volumes of this series, much of Mao’s poetry makes use of the convention of “tune title” (ci pai), 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. In the Chinese, each of these three short poems follows exactly the same pattern, comprising sixteen characters arranged in four lines of varying length.

2. The editors of the Shici duijian and the Nianpu offer no more specific dates for these three poems than the indication that they were written during the Long March.

3. Mao’s original note to this poem quoted a Hunanese folksong as follows: “Skull Mountain up above/Treasure Mountain down below/Three foot three from the roof of the sky/On foot you must bow your head/On horseback you must dismount.”
Telegram from the Politburo of the Central Committee and the Central Military Commission to Zhang Guotao

(January 22, 1935)

For the purpose of choosing favorable conditions and seeking greater prospects for expansion, it has been decided that our field army should enter the western part of Sichuan. The plan is to cross the [Yangzi] River upstream from Luzhou. If there is no obstruction, we can cross the River in the middle of February and advance toward the north. It is expected that many fierce battles will be fought along the way. The execution of this strategic measure is closely connected with your action. In order that the Fourth Front Army and the field army may fight in close coordination and first defeat the enemy forces in Sichuan before Chiang's forces have completely entered Sichuan to carry out their "Encirclement and Suppression," we recommend that you use armed mass groups and independent divisions and regiments to operate aggressively toward the eastern front and pin down Liu's two enemy forces while concentrating the main force of the Red Army to attack toward the western front. Because of our forces' entry into Sichuan, there is no longer any possibility for Liu Xiang to attack you. You do not have great chances of victory should you attack Liu's forces, either, since there is too great a distance to coordinate battle with our army and the direction of expanding the soviet areas is also less favorable. On the western front, Tian's forces were torn by internal strife; Deng's forces will be transferred to the south; Yang, Li, and Luo have small and weak forces; so there is greater likelihood for victory; [the western front] is closer to our army, and it is also more favorable to the development of soviet areas there. Therefore, you should immediately concentrate your units to complete the preparations for attack and, in the very near future, launch an offensive toward the western reaches of the Jialing River. As regards the deployment of forces and targets of attack, you should dispatch one unit to the Yingshan line to serve as a secondary thrust, but the main thrust should be along the ChangXi-Langzhong-Nanbu line. The main forces should be concentrated for the main thrust and enter the rear of the enemy through the cracks between enemy strongholds and weak points—to seek out, encircle, and destroy the enemy in mobile warfare in the vast stretches of land without enemy fortifications. If you can, depending on how the fighting develops, enter the areas around Xichong, Nanchong, and Fengxi, this will be most advantageous for coordinating with our army. At the same time, we must expect that the enemy may employ relatively small forces to utilize their fortifications to pin down the Fourth Front Army and, before the field army can establish its foothold, shift their main forces to launch surprise attacks in order to achieve the result of defeating us separately. Therefore, your battle plans should be reported to us via telegram as soon as they are drawn up.

3. The reference is to Tian Songyao (1888–1975), a native of Sichuan, a Guomindang general who had twice been defeated, in 1933 and 1934, in "Bandit Suppression" campaigns in the Sichuan-Shaanxi border area.

4. The reference is to Deng Xihou (1889–1964), zi Jinkang, a native of Sichuan, who was at this time commander of the Guomindang Forty-fifth Army and of the First Route of the Sichuan Bandit-Suppression Army.

5. The reference is to Yang Sen (1884–1977), zi Zihui, a native of Sichuan, who at this time was commander of the Fourth Route Bandit-Suppression Army.

6. Li is Li Jiayu (1892–1944), zi Qianguang, a native of Sichuan, who had commanded the Third Route Bandit-Suppression Army against the Communists in 1933. Luo is Luo Zezhou (dates unknown), likewise a native of Sichuan, who had served as deputy commander of the same army in 1934.
Loushan Pass¹
(To the tune “Remembering the Lady of Qin”) (February 28, 1935)²

Fierce is the west wind,
In the endless void, wild geese call to the frosty morning moon.
Frosty morning moon,
Horses' hoofs clatter sporadically,
The bugle's note is muted.

Do not say that the strong pass is hard as iron,
For this very day we'll stride across its summit.
Across its summit,
Where blue-green hills are like the seas,
And the setting sun like blood.³

Order of the Frontline Headquarters
Regarding Dispositions for Action on the Sixth¹
(March 5, 1935, 11:30 A.M.)

Telegram from the Frontline Headquarters:

Zhou:²

1. With the aim of meeting the enemy to the west of Bailakan, the First Army Group, as well as Zhu [De]'s forces, should attack from north to south, and make a raid behind the enemy's lines. The Third Army Group should attack from south to north, and the Fifth Army Group should remain at Bailakan to serve as a reserve force.

2. If enemy soldiers are found carrying out sabotage in the direction of Songlin, it is best that you, and the various rear detachments, advance to the region between Yaxi, Huaiaotian, and Balishu.

3. On the sixth, the Ninth Army Group should proceed to the vicinity of Balishu, so as to keep watch on the mouth of the Dadu.

4. If the enemy does not advance, tomorrow evening we must decide on a course of action, and you should move close to the front lines. We will be at Bailakan on the sixth.

Zhu [De]     Mao [Zedong]

This poem was first published in the January 1957 issue of Shikan. We have translated it from Shi ci duilian, pp. 50–51.

1. Mao's own commentary to this poem in 1958 reads as follows: “The Long March took countless twists and turns, and the smooth parts were far rarer than the difficulties, so that our mood was rather gloomy. After crossing Minshan, we suddenly saw things in a new light and underwent a complete reversal in attitude, painting a much brighter picture. The following pieces reflect these sentiments.” The reference to “the following pieces” includes not only “The Long March,” “Kunlun,” and “Mount Liupan,” all of October 1935, but also the three short poems of late 1934 and early 1935 translated above, which appeared after this one in the edition of 1958.

2. The date shown here (rather than simply February 1935 as in various editions of Mao's poems) is derived from Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 450, where it is stated that after crossing Loushan Pass on February 28, Mao was moved to write this poem. Since 1935 was not a leap year, and the 28th was the last day of February, the implication (unless the generally accepted dating is wrong) must be that he sat down immediately and wrote these lines.

3. During reminiscences uttered in 1962, Mao is said to have exclaimed that he had accumulated many years of scenic observations while engaged in warfare, and that when at Loushan Pass a military victory coincided suddenly with its natural setting this way, these two lines, which the author himself considered to be most felicitous, were created. (See Nianpu, vol. 1, p. 450n2.)

Our source for this text is Wenzian he yanju, No. 1, 1985, p. 39 (pp. 131–32 of the annual compilation of this periodical).

1. On March 4, 1935, the Central Revolutionary Military Commission had issued an order reestablishing the “Frontline Headquarters” abolished in 1932, and appointing Zhu De as commander-in-chief and Mao as political commissar. (On this development, see above, the Introduction to this volume, and also Yang, From Revolution to Politics, p. 126.)

2. This telegram is addressed to Zhou Enlai, who had been given ultimate decision-making authority within the Central Revolutionary Military Commission at the Zunyi Conference.
Order of the Frontline Headquarters
Regarding Dispositions to Destroy the Divisions of Xiao and Xie

(March 5, 1935, at the Yaxi Headquarters)

1. We judge that the Zhou column and two divisions of Xiao and Xie, seven regiments in all, are showing signs of moving tomorrow, the 6th, from Changganshan toward Fengxiangbei and Bailakan, and Wan’s six regiments appear to be advancing toward Changganshan. The enemy forces from Guizhou commanded by He Zhizhong, altogether three regiments, will move from Shikang and Aokou toward Daishui.

2. Our army has the mission of first destroying the two divisions of Xiao and Xie; deployments for tomorrow, the 6th, are as follows:
   a. The First Army Group and the cadres’ regiment, acting as the right column, will take the route of Huamiaoan at dawn tomorrow (the 6th) to launch an attack on the areas between Changganshan and Fengxiangbei. The First Division should make a detour to reach Daoliushui and Li Village and attack the enemy’s rear. The Second Division is to attack the enemy in the Qingkeng area on their flanks. The cadres’ regiment follows the Second Division forward and is under the command of Lin and Nie. The Third Army Group, acting as the left column and using the three regiments of its main forces, is to go around the western edge of Wenshui Dashan via Wenshuiou and attack from south to north toward Daoliushui, Qingkeng, and Yangmashui. One regiment is to defend the front of Jiujiangshan and Bailakan and lure the enemy to move eastward. This army group should send small units to the south of Taipingchang to confuse and pin down He’s enemy forces.
   c. The Fifth Army Group acts as the general reserve and moves near Bailakan to await orders.

3. Tomorrow, the 6th, all army units must take forceful action to finish off the two divisions of Xiao and Xie, so that on the 7th they can continue the fight against Wan’s division.

4. The rear general headquarters is established in the area between Yaxi, Huamiaoan, and Zunyi.

5. The frontline headquarters advances in the wake of the First Army Group headquarters, and tomorrow, the 6th, it will be at Bailakan.

Addendum: As regards communications, apart from using the radio to report on the military situation at all times, it is also stipulated that beacon fires should be lit: three fires in the event of a great victory; two fires in the event of a small victory; one fire in the event of a stalemate or an unfavorable situation.

Commander-in-Chief Zhu De
Political Commissar Mao Zedong

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6. The reference is to Lin Biao and Nie Rongzen. Lin Biao (1907–1971) was a native of Hubei. He was a member of the fourth class at the Huangpu Military Academy, and participated in the Nanchang Uprising. In 1928, he went up the Jinggangshan with Zhu De. Despite Mao’s criticisms of him in a letter of January 5, 1930 (see Volume III, pp. 234–46), he was regarded during the Jiangxi period as one of Mao’s close supporters. On the Long March, he commanded the First Army Group of the First Front Army. Nie Rongzen (1899–1992) was a native of Sichuan. After studying from 1920 to 1925 in France, Belgium, and the Soviet Union, he became general secretary of the Huangpu Military Academy, and participated in the Nanchang Uprising. During the period of the Jiangxi Soviet Republic, he served as political commissar of the First Army Group, and continued in this capacity during the Long March.
Declaration Opposing Japan’s Annexation of North China and Chiang Kaishek’s Treason

(June 15, 1935)

To the popular masses of all China!

The viciously evil Japanese imperialist bandits yesterday seized the Three Northeastern Provinces, Rehe, eastern Chahar, and the demilitarized zones of Hebei and Shanghai, invaded Fujian, and drove deep into Guangdong and Guangxi. Today they are carrying out their occupation of Beiping, Tianjin, Chahar, and all of North China (north of the Huai River). Tomorrow they will swallow up the whole of China! They wish to turn all of China into a colony of Japan, and let the whole of our four hundred million Chinese brethren be slaughtered, raped, and trampled upon by Japanese imperialism, turning them irreversibly into slaves without a country!

The most diligent trailblazer for Japan in swallowing up China is Traitor Chiang Kaishek and his Blue Shirt Society bandits. What Traitor Chiang and his ilk have actually done in recent years is to suppress, on behalf of Japanese imperialism, the anti-Japanese movement and the movement to boycott Japanese goods, to disarm the volunteer army, to oppress, disband, and slaughter the workers and the Nineteenth Route Army soldiers who fought against Japan in Shanghai, to arrest and massacre countless leaders and masses who resisted the Japanese, to use the airplanes and guns donated by the popular masses of the whole country to bomb the popular masses who paid for them and the troops of the popular masses themselves—the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army, and to transfer hundreds of thousands of troops from the Northeast and North China to the south to “encircle and suppress” or “pursue and suppress” the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army, who are the only ones resisting the Japanese and opposing imperialism! At the same time, Traitor Chiang and his ilk engage in unbridled propaganda such as “revitalize the nation,” “courtesy, justice, humility, and shame,” “powerless to resist Japan” and “Sino-Japanese friendship” to cover up their treasonous nature and fool the people into becoming slaves who will put up no resistance whatsoever against Japanese imperialism. The vastness of the territory treacherously given away by Traitor Chiang and his ilk, the number of people he has slaughtered, and the cunning with which he has deceived the people have indeed broken all records in the history of the world! Chiang Kaishek is the biggest national traitor ever to exist in the past or the present, in China or the world!

The government of the Chinese Soviet Republic and the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army long ago publicly opposed the treason and humiliation of our country by Traitor Chiang and his ilk, declaring null and void the Tanggu Treaty and all secret agreements between China and Japan, declaring war against Japan, calling upon the army, navy, and air force all over China to sign combat agreements and directly fight the Japanese imperialists together with the Red Army, supporting the six basic principles of fighting Japan, dispatching an advance party of the Red Army anti-Japanese Northern Expedition, and devoting manpower and material resources to aid the people’s revolutionary forces that are directly involved in hand-to-hand fighting against the Japanese puppet troops in the Three Northeastern Provinces: the anti-Japanese volunteer armies. Traitor Chiang and his ilk slandered the soviet Red Army as “murderous, arsonist bandits” and “equivalent to the treasonous Manchurian puppets,” and now they have offered up with both hands to the Japanese imperialists Chinese territory equivalent to half of Europe, and they are mobilizing millions of White army soldiers to block the Red Army’s Northern Expedition to fight the Japanese, in an attempt to destroy the anti-Japanese Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army. All of these ironclad facts are sufficient to prove who are the traitors and bandits, and which is the government and army that are liberating the Chinese nation and China’s four hundred million people. Worker and peasant masses, and all intellectuals! One of the main reasons for your unemployment, hunger, deaths, and homelessness is that Traitor Chiang and his ilk and the bandits of their Blue Shirt Society have handed over China’s national interests to Japan and the other imperialists, causing all of China’s enterprises to be thoroughly ravaged by Japanese imperialism.

Brothers in the army, navy, and air force! You haven’t received a penny for a long time. Traitor Chiang and his ilk not only want you to come to the firing line to murder your own compatriots, they also want you to do unpaid coolie labor. This is because Traitor Chiang and his ilk sold out the country and pocketed your military service pay. Japanese imperialism and Traitor Chiang and his bandits of the Blue Shirt Society are your deadly enemies! They are your common enemy number one!

Now the Soviet Government continues to declare war against Japan. It calls

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong ji: Bujuan, vol. 4, pp. 229–32.

1. This manifesto was issued on the day the forces of the Central Red Army arrived in Maogong in Sichuan, after encountering troops of Zhang Guotao’s Fourth Front Army on June 12.

2. The body commonly called the Blue Shirt Society, and more correctly entitled the “Three People’s Principles Earnest Action Society” (Sanmin zhuyi lixingshe) was a secret organization set up by Chiang Kaishek in 1932, and composed initially of Hungwu graduates who had served under him. Its primary task was the struggle against Communism, by means of spying, arbitrary arrests, and even assassination, but its targets also included anti-Japanese activists and critics of Chiang. See Lloyd Eastman, The Abortive Revolution: China under Nationalist Rule, 1927–1937, Chapter 2, “The Blue Shirts and Fascism,” and, for an up-to-date and thoroughly documented account of the Li-Xingshe’s activity during the years 1935–1937, Xu Youwei and Philip Billingsley, “Behind the Scenes of the Xi’an Incident: The Case of the Li-Xingshe,” The China Quarterly, no. 154, June 1998, pp. 263–307.
on the army, navy, and air force all over China to join forces with the Red Army
and go north together to fight the Japanese. It calls on the popular masses of the
whole country to mobilize and seize the arms in Traitor Chiang's munitions
factories and those imported from abroad to arm themselves; it calls for suspen-
sion of payment to Japan on war reparations and debt principal and interest; it
calls for the confiscation of all Japanese assets and businesses in China and the
assets of all traitors, to replenish the funds for resisting Japan; it calls for
mobilizing all of China's popular masses to form anti-Japanese associations,
volunteer teams, confiscating-Japanese-goods teams, transportation teams,
rescue teams, and propaganda teams, to participate together in the sacred war
against Japan!

The government of the Chinese Soviet Republic announces that it sentences
Traitor Chiang Kaishek to death, and calls on the people of China to eliminate
Chiang Kaishek, this treacherous Japanese running dog who has brought shame

to our country. Every one of China's four hundred million people has the right
to capture Chiang Kaishek alive and execute him on the spot! The Soviet Gov-
ernment announces at the same time that as long as our brothers in the White army
who have been deceived by Chiang in the past now come to their senses and take
action to oppose Chiang, they are all our dear friends. The only way to save
China at present is to unite all the popular masses who oppose the Japanese and
Chiang Kaishek, and stand on the same front to overthrow our common
enemy—Japanese imperialism, Chiang Kaishek, and the bandits of the Blue
Shirt Society!

The government of the Chinese Soviet Republic calls on all workers, peas-
ants, the army, the navy, the air force, students, teachers, businessmen, journal-
ists, doctors, nurses, lawyers, engineers, and all patriots and revolutionary
masses to go on strike, boycott classes, and close down shops to protest the
occupation of North China by the Japanese imperialists, to oppose the betrayal
of China by Traitor Chiang and his ilk, to fight Japan resolutely, drive the Japanese
imperialists out of China, execute Chiang Kaishek by firing squad, and annihi-
late the Blue Shirt Society bandits!

In the past the workers of Shanghai and the soldiers of the Nineteenth
Route Army, plus the people's revolutionary armies and the volunteer armies
of the Three Northeastern Provinces, have repeatedly defeated the armies of
Japanese puppets. Under the direct leadership of the Japanese and other im-
perialists, Traitor Chiang used more than one million White army soldiers to
attack the relatively small and poorly trained Workers' and Peasants' Red
Army. The result was that not only were they unable to destroy the Red
Army, but the Red Army and its guerrilla forces have already developed in
the nineteen provinces of Jiangxi, Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, Anhui,
Henan, Hubei, Hunan, Sichuan, Guizhou, Xikang, Yunnan, Shaanxi, Gansu,
Shanxi, Hebei, Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang. The news of the Red
Army's victory has already spread all over the world! This proves that the

Red Army, under the correct leadership of the Communist Party and warmly
supported by tens and hundreds of millions of people, is an army that cannot be
destroyed. We do indeed have the strength to overthrow the Japanese im-
perialists, Traitor Chiang Kaishek, and his Blue Shirt Society bandits! The final
victory is ours!

Central Government of the
Chinese Soviet Republic
Chairman Mao Zedong
Vice-Chairmen Xiang Ying
Zhang Guotao

Revolutionary Military Commission
of the Chinese Workers' and Peasants'
Red Army
Chairman Zhu De
Vice-Chairmen Zhou Enlai
Wang Jiaxiang

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3. For a biographical note on Xiang Ying, see the Introduction to Volume IV, p.
xxxii, n. 8.
4. For a biography of Wang Jiaxiang (1906–1974), also known as Wang Jiaqiang, see
Volume IV, p. xxxvii, n. 18. As indicated above in the Introduction, he had been made a
member of the three-man group responsible for military leadership at a meeting in late
March 1935, together with Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. The reference here is not to this
body, but to the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Soviet Republic elected at the
Second Soviet Congress in January 1934.
Soviet Régimes Should Be Established in the Three Provinces of Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu

(June 16, 1935, 2:00 A.M.)

Comrades Zhang, Xu, and Chen:¹

We have taken cognizance of your numerous telegrams.

1. In order to place the development of the soviet movement on a stabler and stronger foundation, the general principle for our First and Fourth Front Armies in the future should be to occupy the three provinces of Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu, to establish soviet régimes in the three provinces, and to dispatch, at an appropriate time, an expeditionary force made up of one unit to occupy Xinjiang.

2. The current plan is that the whole of your troops² and the main force of our field armies should be placed east of the Min River to deal a resolute blow to the enemy’s imminent massive new attack, and expand toward the areas between the Min and Jialing rivers. When such expansion is contained, we will utilize parts of Shaanxi and Gansu as areas of strategic mobility. Therefore, the key to this plan is firmly to consolidate Maotian, Beichuan, and Weizhou in our hands, and to rout Hu Zongnan’s³ southward advance.

3. The areas centered around Maogong stretch out thousands of li and are mostly desolate mountains and barren valleys with sparse population and scant supplies. The situation is roughly the same along the banks of the Dadu River, all the way to the vicinity of Mount Emei. The conditions in Xikang are even worse.

If the enemy blockades the upper reaches of the Min River (which is precisely the plan being carried out by the enemy), it will be extremely difficult to conduct mobile sorties toward the north. Therefore, only small forces can be used to operate in the areas within the Qilai Mountains, and sending main forces to such areas seems not to be a good idea.

4. All our field armies passed through the Tianquan-Lushan line on the 12th. On the 18th, the main forces and the central organs may be concentrated on the Maogong-Lianghekou line. Because there is very little food it is impossible to rest, and the whole army may be concentrated in the area around Lifan toward the end of the month, and prepare to cross the Min River.

5. Such are our views. We very much look forward to reactions from you, our elder brothers.

Zhu De  Mao Zedong  Zhou Enlai  Zhang Wentian


¹ Zhang is Zhang Guotao (1897–1979), then vice-chairman of the Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic, and chairman of the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission. For further details regarding Zhang and his relations with Mao, see above, the Introduction to this volume. Xu is Xu Xiangqian (1901–1990), a native of Shanxi, who was commander-in-chief of the Red Army’s Fourth Front Army. Chen refers to Chen Changhao (1906–1967), a native of Hubei, who had been associated with the “Twenty-eight Bolsheviks.” At this time, he was head of the Political Department of the Fourth Front Army. This telegram, like the manifesto dated June 15, was issued from Maogong.

² Mao here refers to the Fourth Front Army by the respectful term *xiong fang* (“elder-brotherside”).

³ Hu Zongnan (1896–1962), zi Shoushan, was a native of Zhejiang. At this time he was commanding officer of the Second Column of the Guomindang Army’s “Bandit Suppression” Third Route Army, and commander of the First Division, and had been ordered by Chiang Kaishek to halt the Communists’ advance in Sichuan.
The Fourth Front Army Must Do Its Utmost to Attack and Take Pingwu and Songpan

(June 18, 1935, 9 P.M.)

Comrades [Zhang] Guotao, [Chen] Changhao, [Xu] Xiangqian:

1. Muping has been abandoned, but Dayaoshuo and Yanjingping to the south of the Jiajin Mountains are still in our hands. Our field armies are now stationed along the line from Dayaoshuo to Dawei, Maogong, and Fubian, and plan to rest for two or three days. Xiannian has already been ordered to send two regiments to take Chonghua, Suijing, and Danba, and to control the Greater Jin River. Dongshan is already advancing toward Shuimogou.

2. The present situation demands that great strength be concentrated to make a first breakthrough in Pingwu so as to provide a pivot around which to move northward. The troops that have already passed Lifan should pass quickly through Matang and go around to attack Songpan, making every effort to take it. Otherwise it will be extremely difficult if not impossible for such large forces as yours and ours to enter Gansu and Qinghai by way of Aba and the nomadic grassland areas. Moving southward toward Ya’an, Mingshan, Qionglai, and Da’er may go well for a time, but offers little prospect for further development. Therefore, the main thing at present is to make every effort to take Pingwu and Songpan, and we hope that it will be so resolved without delay.

Zhang [Wentian] Zhu [De]
Mao [Zedong] Zhou [Enlai]

The Fourth Front Army Should Hasten Northward

(July 10, 1935)

Zhang [Guotao]:

1. The principle of hastening northward by separate routes was decided a long time ago, but then it was suddenly delayed, to the extent that there are no units following behind us. We urgently hope that, in accordance with your telegram, all units can indeed change direction and advance rapidly. Let there be no further delay, for this would enable the enemy to seize the advantage.

2. At present the main forces of the Fourth Front Army have not yet reached the northeast of Heiheba, and there has been trouble along the way from the Fan people. The Third Army Group should be deployed as a security force, and to break through in the direction of Shidaioulu. The First Army Group and the three regiments in the Eighty-eighth and Eighty-ninth Divisions should not enter this area before Mao’ergai is captured.

3. We, your younger brothers, have arrived at Upper Luhua today, and anxiously await your imminent arrival, along with that of Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao], so as to centralize command.


We have translated this document from *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 362–63.

1. The character *fan* can be applied to aborigines, or even foreigners in general, but here Mao is referring specifically to the tribes in western Sichuan with whom the Red Army was then in contact.

2. Mao’ergai in Songpan xian, Sichuan Province, was taken by the Red Army on July 16.

3. Luhua was the seat of Luhua xian, Sichuan Province, now called Heishui xian.

4. At a conference held in Luhua in late July 1935, Chen Changhao supplanted Mao as political commissar of the Frontline Headquarters, though he may not have exercised the real power of that office. See, in particular, Yang, *From Revolution to Politics*, pp. 149–51.
Supplementary Decision by the Politburo of the Central Committee on General Strategic Policy at the Present Time

(August 20, 1935)

Having heard Comrade Mao Zedong’s report, the Politburo took the following supplementary decision (passed by the Politburo on August 20th) with respect to the June 28th “Decision on General Strategic Policy.”

1. Given the present concrete situation of the enemy and ourselves, it is necessary in order to carry out the basic decisions of June 28th on current strategic policy that our main forces quickly occupy the Tao River basin area, with Minzhou as its center (chiefly the eastern banks of the Tao River), and attack toward the east with this area as the base, so as to facilitate gaining vast areas in Gansu and Shaanxi, and continue to develop a powerful pillar and base area for the Chinese soviets.

2. This decision is made on the basis of the reasons and considerations given below. Not only is the region of Gansu and Shaanxi favorable both to our present and future development, but such expansion is entirely feasible with our available strength. The reasons and considerations are:

a. Politically we can establish cooperation, carry out coordinated operations, and join forces with the Red Army’s Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Armies through the guerrilla area of Tongnanba, and we can help, organize, and lead the guerrilla movement being carried out in this area, and link together the soviet areas on the borders of Gansu and Shaanxi with the guerrilla areas to form one continuous soviet area. This would give us the ability to create rapidly within a short period of time a solid soviet base area, which would soon make possible the formation of a leadership center for the revolutionary movement in the northwest of China and in the whole of China.

b. As regards the enemy situation, there are several factions of warlords in this area. Although they have joined forces in attacking us, there are contradictions and conflicts among them as well. Generally, the enemy’s combat effectiveness is weak, and his morale is low. In particular, among the soldiers of the Northeastern Army, which is being transferred from the front line against Japanese imperialism in Hebei to this area, and whose soldiers have been redesignated from the Nineteenth Route Army, there are abnormal and disaffected sentiments, and this truly offers favorable conditions for the success of our revolutionary work. The Northeastern Army and the [enemy] units in Shaanxi and Gansu lack the experience of fighting the main forces of the Red Army, and the enemy is now on the whole far away from his current key areas as regards military strategy, politics, and economics. All these various factors provide us with favorable conditions for defeating each enemy and obtaining great victories in the course of flexible mobile operations.

c. As regards the conditions of the masses who reside here, the preconditions for a great peasant revolution are rapidly maturing, thanks to years of continuous deep agricultural crisis, famine, heavy taxes, and land concentration in the area. Moreover, a struggle by the peasants to seize the land and resist taxes, as well as a guerrilla movement, have already begun to develop. This will enable us to organize and lead this sort of spontaneous peasant struggle among the basic masses of the Han nationality in the area, raise the level of their consciousness, and have them embark on the road to soviet revolution, and will in turn be favorable to the expansion and development of the Red Army. It will greatly encourage and push forward the national liberation of the non-Han masses (the Muslims, the Mongols, and the Fan) who live in or near this area, and the movement for the establishment of their own people’s republics. Furthermore, through our assistance, mobilization, and leadership, we can quickly capture this movement and merge it into the tidal wave of the soviet movement.

d. In terms of material conditions, this area is a relatively prosperous one in the northwestern region, and can assure us of the necessary material supplies for our existing units, as well as for continuing expansion.

3. In carrying out this strategic decision, the campaign now under way is of decisive significance. Any negligence or mistakes in this campaign will bring about difficulties, or even defeat, for the realization of the entire strategy. Consequently, the current campaign should make every effort to seize control of the Tao River, beginning with the area on its eastern banks, so as to smash the enemy’s plan of establishing a blockade along the line from Lanzhou to Songfan. This will place us in a favorable situation for mobile operations, and contribute to our continuing efforts to defeat the enemy. The guarantee for the victory of this campaign is to concentrate the largest possible portion of our main forces in this direction, fight with determination and courage, and maneuver with flexibil-
ity and skill. Opportunistic capitulation to difficulties and choosing the path of least resistance will not only lose us victory in this campaign, but will also make it impossible to carry out our strategy successfully.

4. The Politburo believes that it would be inappropriate and extremely disadvantageous at this time to have our main forces cross the Yellow River to the west, and penetrate into the remote areas of Qinghai, Ningxia, and Xinjiang. (The Politburo does not, however, reject the idea of sending a detachment to operate in this area, and indeed thinks it is necessary to do so.) This is because:

a. The struggle for national liberation of non-Han nationalities (the Mongols, the Tatars, the Fan, and other nationalities) is brewing and developing. But long-term penetration of this area by all the forces of the Han nationality Red Army is bound to give rise to attitudes of misunderstanding, suspicion, and even hostility among the masses of these nationalities. As food supplies deteriorate further, such conflicts are likely to sharpen. The Party’s basic policy toward the national movement should be the mobilization of the masses from below in their struggle for national liberation, and it must absolutely never be forced sovietization.

b. Objectively, such action would just play into the hands of the enemy. The enemy is devoting all his efforts to press us toward areas unfavorable to us, and may construct multiple lines of blockades and fortifications along the Yellow River to stop our future expansion toward China proper, and cut off our ties with the Red Army in other Soviet areas and the revolutionary movement in the whole country. This unfavorable situation will unavoidably arise so long as we do not have the military and political guarantees for overcoming the enemy’s fortifications and blockade.

c. Unfavorable natural and material conditions. If the greater part of the Red Army operates in this area for a long time, they will encounter extremely great difficulties.

Clearly, if we adopt such a policy direction at present, it will cause losses to the Soviets and the Red Army, and limit their development. Therefore, the Politburo considers that it is a mistake to adopt this policy at the moment, that it is a dangerous policy of retreat. The political origin of this policy direction is right opportunism, marked by fear of the enemy, overestimation of the enemy’s strength, and loss of confidence in our own strength and in victory.

The Politburo calls on all Party members and all Red officers and fighters to summon up the Bolshevik determination and heroism characteristic of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army, to unite under the correct line of the Central Committee, to destroy the enemy, and to turn Sichuan, Shanzhi, and Gansu Red, thereby establishing a solid and unshakable foundation for a Soviet China.

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The Army of the Left Wing Should Change Its Route and March Northward

(September 8, 1935, 10:00 P.M.)

Comrades Zhu, Zhang, and Liu:

The Red Army’s movements are now at a most critical juncture, so that it is necessary for us to consider this question carefully yet speedily, and to take a decision on it. After considering it in detail, your younger brothers have come to the following conclusions:

1. If the Army of the Left Wing moves southward, its future will be in great jeopardy. The reasons are:

a. The topography is conducive to the enemy’s setting up a blockade, but disadvantageous to us in launching attacks. For more than one thousand li to the south of Danba, and seven hundred li to the south of Maogong, there is nothing but snowy mountains, ancient forests, and narrow paths. Along the area from Kang[ding], Lu[ding], Tian[quan], Lu[shan], Yi[lan],


1. On August 5–6, 1935, an enlarged Politburo conference had taken place at Shawo near Mao’ergai, attended by all the important Party leaders then present in the area. At this gathering, the differences between Mao and Zhang Guotao were papered over as well as possible, and it was agreed that all Red Army forces should proceed north to fight the Japanese and create a soviet in Sichuan, Gansu, and Shannxi. The Red forces were divided into the Left Route Army, composed primarily of units from Zhang Guotao’s Fourth Front Army, and the Right Route Army, comprising most of Mao’s First Front Army. Zhu De, however, accompanied Zhang Guotao as commander-in-chief of the Left Route Army, with Liu Bocheng serving as chief of staff. Liu Bocheng (1892–1986), a native of Sichuan, graduated from a military school in Chengdu in 1912, and became an officer in the army of Xiong Kewu, who opposed Yuan Shikai’s attempt at monarchical restoration in 1915–1916. While on a mission for Xiong, he became acquainted with Zhu De, with whom he was to have a lifelong relationship. Liu Bocheng joined the Communist Party in 1926, and participated in the Nanchang Uprising. Thereafter, he was sent to the Soviet Union, where he received further military training at the Frunze Academy. Returning to China, he became chief of staff of the Central Revolutionary Military Council, and participated in the struggle against the Fourth and Fifth campaigns of “Encirclement and Suppression.” According to recent accounts published in China, he supported Mao’s strategic views in early 1935, but when, at the beginning of September, Zhang Guotao decided to turn back toward the south instead of continuing north as agreed at Shawo, Liu, like Zhu De, continued to follow him. The present telegram, addressed to Zhu De, Zhang Guotao, and Liu Bocheng, is an attempt to dissuade them from this course. Regarding the complicated developments at this time, see above, the Introduction, and also Yang, From Revolution to Politics, pp. 149–55.
Dispositions for Destroying the Enemy at Lazikou

(September 16, 1935, midnight)

Peng:

1. According to the Second Division's report, approximately one battalion of enemy troops remains at Lazikou without retreating. The road at that point is very narrow, and it is impossible to advance unless this enemy is eliminated. This being the case, except for sending one regiment to Daozhalai to relieve the garrison and build fortifications, the rest of the Third Army and the Military Commission's column are to remain at their present location at Heila. We will remain at Heiduosi. All other units should await further orders before setting out.

2. According to captured enemy telegrams, Headman Yang may send a thousand cavalrymen to Heila to harass us. Please be aware of this.

3. Each person should have food for eleven days.

4. The Second Bureau should hasten to find out about the two units under Wang [Jun] and Hu [Zongnan].

Mao [Zedong] Lin [Biao] Nie [Rongzhen]

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshe wenji, vol. 1, pp. 367–68.

1. This order is addressed to Peng Dehuai (1898–1974), who was, like Mao, a native of Xiangtan xian, Hunan Province. A former regimental commander in the Guomindang National Revolutionary Army, he led an uprising at Pingjiang in July 1928, and created the Fifth Red Army, of which he assumed command. At this time, he was the commander of the main forces accompanying Mao and the Central Committee, which had been reorganized as the “Shaanxi-Gansu Detachment” because of the reduction in size resulting from losses during the Long March, and the fact that part of the First Army had accompanied Zhang Guotao to the west (see above, the Introduction).

2. Headman from southern Gansu, Yang Jiqing.
Dispositions Regarding Troop Movements and the Problem of Enforcing Discipline

(September 18, 1935, 8:00 P.M.)

Peng, and also Peng and Li.

1. The enemy troops in Min [xian] are holding the town. There is no enemy at Hadapu. Where the First Column is stationed, the popular masses of the Muslim and Han nationalities are already mobilized in a big way. The discipline of our troops is still good. More than 100,000 jin of grain and 2,000 jin of salt have been confiscated from the enemy. After crossing the Dala Mountains, there are no more high mountains and narrow passages. At the moment the First Column is stationed at Zhailu, Mazichuan; column headquarters is in Luyuanli.

2. All of you will come here tomorrow (the 19th). The First and Second Sections of Central Headquarters are to be stationed at Luyuanli. The Second Column is to be stationed at Xuanwo and Dacaotan, and the Third Column is to be stationed at Hongtupoo.

3. Discipline must be strictly enforced within the ranks. Confiscation is limited to landlords and reactionaries. Violators will be severely punished. Please make this announcement during the break in the army's advance tomorrow.

4. Three portable mortars and more than a hundred shells have been seized, and are still in Dala. Please mobilize the soldiers to bring them here. They can leave food behind to carry the shells.

Mao

The Long March

(A qilü)1

(October 1935)

The Red Army fears not the trials of a distant march,
Makes light of ten thousand rivers and mountains.
To them the Five Ridges2 meander like gentle ripples,
And the majestic peaks of Wumeng3 roll by like balls of clay.
Warm are the cloud-topped cliffs lapped by the waters4 of the Golden Sands.5
Cold are the iron chains that span the Dadu River.6

This poem was first published in the January 1957 issue of Shikan. We have translated it from Shichi duijuan, pp. 52–54.

1. Prior to 1949, Mao's poetry was written almost exclusively in the form of ci, with "tune titles." Apart from couplets and quatrains, the only known exceptions in earlier years are two poems of 1915 and 1918, which appear in Volume I, pp. 63–64 and 164–66. This is the first occurrence in our edition of one of his qilü, or regulated verse with seven characters to a line.

2. The reference is to five mountain ridges crossed by the Red Army in October and November 1934, during the early part of the Long March: Dayu, Qitian, Mengzhu, Dupang, and Yuecheng, located in the provinces of Hunan, Jiangxi, Guangdong, and Guangxi.

3. The Wumeng Mountains straddle the two provinces of Guizhou and Yunnan. The Red Army passed through this area on the Long March during May 1935.

4. Mao had originally used the word "waves" here instead of "waters," and his own note to this line reads as follows: "The change from 'lapped by the waves' to 'lapped by the waters' came about as the result of a suggestion from a friend with whom I am not acquainted. He said the word 'waves' should not be used twice in one poem, and I think this is right." The other occurrence of "waves" (lang in the original) here is what we have translated in the third line as "ripples." According to the editors of the Shichi duijuan, the suggestion was made in a 1952 New Year's letter to Mao from Professor Luo Yuanzhen of the History Department at Shanxi University. Mao's emendation had already been incorporated by the time the poem appeared in Shikan.

5. This refers to the Jinsha Jiang, or "River of Golden Sands," which is a stretch of the Yangzi that flows from Yushu xian in Qinghai to Yibin xian in Sichuan.

6. The Dadu River is in Sichuan Province. "Iron chains" refers to the Luding Bridge over the Dadu in Luding xian, crossed by an advance party of Red Army soldiers in late May 1935 in one of the most celebrated episodes of the Long March. The bridge consisted of thirteen chains supporting wooden planks, but the planks had been removed by the time the Red Army soldiers crossed it.

Our source for this document in Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 369–70.

1. The recipients of this telegram were Peng Dehuai, commander of the Red Army's Shaanxi-Gansu Detachment, and Peng Xuefeng and Li Fuchun, the detachment's Second Column commanding officer and political commissar, respectively.
The myriad snows of Minshan bring yet more delight,  
And when the three armies have crossed, a smile lights up each face.

Kunlun

(To the tune "The Charms of Nian-nu")

(October, 1935)

Straddling the skies, above the earth,  
The vast and wild Kunlun,  
Have witnessed endless springtimes in the world of men.  
Three million white jade dragons in flight,  
Freeze the whole sky with piercing cold.  
Summertime brings melting,  
Flooding the rivers and streams,  
And people may become fishes and turtles.

We have translated this poem, which first appeared in the January 1957 issue of Shikan, from Shici duilian, pp. 55–58.

1. The Kunlun Mountains constitute a vast range that runs from the Pamir Plateau in the West through Xinjiang and Tibet to within the borders of Qinghai in the East. This is China’s longest East-West mountain range, extending for 2,500 kilometers. The Minshan range, mentioned above in Mao’s poem “The Long March,” is here considered part of the Kunlun range. Mao’s own comment on the poem reads: “Kunlun: the primary theme is nothing but opposing imperialism.”

2. Nian-nu was a singing girl who lived in the middle of the eighth century, during the Tang dynasty.

3. Mao’s own note to this line reads: “The ancient who wrote, ‘While three million jade dragons did battle, their tattered scales flew helter skelter’ was describing the snow flying around. Here I have borrowed an expression to describe the snowy mountains. In summer when one climbs atop Minshan and looks out into the distance, a host of mountains dance as if in flight, all a sea of white. The local people tell the tale that when in days gone by the Monkey King passed through here, all the mountains were on fire. They turned white because he borrowed a palm leaf fan and quenched the flames with it.” The “ancient” to whom Mao refers here is the Northern Song poet Zhang Yuan, a native of Huazhou who had visited Gansu. The lines are from his poem called “On Snow.” The Monkey King is, of course, the character in the classic novel Xiyuji (known in English as “Journey to the West,” or “Monkey”).

4. This image of flood victims turning into fish or turtles comes from various classical references. These include the Zuo zhuan, first year of Zhao Gong, where Duke Ding of Liu says, “But for Yu, we should have been fishes!” (Legge, Vol. V, p. 578); the Hou Hanshu, Guangwu ji: “With torrential flooding, millions of people could turn into fish”; and Du Fu’s poem “Tongguan li,” which contains the line “a million transformed into fish.” (See Zhen Fu, Mao Zhuxi shici qianshi (Commentary on Chairman Mao’s poetry) [Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1962], p. 71.) It should also be noted that both of China’s great rivers, the Yangzi and the Yellow River, find their sources in the Kunlun range.

7. The Minshan range spans the borders of Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu, and Shaanxi, and is known as the “Great Snowy Mountains.” It lies at the eastern extremity of the Kunlun Mountains, the subject of Mao’s next poem.

8. In ancient times, Chinese armies were divided into three sections, so that “the three armies” came to mean the entire army.
For a thousand autumns you have wrought good and evil,
Who has ever passed judgement?

But now I say to Kunlun:
We don't want all your height,
We don't want so much snow.
What if I drew my sword resting on the sky,\(^5\)
And split you into three?
I'd give one piece to Europe,
One to America,
And keep one piece in China.\(^6\)
Great peace\(^7\) would reign on earth,
The same cold and warmth all over the globe.

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\(^5\) "Sky-leaning sword" is a common poetic expression for a long sword (see Song Yu's "Dayan fu"). Mao's line in this case is derived from Li Bo's "Linjiang Wang Jieshi ge."

\(^6\) This is the way the line appeared in the Shikan version of the poem, but in a 1963 edition of Mao's poetry (Mao Zhuxi shici) it was changed to "And return one piece to the Eastern countries." The Shici duilian notes this fact, but uses, like all recent Chinese editions, the revised version of the line.

\(^7\) Taiping, a traditional concept much used by Mao in his early years. See, in particular, Volume I, p. 135 and note 11.
Mount Liupan¹
(To the tune “Pure and Serene Music”)¹

(October 1935)²

The sky is high, the clouds are pale,
We watch the wild geese flying south until they vanish.
If we reach not the Great Wall³ we are no true men,
Already we have come twenty thousand li.

High on the crest of Mount Liupan,
Banners⁴ idly wave in the west wind.
Today the long cord⁵ is in our hands,
When shall we bind fast the Gray Dragon?⁶

Our source for this poem, which first appeared in the January 1957 issue of Shikan, is the Shici duliian, pp. 59–60.

1. Mount Liupan, located in Guyuan xian in the southern part of what is now the Ningxia Autonomous Region, is the main peak in the range bearing the same name. Mao led the Central Red Army across this peak in early October 1935.

2. The editors of the Shici duliian note, “According to the reminiscences of Comrade Chen Changfeng and others, the author made final revisions to the text of this ci in December 1935, in Wayaobao (now Zichang xian).”

3. Mao here evokes the destination of the Long March.

4. When the poem was first published in Shikan, this line read: “Yak-tail banners idly wave in the west wind.” Animal tails used as banners were traditional in China, especially in the western regions, and the Tang dynasty poet Cen Shen, who by the twentieth century was known as China’s foremost “frontier poet” and to whom Mao has elsewhere made reference, wrote a line about a general who “led a westward campaign, under the yak-tail banner.” According to the editors of the Shici duliian, in 1961 when Mao wrote out the poem “at the request of comrades from Ningxia,” he substituted “red flags” for “yak-tail banners.” (See the October 7, 1961, issue of Guangming ribao for a facsimile of the poem in Mao’s calligraphy.) Beginning with the 1963 edition of Mao zhuxi shici, “red flags” has been used.

5. Traditional legend has it that during Han Wudi’s time, an army was sent out to Southern Yue. They asked Wudi for a long cord, promising to bind up and bring back the king of Yue.

6. “Gray Dragon” stands for the planet Jupiter, which is considered an ill-omened, evil force in ancient Chinese lore. Chinese commentators on this poem state that it refers to Chiang Kai-shek, although earlier translations of the poem have indicated that it may also stand for the Japanese invaders. The editors of the Shici duliian also state that this line alludes to a ci to the tune “Congratulating the Bridegroom” by the Song dynasty poet Liu Kezhuang, which contains the line, “When will the long cord come into our hands/To bind fast the military commander?”

It Is Necessary to Prepare for Battle
When Passing Through Hongde City and
Huan Xian

(October 13, 1935, 3:00 P.M.)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. The First Column will march today for about seventy li, to the Miaoazhuan, Zhengjiawan, and Xiaonan’gou line, and camp there. It is planned to go via Helianwan tomorrow (the 14th) to Hongde City and the area to the east, and camp there.

2. The Second and Third Columns should go tomorrow by way of the southern edge of Helianwan, advance to the area southeast of Hongde City, and camp there.

3. According to people who came from Huan xian on the 12th, there are two regiments of the enemy’s Thirty-fifth Division in Huan xian. It is unclear how many enemy troops are in Quzhou. On that morning no cavalrymen had arrived in Huan xian, but the Sixth Cavalry Division may have arrived yesterday or today. As for the enemy troops pursuing us, they may reach the Miaozi—Lianzijian line today.

4. When our troops arrive at and pass through the Hongde City–Huan xian line tomorrow, they must be prepared to fight the enemy cavalrymen who may appear. If the enemy force is small we will wipe it out. If it is large we will pin it down, and then pass through the gaps in that line under cover of darkness.

Mao
Our Troops Should Strive to Concentrate Their Forces and Rest at Wuqizhen and Jintangzhen

(October 16, 1935, 7:00 P.M.)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. There is no recent news about the enemy’s situation.
2. The First Column marched for fifty li today, reached the area of Muguacheng, and camped there. It is planned for it to march fifty or sixty li to the Tiebiancheng, Diaozhang, and Tianbaihu line tomorrow, and to advance toward Wuqizhen the day after.
3. The Second and Third Columns should advance toward Jintangzhen tomorrow. If the enemy situation permits they should march fifty to sixty li a day, and prepare to arrive at Jintangzhen in three to four days’ march.
4. If the enemy pursuing us halts, our army should gather and rest for a day or two at Wuqizhen and Jintangzhen, find out about conditions in Bao’an and Jingbian, and then attack by separate routes and capture them. They should then rest, consolidate their forces, and expand in the area of Wuqizhen, Bao’an, and Jingbian, collect funds and supplies, and solve the problem of winter uniforms. At the same time they should send someone to the Soviet Area to establish liaison.
5. At present there is not much marching every day, so please order each unit to make use of the time to carry out education, and to make every effort to improve provisions.

Mao

Plan to Destroy the Pursuing Enemy in the Area East of Tiebiancheng

(October 17, 1935, 9:00 P.M.)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. The First Column is to set out today from Muguacheng, proceed to the area forty li from Tiebiancheng called Niuquan Geda, and camp there.
2. Mao Bingwen¹ has ordered Tao Zhiyue² to advance to the Huan xian–Hongde City line, reorganize his forces, and await further orders. His cavalry regiment has ordered its rear elements to follow closely for surveillance purposes. At 2:00 P.M. today, our rear guard met the enemy on the high hill on the eastern end of Muguacheng, and it appeared that they were the cavalry regiment.
3. If this enemy continues to pursue us, the plan is to counterattack on the day after tomorrow and wipe him out in the area to the east of Tiebiancheng.
4. To prepare for day after tomorrow’s combat, the plan is for the First Column to advance tomorrow (the 18th) to the Zhangjiawan and Yangjia Miaotai line, east of Tiebiancheng, and camp there. Its rear guard will then be in Tiebiancheng. The day after tomorrow, the rearguard troops are to induce the enemy to pursue them, while the main forces will launch a surprise attack from the sides.
5. The Second and Third Columns must make camp tomorrow rather close to the First Column (along the Shijihe and Yenjia Yaojian line), so that they will be in a good position to cooperate in annihilating the enemy troops the day after tomorrow.

Mao


1. Mao Bingwen (1891–1970), a native of Hunan, had participated in the first, second, third, and fifth campaigns of “Encirclement and Suppression.” At this time he was commander of the Third Column (Thirty-seventh Army) of the First Route under the Guomindang army’s Northwest “Bandit Suppression” General Headquarters.

2. Tao Zhiyue (1892–1988) was a native of Hunan. At this time he commanded the Eighth Division of Mao Bingwen’s Third Column.
Dispositions Regarding the Operations of the Shaanxi-Gansu Detachment

(October 19, 1935, 7:00 P.M.)

Commander Peng [Dehuai]:

1. The First Column arrived at Wuqizhen today and encamped in the area fifteen li to the front and to the rear of it. Tomorrow (the 20th) it will rest here for one day in a stand of preparing for combat, build fortifications against the approaching enemy, keep a lookout for it, and send out some troops to make guerrilla attacks along the enemy’s approach route.

2. Tomorrow, the Second and Third Columns should get closer to Wuqizhen, and camp in the area about twenty li south of it.

3. Wuqizhen already marks the border of the Soviet Areas. There is a Red régime to the east of it, and it is said that there are Red troops in Bao’an City, but in Jinping, between Wuqizhen and Jintangzhen, the landlords have more than a hundred men defending the fort. It is planned to send troops to wipe them out.

4. It is requested that Peng come to Wuqizhen tomorrow to discuss strategic plans for the operation. The Second and Third Columns are to be placed under the command of Ye and Deng.¹

Mao

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We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 378–79.

1. Ye is Ye Jianying (1897–1986), a native of Guangdong, then commander of the Red Army Shannxi-Gansu Detachment’s Third Column. After the arrival of the Red Army in North Shaanxi, he became chief of staff. Deng is Deng Fa (1906–1946), a native of Guangdong, then political commissar of the same unit. After several years as a labor organizer, and a period in the Soviet Union, Deng had become chief of the Political Security Bureau of the Chinese Soviet Republic during the Jiangxi period, and continued to exercise these functions.

For Comrade Peng Dehuai

(A Six-Character Poem)²

(October 21, 1935)²

The mountains are high, the roads are long, the gullies are deep,³
Huge forces gallop through in every direction.
Who is it dares to ride on horseback with drawn sword?
None but our great General Peng!⁴

This poem first appeared in the August 1, 1947, issue of the Hebei-Shandong-Henan People’s Liberation Army paper, Zhanyou, and was reprinted in the April 1957 issue of Jiefangjun wenyi. We have translated it from the Shici duijuan, pp. 61–62.

1. This is another occurrence of a poem by Mao in other than the ci form. The six-character poem [liuyan shi] is a classical verse form with six characters to a line, in which the rhyme scheme, number of lines, and tonal patterns are not as strictly defined as they are in “regulated verse.”

2. This poem is usually dated simply October, but the Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 481, states that Mao wrote it immediately after Peng’s forces had smashed the Guomindang cavalry on October 21.

3. According to the editors of the Shici duijuan, when the Central Red Army’s Shaanxi-Gansu Detachment (commanded by Peng Dehuai) reached Wuqizhen on the border of the northern Shaanxi base area, they were pursued by the cavalry forces of Ma Hongkui (1892–1970) and Ma Hongbin (1884–1960). Both these men were generals in the Guomindang armies; Ma Hongkui had formerly been chairman of the Ningxia provincial government, and Ma Hongbin had been chairman of the Gansu government. In 1934, they had combined with Ma Bufang (1903–1975) to establish the power of the so-called “Ma Family Clique” in the northwest, and in September 1935, Ma Hongbin, as commander of the Guomindang Thirty-fifth Army, had participated in an attack on the Red Army in north Shaanxi. Mao and Peng composed a telegram advocating a counterattack on the Ma family forces. The telegram, which is not available to us, contained a sentence describing the Shaanxi and Gansu terrain as being full of “high mountains, long roads, and deep gullies.” Using a different word for “gullies,” Mao took that description as the first line of this poem.

4. According to Peng’s autobiography (Peng Dehuai zishu [Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1981], pp. 206–7), when he received this poem from Mao, out of modesty he changed the last line to read: “None other than our heroic Red Army,” and sent it back to Mao. (The version of the poem as given in Peng’s autobiography also has several variants from the published text.) The editors of the Shici duijuan quote reminiscences of Zhang Aiping (1910–) to the effect that in August 1947 Peng Dehuai scored a crucial victory in the battle of Shajadian, at which point Mao wrote this poem again for him, with the last line as in the original.
Investigate the Roads and the Topography in the Vicinity of Zhiluozhen

(November 6, 1935, 8:00 P.M.)

Haidong:¹

1. The 117th Division has already arrived at Fu xian, but Dong Yingbin² has made no moves yet.
2. Please pay attention to the following three matters:
   a. Eliminate as quickly as possible the militia bandits in [the village of] Changcunyi.
   b. Direct two companies of guerrilla forces to Zhiluozhen to carry out guerrilla attacks on [the village of] Heishuisi.
   c. Investigate the roads, topography, and conditions among the people in the areas to the north and to the south of the Zhiluozhen region. Find out whether the Hulu River can be crossed on foot, and report by telegraph.
3. We and the Twenty-fifth Army will remain in the same place tomorrow.


Manifesto of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on the Annexation of North China by Japanese Imperialism, and Chiang Kaishek’s Sellout of North China and of the Whole Country

(November 13, 1935)

To the popular masses of the whole of China:

China is now at the critical point of the destruction of the state and the extermination of the race. The Japanese imperialist bandits’ attack against China has taken a drastic turn. Since the Chahar Incident, the five provinces in North China (Hebei, Shandong, Shanxi, Chahar and Suiyuan) have, in effect, been placed under Japanese imperialist rule. And yet this cannot satisfy the greed of the Japanese imperialist bandits. Their new attacks have begun on an even greater scale. Just look at the eight conditions they have recently raised: (1) complete political and economic autonomy for the five provinces of North China; (2) withdrawal of all Guomindang troops from Shaanxi and the other provinces in the Northwest; (3) complete transformation into demilitarized zones of the five coastal provinces of Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, and Shandong; (4) China’s withdrawal from the League of Nations and abandonment of all assistance from Britain and the United States; (5) recognition of ‘‘Manchukuo’’ and close cooperation among the three states of China, Japan, and Manchukuo to create a political and economic association in the Far East; (6) a halt to all anti-Japanese movements in China; (7) concentrating all the power of China and Japan to attack China’s soviet revolution, especially the soviets and the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army in the Northwest; (8) the right of Japanese representatives to attend Guomindang congresses to observe whether China is sincere about Sino-Japanese friendship.

These conditions put forward by the Japanese imperialist bandits are clearly designed not only to annex the whole of North China, but to turn the whole of China into a colony of Japanese imperialism! No Chinese with the slightest degree of conscience, faced with the danger of the destruction of the state and the extermination of the race, can possibly accept these conditions or willingly

¹ Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, vol. 1, pp. 380–81.
² This telegram is addressed to Xu Haidong, commander of the Red Army First Front Army’s Fifteenth Army Group. Xu Haidong (1900–1970) was a native of Hubei. After serving under Zhang Fakui during the Northern Expedition, Xu became a guerrilla leader in the Euyuan (Hubei-Henan-Anhui) area during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Eventually, he became commander of the Red Twenty-fifth Army, which was ordered to North Shaanxi by the Party in 1935. There the Twenty-fifth Army joined forces with the Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh armies, and together formed the Fifteenth Army Group. As noted above in the Introduction, the Fifteenth Army Group had just welcomed Mao Zedong to Shaanxi in mid-October.
³ Dong Yingbin (1894–1950) was a native of Liaoning. At this time he was commander of the Seventh Column (Fifty-seventh Army) of the Second Route under the Guomindang army’s Northwest “Bandit Suppression” General Headquarters.

We have translated this document from Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, vol. 4, pp. 233–36.
become a slave without a country and a docile subject of Japanese imperialism. The Guomindang government, however, with Chiang Kaishek as its chief culprit, casually and shamelessly acceded to these demands on Japan’s part, carelessly selling out all of North China and the whole country! This is an unprecedented act of betrayal. This is truly galling and humiliating to the Chinese nation. Chiang Kaishek and the Guomindang have proven once again that he is the biggest traitor selling out the country since the beginning of Chinese history!

The crimes committed by the arch-traitor Chiang Kaishek are simply countless. He has carried out bloody suppression of the revolutionary movement throughout China, massacring revolutionary fighters all over the country; he has waged ceaseless savage campaigns of “Encirclement and Suppression” against the Soviets and the Red Army; he has abrogated all freedoms of speech, of association, and of assembly, as well as the freedom to strike; he has organized fascist hoodlums to destroy all revolutionary groups and social organizations, and to torture and murder his own enemies; he has made use of every sort of plot and conspiracy to purge his opponents and reorganize the armed forces of other factions so as to establish his own unmitigated autocracy. All this he does in order to serve as trailblazer for the Japanese imperialist invasion, and to act as Japanese imperialism’s reactionary pillar in China.

Popular masses of all China! At this crucial moment when the state is on the verge of destruction and the race is on the verge of extinction, our only way out is to arm ourselves resolutely, and wage a national revolutionary war against the Japanese imperialist invasion, and a revolutionary war to overthrow the chief traitor selling out the country, Chiang Kaishek, and the Guomindang, so as to defend North China and all of China, and win final liberation for the Chinese nation. We cannot overthrow Chiang Kaishek and the Guomindang without opposing Japanese imperialism, nor can we stop the Japanese imperialist invasion or abolish Japanese rule in China without overthrowing Chiang Kaishek and the Guomindang! Resisting Japan and opposing Chiang is the only way out for all the people of China in saving the country and seeking survival. Arguments such as “opposing Chiang precludes resisting Japan” and “first oppose Chiang, then resist Japan” are deceptive propaganda by counterrevolutionary factions, and serve no purpose other than to defend Japanese imperialism.

In July 1934, the main forces of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army, led by the Chinese Communist Party, sent out the “anti-Japanese advance guard detachment of the Northern Expedition of the Chinese Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army,”2 with the aim of leading and organizing directly the national revolutionary war against Japan. In October of the same year, it began its long march northward. Despite Chiang Kaishek’s mobilization of all his forces to chase, ambush, and block us along the way in his efforts to help Japanese imperialism stop the Red Army from going up north to fight the Japanese, the Chinese

Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army, led by the Chinese Communist Party, still managed to overcome all unprecedented difficulties and destroy many enemy blocking forces. After a long march of more than 25,000 li across eleven provinces of Chinese territory, and driven for over a year by a dauntless and tenacious spirit, ultimately the northwestern areas of China were victoriously reached and contact was made with the two provinces of Shaanxi and Gansu. The troops of the nonresisting general and traitor Zhang Xueliang2 were routed and destroyed, the Soviet areas in Shaanxi and Gansu were consolidated and expanded, and China’s new Soviet revolutionary base area and leadership center was created in Northwest China. The great victories of the Chinese Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army are, without a doubt, also victories in resisting Japan and opposing Chiang!

The arrival of the Chinese Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army in the Northwest threw Japanese imperialism into further panic and accelerated its process of swallowing up North China and the entire country. At the same time it also launched a new historical phase in the national revolutionary war, with the Chinese Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army as its main force. Chiang Kaishek and Zhang Xueliang, loyal running dogs of Japanese imperialism, naturally will not give us any breathing space. They are sure to mobilize their main forces to continue attacking us so as to help and support Japanese imperialism’s direct armed intervention, which will turn the national revolutionary war against Japanese imperialism and the revolutionary war to overthrow Chiang Kaishek and the Guomindang into a single task with two inseparable components. The Chinese Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army now stands at the forefront of China’s national revolutionary war. It firmly believes that it is capable of victoriously shouldering this glorious historical task.

Popular masses of all China! Mobilize, arm, and organize yourselves to support and participate in the anti-Japanese and anti-Chiang war led by the Chinese Communist Party! Only with the general mobilization of the people of the entire country and their resolute armed struggle can we win final victory in the war against Japan and Chiang. All Chinese people and armed forces opposed to Japan and to Chiang, regardless of the differences in their party affiliation, beliefs, sex, occupation, and age, should unite and fight a bloody battle to overthrow Japanese imperialism, Chiang Kaishek, and the Guomindang! We should use every form of struggle, whether it be workers’ strikes, peasant uprisings, soldiers’ mutinies, shopkeepers’ strikes, police strikes, mass demonstrations, guerrilla warfare, or anti-Chiang campaigns by any units of the armed forces, to

1. See the proclamation to this effect dated July 15, 1934, in Volume IV, pp. 767–71.

2. The reference is to events following the Japanese aggression of September 18, 1931, when Zhang Xueliang, who commanded the Guomindang’s Northeast Border Defense Army, withdrew his forces gradually in the face of the advancing Japanese army in accordance with Chiang Kaishek’s orders. For further details see below, the relevant note to the text entitled “The Zhiliuzhen Campaign, and the Present Situation and Tasks,” November 30, 1935.
become a slave without a country and a docile subject of Japanese imperialism. The Guomindang government, however, with Chiang Kaishek as its chief culprit, casually and shamelessly acceded to these demands on Japan’s part, carelessly selling out all of North China and the whole country! This is an unprecedented act of betrayal. This is truly galling and humiliating to the Chinese nation. Chiang Kaishek and the Guomindang have proven once again that he is the biggest traitor selling out the country since the beginning of Chinese history!

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fight against Japanese imperialism and the head traitor, Chiang Kaishek. The government of the Chinese Soviet Republic and the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army are willing to sign combat agreements with any armed forces to resist Japan and oppose Chiang, and wish to provide tangible assistance to all forms of organization resisting Japan and opposing Chiang.

Popular masses of all China, oppose Japanese imperialism’s aggression and plunder, condemn the biggest traitor and collaborator in China’s history, Chiang Kaishek, support the heroic struggle to resist Japan and oppose Chiang being waged by the Chinese soviets and the Chinese Workers’ and Peasant’s Red Army, and support the only correct proposal for the salvation of our country, that of the Chinese Communist Party!

Oppose Japanese imperialism’s annexation of North China and the entire country!

Down with the Chinese traitor selling out his country, Chiang Kaishek, and the Guomindang!

Long live the victory of the Chinese national revolutionary war!
Long live the victory of the Chinese soviet revolution!

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**Wipe Out the Enemy in the Zhiluozen Area**

*(November 20, 1935, 4:00 P.M.)*

Lin and Nie

1. Tomorrow (the 21st) the Front Army has the task of eliminating one or two divisions of enemy troops in the Zhiluozen area.

2. The First Army Group is to set out at 4:00 A.M. tomorrow. Its main forces are to advance to the area north of Yuanjiashan and Zhiluozen, and launch the attack from the north toward the south. One regiment is to advance to the area near Laorenshan, pin down the enemy’s reserve forces, and stop and attack the enemy forces when they retreat. The scout company is to launch a feint toward Heishuisi.

3. The Fifteenth Army Group is to launch a surprise attack from the area north of Yaofutou, striking from south to north.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

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We have translated this telegram from *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 382–83.

1. This telegram is addressed to Lin Biao and Nie Rongzhen, commander and political commissar, respectively, of the First Front Army’s First Army Group.
Check the Enemy’s 117th Division from the Sides and from the Front  

(November 22, 1935, 7:00 A.M.)

Ye:¹

1. It looks as if the 117th Division will attack Yangquanzhen, and it is hoped that someone will be sent to command the battalion of the Twenty-seventh Army in Qu’er, the local armed forces, and the two cavalry companies in an effort to keep it in check from the sides as well as from the front. The organs in the rear and the captive division must be moved promptly to Taotong and Zhaobasi.

2. Headquarters should be at Taohuabian. You are in charge of the work in the rear and fighting the enemy in the east.

3. Check on officers ranked above company commander among the prisoners. Watch out in particular for Niu Yuanfeng.²

4. The troops we wiped out yesterday include three regimental and one divisional headquarters. One divisional chief of staff and one regimental commander fled toward the soviet areas in the northeast; please notify the local [authorities so as] to capture them.

5. Advise the provincial committee and the military area command³ to fight in coordination with each other.

Mao

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Troop Deployment for the Battle Against the Enemy’s 106th Division and Dong Yingbin’s Forces  

(November 22, 1935, 7:00 A.M.)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. The enemy’s 106th Division set out today from Heishuisi as reinforcements, and the two regiments under the command of Dong Yingbin are near our battle position in the vicinity of Anjiazhai. We reckon that Dong’s enemy troops will attack today in the direction of Yuanjiashan and Beishan; the 106th Division, coming from Laorenshan and Donggou, will try to outflank us on the right.

2. Today (the 22nd) the main force of our Fifteenth Army Group will meet Dong’s enemy troops head on, while our First Army Group will attack the 106th Division from the right. Finally, they will cooperate in destroying the enemy forces under Dong’s command.

3. Correspondence is to be forwarded through Wujiata.

Mao

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Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 386–87.

1. This telegram is addressed to Ye Jianying, chief of staff of the Red Army’s First Front Army.

2. Niu Yuanfeng, then commander of the 109th Division of the Second Route’s Seventh Column (57th Army) under the Guomindang Army’s Northwest “Bandit Suppression” General Headquarters, was killed in the battle of Zhiluozhen.

3. Refers to the Shaanxi-Gansu Provincial Party Committee and the Shaanxi-Gansu military area command.

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 384–85.
Deployment to Destroy the Two Divisions of Dong Yingbin and Shen Ke

(November 23, 1935, 7:00 A.M., at Kuangping)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. With the aim of finishing off the two divisions of Dong and Shen, and taking the strategic key point of Heishiwei, it has been decided to take steps to encircle Heishiwei. It is anticipated that this task can be carried out within two weeks.

2. The First Regiment has already been given orders, together with the Seventeenth Platoon, to replenish food supplies in the morning and set out in the afternoon, advancing to the area of Xiaoyouzi and Renjiadian, and at dawn tomorrow to seize an opportunity to launch a surprise attack and take Longyiwan, and begin by building solid blockhouses at key points nearby. Within five days they are to complete one major blockhouse and three subsidiary ones.

3. Please have Xu and Cheng send one regiment of the Twenty-fifth Army, which should first of all dispatch one battalion to the Mengjiayoufang area. At the appropriate moment, this battalion should take Wangjiajiao by surprise attack, build blockhouses and ramparts nearby, cut off the enemy's food supply, stop his reinforcements, and establish liaison with the First Regiment. The other two battalions are to await further orders before setting out.

Mao

Dispositions Regarding the Actions of the First and Fifteenth Army Groups

(November 23, 1935, 8:00 A.M.)

Peng [Dehuai] and Zhou [Enlai]:

1. In the context of the basic orientation of surrounding Heishiwei and finishing off Dong Yingbin completely, we have decided that the First Army Group, as the main force, should advance as far as the area of Hanjiahe, Gan'goumen, and Wanjiazhuan. [Nie] Rongzhen will lead the First and Thirteenth Regiments and the reconnaissance company and advance to Longyiwan, Wangjiajiao, and the area to the north. They should all arrive at their destinations this afternoon.

2. The Fifteenth Army Group should employ one unit to surround Zhiluozhen and make sure that this enemy is wiped out, but its main force should set out at 1:00 A.M. tomorrow (the 24th). They should leave the present location secretly and move to the area of Xiwafang, Mengjiayoufang, Shuimoshang, Mengpingli, Yueliangshan, Ershilipai, and Maquisi, cooperate with the First and Thirteenth Regiments in seizing the territory about thirty to forty li long between Heishiwei and Taibaizheng, and prepare to strike at the enemy reinforcements from the west.

Mao

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 388-89, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Dong and Shen were commanders of the 111th Division and the 106th Division, respectively, of the Second Route's Seventh Column (Fifty-seventh Army) under the Guomindang army's Northwest 'Bandit Suppression' General Headquarters.

2. Xu Haidong and Cheng Zihua, who were, respectively, commander and political commissar of the Red Army First Front Army's Fifteenth Army Group.

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 390-91, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Dispositions for Pursuing the Fleeing Enemy,
Dong Yingbin

( November 24, 1935, 2:00 P.M.)

Political Commissar Nie:¹

1. The enemy in Zhihuzhen has already broken through the encirclement, and is fleeing northward. Right now we are in the midst of pursuing and intercepting him. According to our secret agents, Dong Yingbin had already withdrawn to Taibai last night, and is planning to continue to retreat to Heshui and concentrate his forces there.

2. Led by Cheng Zihua, two battalions of our Fifteenth Army Group set out from Yuefotou this morning in the direction of Heshangyuan and Taibaizhen to pursue and attack the enemy. Our Second and Fourth Divisions and Thirteenth Regiment have been engaged in pursuing and attacking the enemy yesterday and today in the direction of Taibaizhen.

3. If the enemy has already retreated to Taibaizhen and concentrated his forces, then you should put more pressure on him and force him to continue his retreat. If the enemy is continuing to retreat westward from Taibaizhen, then you should take advantage of the fact that he is in the midst of a retreat and attack him. Afterwards use a portion of your forces to continue the pursuit and attack, while the main force stops at Taibaizhen to await further orders, at the same time expanding the propaganda about our victory.

4. We lost our way yesterday and ended up in Shizuizi. Today we remained here without moving. The pursuing forces of the First and Fifteenth Army Groups are all under your command. We expect that you will arrange everything in accordance with circumstances.

Mao [Zedong] Lin [Biao]

Rebuttal of Chiang Kaishek’s Absurd and Shameless Defense of His Treason

Interview with a correspondent of Red China

( November 25, 1935)

After Chiang Kaishek made his so-called foreign policy speech at the Fifth Congress of the Guomindang, this reporter interviewed the chairman of the Central Government of the Soviet Republic of China, Mao Zedong. The following is his interview with this reporter:

The crimes committed by the biggest traitor in Chinese history since ancient times, Chiang Kaishek, in selling out the country are truly innumerable. He sold out the three provinces in the Northeast; he used machine guns to force the soldiers who were bravely resisting Japan in Shanghai to retreat; he sold out Wusong and Shanghai, he sold out Rehe. He signed the Tanggou truce and sold out Beijing, Tianjin, and Hebei; he acceded to the [X] demands raised by Japan during the Chahar Incident; he sold out Chahar Province and North China; he further acceded to the eight great demands recently raised by Japan, which would lead to the loss of our state and the extinction of our race; he sold out the whole of North China and all of China; he wants to turn the whole of China into a colony of Japanese imperialism, and the entire Chinese people into slaves without a country! In the face of these ... monumental evil facts about selling out the country, Chiang Kaishek offered the most absurd and shameless defense before the so-called “Fifth Congress” of the Guomindang!

Chiang Kaishek Defends Japanese Imperialism with All His Might

The savage aggression of Japanese imperialism against China has as its direct aim to swallow up the territory of all China, and to destroy the Chinese nation. Every Chinese who regards himself as courageous and upright should exert himself vigorously to the end in the anti-Japanese struggle which lies before us. But Traitor Chiang Kaishek, on the contrary, did his best to defend the evil

¹ This interview was first published in Hongse Zhonghua (Red China), no. 241, November 25, 1935. We have translated it from a facsimile of that periodical issued in China in 1982. The text is also conveniently available in Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 4, pp. 239–42.

1. Suspension points in original.
aggression of the Japanese imperialists, saying, “The so-called national movement is by no means a movement directed purely against the outside,” “There is no such thing as permanent enmity between two states.” “If you consider another event from a different perspective, it seems as if country A and country B are on a path from which they cannot deviate,” and “Our eastern neighbor, Japan, must also be more deeply concerned with peace in East Asia and the reciprocal welfare of the two countries.” What an ugly defense of Japanese imperialism! The Japanese imperialists employ rifles, guns, and bombs to slaughter our popular masses and suck our blood, but he says on the contrary that China harbors no hatred toward Japanese imperialism, that China cannot get away from Japan, and that the Japanese butchers are more concerned with the welfare of China! Where in the world can there be anything more absurd and shameless than these words? Only the Japanese imperialists’ most faithful running dogs like Traitor Chiang Kaishek are capable of uttering such sycophantic nonsense!

Chiang Kaishek Holds That the Chinese People Themselves Are at Fault for the Destruction of Their State and the Extinction of Their Race

We Chinese have the power to resist the brutal aggression and annexation by the Japanese imperialists. If we mobilize the whole people, arm the people, mobilize the several millions of members of the navy, army, and air force of all China, confiscate the banks and enterprises of Japanese imperialism and the assets of Chinese traitors, and ally ourselves with all the enemies of Japan (the Soviet Union and the world proletariat, the oppressed popular masses of the colonies of Japan, the proletariat in Korea, on Taiwan, and within Japan itself, and so on), then under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, we can certainly defeat Japan and any2 imperialists, and drive the Japanese out of China. The history of the anti-Japanese war by the brave soldiers of the Nineteenth Route Army in Wusong and Shanghai, the experience of several years of a staunch war of resistance by the volunteers’ army in Manchuria (despite the Guomindang’s repeated repression and betrayal of them), the arduous struggle waged for many years by China’s only anti-imperialist force, the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army, against the imperialist Guomindang, and Japan’s dread of the Chinese people’s anti-Japanese struggle—all these facts clearly prove that China has the power to resist Japan, recover its lost territories, and secure its national independence and freedom.

2. Here the text as originally published in Hongse Zhonghua appears to read “any Japanese imperialists.” The editors of the Mao Zedong ji question whether this is correct, and in fact it is almost certainly a typographical error. The characters renhe (“any”) look at first glance as though they had been inserted in the handwritten copy from which the mimeographed text was printed before riben (“Japanese”), but were no doubt intended to replace these two characters, which the scribe forgot to delete.

Traitor Chiang Kaishek, however, since he uses every possible means to pave the way for Japanese aggression, and devotes all his strength to suppressing the anti-Japanese movement, takes the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army as the primary target of his attacks, and says on the contrary that China does not have the strength to resist Japan: “We today should particularly ask ourselves to what extent our country has really tried, in the past several years, in all its spiritual and material development, the so-called way of self-reliance and self-strengthening”;

“If we emphasize only one aspect (the outside), we will certainly suffer unexpected setbacks.” There is not the slightest doubt that Chiang Kaishek’s so-called “spiritual development” is the slave’s morality advocated by the New Life Movement, and his so-called “material development” is the construction of fortifications, roads, and lines of communication with which to attack the Red Army. While Chiang Kaishek expends all his energy to destroy the anti-Japanese forces fighting for national independence, he turns around and says that China should seek self-reliance and self-strengthening. This is truly most absurd. Chiang Kaishek goes even farther, and shifts [the responsibility for] imperialist aggression and his own crime of selling out the country to the shoulders of the popular masses, saying, “Only those who despise themselves will be despised by others; only a country that attacks itself will be attacked by others.” China itself is to blame for everything; the popular masses themselves are to blame for everything. Can there be anything else in this world more nonsensical and shameless than such delirious ranting?

Chiang Kaishek Wants the People of All China to Be the Obedient Slaves of the Japanese Imperialists

In the interests of his master, Japanese imperialism, Traitor Chiang Kaishek nakedly asks the Chinese popular masses to be obedient and not to resist the aggression by the Japanese imperialists, urging that the popular masses “should not be obsessed with momentary conflicts of interest,” “should not be driven by momentary impulses of emotion or treat partial interests as their object.” He says that “the greatest amount of restraint must be exercised in dealing with all minor issues.(!?)” “At this moment of difficulty, we can only do our best to help ourselves and seek assistance from ourselves,” “what we are seeking today is no more than self-sincerity toward our own country, and shared sincerity toward the international community.” Thus, the Japanese destruction of our state and extermination of our race are “minor issues” (most absurd nonsense!). The popular masses of China should not have the slightest concern; the popular masses of the whole country can only endure, bind their own hands to wait to be carved up and enslaved by the imperialists, and docilely become slaves without a country living under the butcher’s knife of the Japanese imperialists. Chiang Kaishek has told the popular masses to take such a dead-end street. His words are truly the nonsense of a heartless traitor.
Chiang Kaishek Will Sell Out the Country to the End

Chiang Kaishek does his utmost to support the Japanese imperialists' aggression and suppression of all anti-Japanese struggles; he tells the people of all China to go on patiently being slaves without a country; he loudly proclaims that this treason of his is both consistent and resolute, saying, "[I], Zhongzheng, ... pledge that I will never give up peace before prospects for peace are completely extinguished, and I will not talk lightly about sacrifices before we ourselves face the final moment." His so-called "peace" is selling out the country without the slightest resistance. Thus, Chiang Kaishek will "absolutely never abandon" his cause of selling out the country; he will sell it out to the end; he will "absolutely never give up" his position as the ringleader of the traitors selling out their country; he wants to stick to this position to the end; he wants to be the obedient and dutiful running dog of the Japanese imperialists to his dying day!

The Central Government of the Soviet Republic of China has, in repeated declarations, condemned the action of Traitor Chiang in selling out the country, and announced his death sentence. The Central Soviet Government leads the only anti-imperialist main force, the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army. It calls on the popular masses of the whole country to rise in a general mobilization, arm themselves to resist Japan and oppose Chiang, and destroy this heartless traitor, Chiang Kaishek. The Central Soviet Government is willing to sign anti-Chiang operational agreements with any armed forces in the country to get rid of this big traitor to the Chinese people—Chiang Kaishek. Only by resolutely destroying this big traitor, and thoroughly carrying out the national revolutionary war, can the Chinese people gain independence, liberation, and territorial integrity!

The Basic Orientation in Dealing with Shen Ke's 106th Division

(November 26, 1935, 5:00 A.M.)

Political commissar Nie [Rongzhen], and to be passed on to Lin [Biao]:

We have taken cognizance of your telegram of 8:00 P.M. yesterday.
1. The general orientation in dealing with the 106th Division is to try to win it over to oppose the Japanese invaders and Chiang Kaishek by positive and sincere methods.
2. Regardless of whether or not Shen Ke gives us a serious reply, the First Army Group should be prepared to withdraw.
3. Inform Dong Yanwen¹ regarding the route to Zhangceyun, so that he will be able to get in touch with us in the future.
4. Give Yanwen the necessary credentials to enter and leave the Soviet district.
5. The Fifteenth Army Group is now moving to Zhangceyun to concentrate its forces, and will be making preparations to pursue and attack the 117th Division.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

¹. The editors of Mao Zedong junshi wenji have not been able to identify this individual.

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 394–95, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Manifesto of the Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic and of the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army on Resisting Japan and Saving China

(November 28, 1935)

To the workers, peasants, soldiers, students, members of the professions, businessmen, and merchants of all China, the People's Revolutionary Army of the Northeast, the Volunteers' Army of the Northeast, officers of all the armed forces, and all noble-minded and warm-hearted patriots:

After the Four Northeastern Provinces, North China has now also fallen, [making] half of China. The Japanese imperialist robbers want to turn the people of China into slaves without a country, and all of China into a colony. The head traitor, Chiang Kaishek, after selling out the Four Northeastern Provinces, is now engaged in selling out all of North China, and even the whole of China, in order to preserve his own cruel fascist rule over the people of all China.

Faced with the threat of the loss of our state and the extinction of our race, the Chinese people must absolutely not tie their own hands and wait to be slaughtered. The Chinese nation can gain its final and complete liberation only through a general mobilization of all China's navy, army, and air force and the people of all China, and the launching of a sacred national-revolutionary war against Japan, to overthrow Japanese imperialism and destroy the biggest traitor selling out the country since Chinese history began, Chiang Kaishek.

The Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic and the Revolution-ary Military Commission of the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army have repeatedly called on the people of the whole country to unite and fight Japan. They have sent the main force of their own Red Army on a 25,000-li Long March, through unspeakable difficulties and hardships, to go northward and resist Japan. Now the situation has grown even more urgent. Now is truly the time that requires us, the people of the whole country, to contribute our strength if we have strength, our money, if we have money, our guns, if we have guns, and our knowledge, if we have knowledge, to unite and struggle all together, and to confront the common enemy of the Chinese people, with the determination to fight to the death. Therefore, the Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic and the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army issue this special manifesto to the people of the whole country, proclaiming our willingness not only to sign operational agreements to resist Japan and oppose Chiang Kaishek with any political group, armed force, social group, or person whatsoever, so long as they are willing to resist Japan and oppose Chiang Kaishek, but to go a step further and form a united Anti-Japanese army and a government of national defense. We consider that this united anti-Japanese army and government of national defense should have the following ten guiding principles:

1. Confiscate all the assets in China that belong to Japanese imperialism, to provide funds for opposing Japan.
2. Confiscate all the assets of the traitors who are selling out China, and distribute them to victims of disaster and refugees.
3. Provide disaster relief, prevent floods, and give stability to people's livelihood.
4. Abolish all burdensome levies and miscellaneous taxes; develop industry and commerce.
5. Raise pay to improve the lives of workers, soldiers and teachers.
6. Develop education and provide relief to students whose schools have closed down.
7. Put into effect democratic rights, and release all political prisoners.
8. Develop productive technologies, and provide relief to unemployed intellectuals.
9. Unite with the workers and peasants, and with all the anti-Japanese forces in Korea, in Taiwan, and within Japan to form a solid alliance.
10. Establish close and friendly relations with nations or states that show sympathy and approval for, or maintain a friendly neutrality toward, China's anti-Japanese national movement.

The Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic and the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army call on the people of the whole country to support this position of ours, and to send representatives immediately to meet with each other and discuss concrete meth-
The Zhiluozhen Campaign, and the Present Situation and Tasks

(November 30, 1935)

1. The Zhiluozhen Campaign

1. The gravity of this attack by the enemy:

After our two victories at Laoshan and Yulin, the main force of the enemy advanced from the west with the aim of forming blockade lines to the east and west of the Hulu River, and then northward in support of Ganquan and Yan’an, so as to form blockade lines both south and north of the Luoke River. If it had not been for the victory at Zhiluozhen, our progress toward the south would have been restricted, and the existing Soviet areas could not have been completely consolidated.

2. The reasons for our victory:

a. The convergence and unity of the two army groups (this was basic);

b. Strategy, and the grasp of key opportunities in the campaigns (at the Hulu River and the town of Zhiluozhen);

c. Full preparation for the combat;

d. The unity between the masses and ourselves.

Those four conditions were decisive in our victory and the enemy’s defeat. Without the first condition, we could not have achieved so great a victory. We would not have been able to make Dong Yingbin’s five divisions (four in the west and one in the east), after the initial annihilation of his vanguard, the 109th Division, retreat with their main forces. In pursuing the foe, we also wiped out a regiment of the 106th Division, and gave the 108th and 111th Divisions no option but to retreat to the border of Gansu. The 117th Division, which was invading Yangquan from the east, had also to withdraw from the xian seat of Fuxian. Without the second condition, victory would have been impossible on this occasion, and we would, on the contrary, have allowed the enemy to occupy the Hulu River and Zhiluozhen. Without the third condition, the troops would not have had rest and training, and it would have been impossible to raise the morale and combat effectiveness of the troops to such a high level. If the five or six units of landlord militia occupying fortified villages in Zhangcunyi and

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 398–407, where it is reproduced from a mimeographed document preserved in the Central Archives.

1. This is the outline of Mao’s report to the cadre conference of the First Front Army (attended by cadres at the battalion level and above), held at Dongcun in Fu xian, Shaanxi.
Dongguan had not been annihilated or driven out, our main forces could not have successfully taken cover there to our advantage in the battle. If the regimental commanders and above had not inspected in person and mapped the terrain, they could not have deployed their troops so appropriately, and achieved such a splendid victory. Without the fourth condition, we could not have done so well in hiding our main forces, transporting our casualties, and supplying the troops with food. Those four conditions are the factors that created this great victory. Moreover, because the commanders at all levels and the fighters of the field army resolutely carried out the general policies of “fighting to the south” and “breaking the ‘encirclement and suppression’ in early winter” laid down by the Central Committee and its Military Commission, these goals have been achieved satisfactorily. This victorious battle tells us that in future operations, we must also strive to realize these four conditions: (1) the two army groups must unite even more closely; (2) grasp the key points in our strategy in making dispositions for the campaigns, and grasp the key points in a campaign in planning battles; (3) achieve full preparedness in military training and political instruction before the battle; (4) work hard in the localities, ensure unity between the masses and ourselves. Not a single one of these conditions can be dispensed with.

3. The relationship between this victory and the next one:

This victory has finally disposed of the third “Encirclement and Suppression”; the enemy can no longer attack us unless they gather more troops and deploy them anew. This provides us with the conditions for smashing a new “Encirclement and Suppression”: time and space. Time and space are of vital importance to us, and we must make the most of every second of time and every square li of land to complete all the fundamental work that is to be done when we are between two campaigns of “Encirclement and Suppression.”

4. The influence of this victory:

a. Strengthening the unity of the three Red armies, respectively from the south, the center, and the north, which have just converged. Now everyone believes that such convergence and unity are very good, are necessary, represent an irresistible force, and constitute a basic condition for defeating the enemy.

b. Allowing us time to expand the Red Army boldly. This is absolutely the most important matter at the moment. Under the influence of victory, more men are willing to join the Red Army, and the comrades who are directing the expansion of the army have also become more enthusiastic.

c. Consolidating the soviet areas. Everyone in the soviet areas is happy. The masses are supportive of the Red Army and their zeal in aiding the war will definitely be further heightened. “The Central Red Army and the Fifteenth Army Group are really good” has become a trend in public opinion echoing throughout the area.

d. Enabling us to expand the soviet areas vigorously. Luochuan, Zhongbu, Yijun, Yichuan, and Hancheng, as well as the guerrilla areas and White areas in the zone of Guanzhong and Longdong, can all be turned into soviet areas. The masses in these areas will assuredly become increasingly enthusiastic under the influence of victory.

e. The Japanese imperialists are just now making use of artillery fire in their efforts to invade North China, and to swallow up the whole country, while the Guomindang in Nanjing is holding a congress for selling out the country. Our victory makes known to them that we will not allow you Japanese imperialists to destroy North China and the whole country; we will not allow this vicious Guomindang of yours to sell out the country to the end. Get out of the way, you Guomindang traitors! The savors of the people of the whole country—the Red Army and the soviet—will join hands with the people, and make use of our guns and cannons, and our own flesh and blood, to overthrow Japanese imperialism, overthrow the traitorous Guomindang, and overthrow the head traitor, Chiang Kai-shek. When the people of the whole country, especially the people of the five provinces of North China and of the coastal provinces, find themselves driven by the cannon fire of the Japanese imperialists, and by the bayonets, whips, and deceitful propaganda of the Guomindang to become slaves without a country, and find no support, our victory says to them: “Fellow countrymen, do not be afraid, because we support you.”

When we send out a victory bulletin, do you think they will be happy to hear it or not?

f. Linking the victory of the Red Army in the whole country and that of guerrilla warfare. “Look, we have finally smashed the Third ‘Encirclement and Suppression’ in the north! The Central Red Army and the Twenty-fifth Army, after their twenty-five thousand li Long March, have effected a junction with the Red Army of Shaanxi and Gansu on the battlefield and, what is more, have captured Division Commander Niu alive. Now, go courageously forward!”

g. At a time when the Central Committee is leading us in building a vast base area in the Northwest—a base from which to lead a nationwide revolutionary war to oppose Japan, oppose Chiang, and oppose all traitors—our victory can be viewed as the ceremony of laying the foundation stone.

h. Japanese imperialism not only wants to destroy China, but also has the intention of attacking the Soviet Union’s Siberia and destroying the People’s Republic of Mongolia. Our victory tells all of them: “If Japanese imperialism invades you, we will attack them from the flank and from the rear. We are your brothers, and we are responsible for one battlefront.”

2. Zhongbu was the name of a xian in Shaanxi now known as Huangling.
3. The reference is to the Fifth Congress of the Guomindang in October 1935.
Comrades, the influence of this victory is extremely great. We must bring this influence into play and go forth to explain things to every Red Army soldier; we must make matters clear to all the worker and peasant masses, whether in the front or in the rear, in the soviet areas or in the White areas, and to all the soldiers and officers of the White army, so that they will understand and sympathize with us.

II. What Is the Present Situation Like?

1. In the world:
   —Contradictions between imperialist powers moving toward a great war (in the East, in the West).
   —The opposition of the proletariat and popular masses to the imperialist great war (the demonstration of four hundred thousand people in France on the 14th of July, the strike of unprecedented magnitude in the United States this year, the democratic revolutions in Spain and Greece, the revolutionary situations in various countries).
   —The anti-imperialist movement in the colonies (the national war in Abyssinia, the rising revolutionary movement in China, the independence movements in British and American colonies).
   —The power and prosperity of the Soviet Union (production having caught up with or surpassed that of any imperialist power; once again, the completion of a five-year plan in four years), the new task of the Red Army—"Victory is assured, and now the only problem is to achieve a great victory in exchange for the fewest sacrifices; the Red Army must continue to achieve breakthroughs in technology and tactics." —The swiftly changing and rapidly evolving nature of the world situation: a new era of revolution and war confronts us in the whole world.

2. In China:
   —Moves taken by Japan (a grave situation of its domination of China).
   —Conflicts between imperialist powers in China (Britain and America versus Japan).
   —Internal strife within the Guomindang (the rise and development of the conflict between the Chiang faction and the anti-Chiang faction).
   —Three main Red Armies (ourselves, the Second and Sixth Army Groups, and the Fourth Field Army), under the leadership of the Shaanxi-Gansu Red Army.
   —Guerrilla warfare, which has recovered and is developing.
   —New anti-imperialist upsurge (which is latent, and has begun to burst out).
   —The mutations and sudden turns of the Chinese situation. A great new revolutionary situation lies before us.

3. In the Northwest:

a. On the enemy’s side:
   —The rout of Zhang Xueliang’s three main armies (Wang Yizhe’s army, Dong Yingbin’s army, and He Zhuguo’s cavalry force).
   —The hesitation of the two armies commanded by Yu Xuezong and Wan Fulin.
   —The isolation of Liu Duanqu’s army.
   —The defensive deployment of Yang Hucheng.
   —Yan Xishan plays a subsidiary role.
   —Chiang Kaishek awaits the opportunity to take a position.
   Thus, the third “Encirclement and Suppression” has been thoroughly smashed.

b. On our side:
   —The dauntless forces of the Red Army (even though it is smaller than before).

4. Zhang Xueliang (1898–), a native of Liaoning, was the eldest son of Zhang Zuolin, the warlord long dominant in the Northeast, and succeeded him as regional powerholder when his father was assassinated by the Japanese in June 1928. In December 1928, he pledged the allegiance of Manchuria to the Nanjing government, and in September 1930 Chiang Kaisheng appointed him deputy commander-in-chief of the national armed forces. Following the Japanese invasion which began on September 18, 1931, Zhang Xueliang withdrew with his forces from the Northeastern provinces. Though he had done so on orders from Chiang Kaisheng, he was stigmatized thereafter as a defeatist. In May 1935, in response to demands by the Japanese for extending their influence in China, Chiang ordered Zhang Xueliang to move with his army to the Northwest, where he was made deputy commander-in-chief of operations against the Communists. For a biography of Wang Yizhe, who commanded the Sixty-seventh Army, see below, the relevant note to “On the Three Basic Conditions for Talks about Joint Resistance to Japan,” March 4, 1936. Regarding Dong Yingbin, see above, the note to the text of November 6, 1935. He Zhuguo (1898–1985), a native of Guangxi, had become commander of the cavalry forces of the National Army in August 1935, and was serving under Zhang Xueliang in this capacity.

5. Yu Xuezong (1890–1964), a native of Shanxi. At this time he was commander of the Fifty-first Army. As indicated above in a note to an order dated March 5, 1935, Wan Fulin commanded the Fifty-third Army.

6. Liu commanded the 105th Army. No further information is available about him.

7. Yang Hucheng is an earlier form of the name of Yang Hucheng (1893–1949), a native of Pucheng in Shaanxi. In 1911, Yang led a group of 200 members of the secret society known as the Zhongguo hui (Mid-Autumn Society) to participate in the revolution. Thereafter he pursued a military career, and rose rapidly in rank. He joined the Guomindang in January 1924. At this time, he was Pacification Commissioner in Xi’an, and commander of the third route of the “Encirclement and Annihilation” headquarters in the Northwest.

8. Yan Xishan (1883–1960), a native of Shanxi. After graduating from a Japanese military academy, and passing the juren examination on his return to China, he became a colonel in the New Army. In October 1911, he rallied to the republican cause, and from 1917 onward, he was effectively the sole ruler of his native province. In 1932, he was appointed pacification commissioner of Shanxi and Suiyuan.
The development of guerrilla warfare (its strategic significance).
The enthusiasm of the worker and peasant masses (a force which may be manifest or latent).
The correct leadership of the Party (the Central Committee).
The sympathy of the masses in the White areas.
The sympathy of the soldiers and lower-level cadres in the White areas.
The sympathy of the minority nationalities.
Thus, we enjoy an excellent battlefield position and a broad mass basis, and are continuing to expand.

4. The problem of the Fourth “Encirclement and Suppression”:
—Our expansion constitutes a serious threat to Japanese imperialism.
—Our expansion constitutes a serious threat to the traitorous Guomindang government.
—Our expansion puts Zhang Xueliang in a predicament.
—Our expansion makes Yang Huchan, Yan Xishan, and Ma Hongkui feel uneasy even when eating and sleeping (especially Yan Xishan, who is, with Zhang Xueliang, one of our two main enemies at present, and will definitely come from Shanxi to attack us in Shaanxi during the fourth “Encirclement and Suppression”).

III. What Are Our New Tasks?

1. Starting now, we will make very great efforts to secure and accumulate more ample strength to meet the enemy’s new large-scale offensive and thoroughly smash it, and to open the way to the expansion of our Soviet area into the five provinces of Shanxi, Shaanxi, Gansu, Suiyuan, and Ningxia, thus completing the task of becoming one with the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of Mongolia. When we do that, we shall be able to accumulate still greater strength, and strike unprecedentedly great blows, both at the Japanese imperialists when they attack the Chinese revolution (as they will necessarily do in the near future) and the Soviet Union, and at the various factions of Guomindang warlords when they attack the Red Army in the north and in the country as a whole. Thus we will achieve a great victory for the soviet in seven or eight provinces in the north, and several individual provinces in the south, and raise the anti-Japanese war to its highest level. Such is our overall task.

2. Vigorously expand guerrilla warfare

—Expand guerrilla warfare extensively and forcefully to the five provinces of Shanxi, Shaanxi, Gansu, Suiyuan and Ningxia.
—Double the size of our guerrilla forces within four months.
—Expand guerrilla warfare in a more planned way.

3. The tasks of the First Front Army:

a. Continue to wipe out the enemy who is entrenched within the boundaries of the soviet area, and also those who might possibly be brought in as reinforcements, so as to replenish our forces in men and weapons, and consolidate the soviet area.

b. Vigorously expand our own forces, and strive to double their size within four months (every unit should expand by recruiting from among the inhabitants, the Military Commission of the Central Bureau should expand from the rear, and as many captives as possible should be won over). I repeat, this is a task of very great importance.

c. Conscientiously train ourselves, and raise the fighting capacity of the Front Army to a very high level. On the one hand, emphasize training in shooting and tactics; on the other hand, stress basic political education and literacy. There are still serious defects in our shooting and in the direction of our fire, and our conduct of battles is still extremely imperfect. We must definitely strive for a thorough transformation in this respect. Efforts should be made to raise cultural and political levels by a step. Commanders should carry on until they are able to read and write; fighters should continue until they know three hundred characters, and have a basic understanding of many questions regarding the revolution. Training is first of all the training of the cadres; only by raising the military and political level of the cadres can the military and political level of the soldiers truly be raised. To improve the level of the old cadres and create large numbers of new cadres is an urgent task confronting the Red Army in the face of the coming battles.

d. Vigorously expand the soviet area, so as to create an advantageous environment for our operations. This can be done by combining the strengths of local Party and government organs with ours. The commanders and fighters of the Red Army should respect the leading organs of the local Party and government. It is completely wrong to adopt an attitude of giving orders, or even shouting abuse, in dealing with the comrades in the localities.

e. Forcefully disrupt the enemy armies. Turn this task of disruption into a mass campaign of the Red Army and the inhabitants. Change our policy concerning the treatment of captured enemy officers. Once disarmed, not only will they all, without exception, not be killed; they will be kindly treated. They will not be tied up (except when necessary), stripped of clothing, beaten up, or cursed. Most of them will be set free, after they have been seen by the political department of the Security Bureau, thus
influencing the White army officers to unite with us in resisting the Japanese. As for the captured soldiers, we must treat them extremely well. Regardless of any excesses committed on the battlefield, we must treat them as our brothers once they have been disarmed, and strictly prohibit acts of revenge. Thus, wiping out the enemy, expanding the Red Army, strengthening the Red Army, enlarging the Red area, and disrupting the enemy armies are the five concrete and important tasks which will occupy the First Front Army in the days to come. During this period, the expansion of the Red Army will, however, be the key link. The task of wiping out the enemy which has been raised here should not and must not impede the performance of the other work (especially the expansion of the Red Army). Thus, you should not seek battles in which victory is not certain, or go to faraway White areas in search of a fight. Though the tasks and items of work mentioned here are the day-to-day tasks and work of the Red Army, they acquire special content and significance in this period between the two campaigns of "Encirclement and Suppression" which lies ahead of us.

IV

These are the things with which we expect to smash the new attacks of the enemy, to exercise leadership in the Red Army’s guerrilla warfare and in its war against Japan and Chiang in the whole country, and to make concrete preparations for the face-to-face battle with the invading armies of Japanese imperialism. We are leading the armed endeavor to stop the Japanese imperialists from attacking and invading North China, swallowing the whole of our country, and attacking the Soviet Union. Our sacred duty requires our comrades to make extraordinary efforts in carrying out their work. Provided only that we do this, a great victory will be ours.

The Basic Orientation at Present Should Be the Southern and Eastern Expeditions
(November 30, 1935, 10:00 P.M.)

Luo Fu:

1. After ten days’ rest, this front army is planning to surround the two towns of Yichuan and Luochuan, and wipe out the enemy’s troops which might be moved in as reinforcements. If the enemy in Yan’an flees, we will intercept and eliminate him. At the same time, we can turn Yichuan and Luochuan xian Red, and collect revenues and food supply.

2. If Yan Xishan is indeed going to move toward Yanchang and Wayaobao, then we will move to the proximity of Yanchuan and await orders.

3. At the moment it is not appropriate to move toward Ningxia immediately. The basic orientation should still be the southern and eastern expeditions. The benefits of the eastern expedition will be very great. We have a detailed letter of reply for you.

4. In preparation for advancing toward the east, we should expand the Red Army by ten thousand within four months.

Zedong

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 396–97, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Zhang Wentian (1900–1976), frequently referred to by his pen name of Luo Fu, was born in a suburb of Shanghai. Like Mao Zedong, he joined the Young China Society in 1919. After a brief period in the United States, he returned to Shanghai, where he made a name for himself as a writer. In 1925 he joined the Chinese Communist Party, and was sent to Moscow to study at Sun Yat-sen University. Returning to China, he became head of the Organization Department of the Central Committee when the "Returned Students" gained control of the Party at the Fourth Plenum of January 1931. During the period of the Jiangxi Soviet Republic, he served as head of the Propaganda Department. At Zunyi, he replaced Qin Bangxian (Bo Gu) as secretary general, in circumstances described above in the Introduction.
Letter to Zhang Wentian on Changing the Policy Toward Rich Peasants and Other Questions
(December 1, 1935, midnight)

Luo Fu:

I have received your two letters of the 20th and the 25th.

1. I am in complete agreement with the general policy of positioning the Red Army close to Outer Mongolia, for this policy is the correct policy, which will make China’s revolutionary war, and especially the anti-Japanese national war that is coming soon, develop more forcefully and faster. What I do not agree with are the time and the itinerary. First of all, the Red Army must now add ten thousand new recruits. Within four months, relying on the soviet region in northern Shaanxi, we must make unprecedented efforts to achieve this goal. Second, we had best take the route of Shanxi and Suiyuan. This is the orientation of getting closer to Outer Mongolia by means of war and development without separating the soviet region in northern Shaanxi from us. In order to fulfill the aforementioned two tasks, I think that about six months will be enough. Therefore, we should move closer to Outer Mongolia next summer or fall. At the moment we should set out at once to organize Mongolian guerrillas.

2. I am in complete agreement with the tactical contents of the united front to oppose Chiang and resist Japan, as well as with the concrete slogans and program. Please publicize the manifesto at once.1

3. I basically agree with changing the tactics toward the rich peasants, but the resolution2 should point out that when the struggle has developed and the poor and middle peasants demand the equal distribution of the land of the rich peasants, the Party should support this request. The rich peasants may get land of the same kind as the poor and middle peasants; the former policy of giving them bad land was wrong. On the other hand, the principle of not touching the land of the rich peasants in the soviet regions, particularly in the soviet regions in the south, is not correct either. As regards the land question, there should be some difference between the policy toward the rich peasants and that toward the middle peasants. The Party in the rural areas should be good at leading and supervising the rich peasants, and strictly guard against being led by the rich peasants. We must point out that when the struggle deepens, the rich peasants are sure to join the ranks of the landlords. This is a peculiarity of the semifeudal rich peasant class in China. As far as the petty landlord stratum of those who have the capacity to work but have gone bankrupt are concerned, they should be treated as rich peasants, with the agreement of the masses.

4. The policy of generally not executing captured enemy officers, treating them kindly, and releasing them has already been carried out here. My letter to Dong Yingbin3 has already been widely publicized, and right now we are carrying out an extensive campaign of disrupting the White army.

5. I may go back to the rear for a visit in a few days.

Zedong

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 372–73, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The reference is to the Manifesto of November 28, 1935, translated above.

2. The reference is to the resolution on changing the policy toward the rich peasants adopted by the Central Committee on December 6, 1935.

3. For an extract from this letter, see above, the Introduction.
General Order Concerning Specifications About Subsidies for Fuel and Food, for Recuperation, and for Compensation for Wounded and Sick Armymen

(Issued from the Field Army Headquarters on December 5, 1935)

In order that the wounded and sick armymen can be swiftly cured and recover their strength, subsidies for fuel and food, for recuperation, and for compensation are specified as follows in accordance with the relatively poor material conditions in the area of our operations:

1. A daily subsidy of five fen for fuel and food is granted to each lightly or heavily wounded or sick armymen during the time of his medical treatment.

2. Four yuan are granted to every heavily wounded armymen and two yuan to every lightly wounded armymen as a subsidy for recuperation.

3. One yuan is granted to any sick armymen as hospitalization fee when he cannot return to his unit for recovery but has to be placed in a hospital for treatment.

4. Those disabled by their wounds are classified as completely disabled and semidisabled, and granted subsidies for compensation accordingly. It is required that a report should be submitted by the commander at the relevant level and then examined and approved by the Committee for Compensations before a yearly subsidy of twenty-five yuan is granted to the completely disabled, and fifteen to the semidisabled.

5. Those who fall sick or break down from constant overwork in the Red Army should be granted a recuperation subsidy in accordance with each different case, with a minimum of fifty fen and a maximum of three yuan every month, until the time of their recovery. They should also undergo the process of examination and approval by the Committee for Compensations.

The above stipulations are subject to change when there is a major variation in market prices. This general order is now issued to every army unit either at the front or in the rear, and to every military organ, and is to be made known to their subordinate units and carried out.

Be it so ordered.

Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission
Chairman           Mao Zedong
Vice-Chairmen      Zhou Enlai
                    Peng Dehuai

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 4, pp. 253–54, where it is reproduced from a volume published in China in July 1977. Because Peng Dehuai had not yet been rehabilitated at that time, his name is missing at the end of the order; we have corrected this omission on the basis of Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 495.
Proclamation of the Central Soviet Government to the People of Inner Mongolia

(December 10, 1935)

To all the dear popular masses of Inner Mongolia! Now that we are at a juncture of worldwide change, are you still willing to be trampled on and dictated to by the Japanese imperialists and the Chinese warlords and get killed as their cannon fodder, or will you rise up fighting when the opportunity offers, and strive to make yourselves strong, so that the most honorable Mongolian nation may win a position of complete equality among all the nations of the world? It must be one or the other, and we hope that you will make your choice as soon as possible.

If the madly ambitious, extremely ferocious, and fearsome Japanese imperialists want to occupy the whole of China, they must necessarily occupy Manchuria and Mongolia first; if they want to dominate the whole world, they must first occupy all of China. This barbarous plan is already being carried out step by step, and the first to suffer from it are the people of the Three Northeastern Provinces and the five provinces of North China, and the whole nation of Inner Mongolia. The Japanese bandits, who are crafty, desppicable, hypocritical, and malignant, are resorting to all sorts of deceptive tricks, and making use of the doctrine of "Greater Mongolia" to seize all the land and property of Mongolia, and enslave the whole of the Inner Mongolian people. They are preparing to make of your land the battlefield, and of your people the cannon fodder, in order to attain their goal of attacking the Chinese Soviet People's Republic, the People's Republic of Outer Mongolia, and the Soviet Union, and finally exterminating the Mongolian nation. If you do not believe it, please take a look at how the people of Korea, Taiwan, and the Three Northeastern Provinces are unable to use their own spoken and written languages, and how they are deprived of freedom of residence, movement, tilling the land, or raising livestock, and other such freedoms. All political and economic jurisdiction is entirely in the hands of the Japanese dwarf slaves. Take a look also at the military deployment and military equipment of the Japanese imperialists in Chahar, the Pacification Headquarters, and all the other plots, and you will see that the Mongolian nation has reached an unprecedented crisis. What is more, there are shameless Chinese warlords with Chiang Kaishek as their chieftain who not only regard this country as the suzerain of Mongolia, but have furthermore designated the whole area of Inner Mongolia as an administrative province, driving the Mongolian nation into an area bounded on the south by the Yellow River, and on the north by the Yinshan Mountains, and instigating smaller warlords like Jing Yuexiu and Gao Shixiu to invade and occupy the pastureland and salt ponds that belong to the Mongolians, with the intent of gradually eliminating the Mongolian nation, clearing the way for Japanese imperialism, and hastening the extinction of the Inner Mongolian nation.

The central government of the Soviet People's Republic of China, and all the valiant Red Army men, have dealt numerous severe blows to the Japanese imperialists and Chiang Kaishek as well as the warlords over the past several years of heroic fighting. The Chinese Red Army has already become an invincible force. Especially remarkable is the valiant Central Red Army, which, after the Long March of twenty-five thousand li, a new world record for military marches, has victoriously accomplished its plan of going north to resist Japan. The Chinese Red Army is fighting not only for the liberation of the whole Chinese nation from the oppression of the imperialists and warlords, but also for the liberation of other weak and small nations, and it will first of all help to solve the problem of the Inner Mongolian nation. We hold that it is only through a common struggle by ourselves and the nation of Inner Mongolia that we can rapidly defeat our common enemy—the Japanese imperialists and their running dog, Chiang Kaishek. At the same time, we are persuaded that only by fighting together with us can the Inner Mongolian nation preserve the glory of the epoch of Genghis Khan, avoid the extinction of their nation, embark on the path of national revival, and obtain independence and freedom like that enjoyed by the nations of Turkey, Poland, the Ukraine, and the Caucasus. Consequently, this government declares to you:

1. We maintain that the six leagues, twenty-four sections, and forty-nine banners of Inner Mongolia, Chahar, the two sections of Tumute, as well as the whole area of the three special banners in Ningxia, whether they have changed their status into xian or have been designated as grassland, should be returned to the Inner Mongolian people as part of their territory. The titles of the three administrative provinces of Re[he], Cha[har], and Su[i]yan and their de facto administrative offices should be abolished. Under no circumstances should other nationalities be allowed to occupy the land of the Inner Mongolian nation or expropriate it under various excuses.

2. We maintain that the Inner Mongolian people have the right to solve all their internal problems themselves, and no one else is entitled to interfere by force with the life, customs, religion, morality, and other rights of the Inner Mongolian nation. At the same time, the Inner Mongolian nation can organize in whatever way it pleases. It has the right, in accordance with the principle of

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1. Our source for this document is *Mao Zedong ji*, Vol. 5, pp. 15–18, where it is reproduced from a contemporary mimeographed text.

2. In Inner Mongolia, the league (*meng*) was equivalent to the prefecture elsewhere in China. The section (*bu*) was an intermediate subdivision, and the banner (*qi*) was equivalent to the *xian*.
independence, to shape its own life and set up its own government; it has the right to form federal ties with other nations, and it also has the right to remain completely separate. In a word, a nation is deserving of respect, and at the same time all nations are equal.

3. The people of Han, Muslim, and Manchu nationalities who dwell on the territory of Inner Mongolia should foster democracy on the principle of equality among nations, so these peoples can enjoy the same treatment as the Inner Mongolian people, as well as the freedom to use their own spoken and written languages, and the same freedom of belief and residence, and so on.

4. First, Baotuwan, which was occupied by Jing Xiuyue, and the area which was occupied by Gao Shixiu, along with the two salt ponds, will be returned to the Inner Mongolian people. Moreover, the area along the Great Wall, including places such as Ningxiaoliang, Anbian, and Dingbian, is designated as a commercial area, in order to promote bilateral trade between you and us.

5. Our Worker-Peasant Red Army and guerrilla units, or any other armed forces of ours, have absolutely no intention of attacking the grasslands. But you should also not allow the armies of Chinese warlords and the Japanese imperialists to pass through the grasslands to attack us, and hasten your own end. We are willing to conclude with you an offensive and defensive alliance to defeat our common enemy.

In sum, as long as you sincerely recognize the necessity of Mongolia’s national liberation, refuse to be slaves without a country, and are determined to oppose Japanese imperialism and the Chinese warlord, Chiang Kaishek, then no matter whether your leaders are kings, nobles, or ordinary people, we can, in any case, offer you well-intentioned and substantial aid. The Mongols are known throughout the world for their bravery and skill in warfare. We are convinced that, once you organize consciously and wage a national revolutionary war to drive the Japanese imperialists and the Chinese warlords out of Mongolian territory, no one will have the audacity to say that the descendants of Genghis Khan can be bullied. Please think it over carefully. If you could also consider exchanging representatives to establish the great cause, we would be endlessly delighted! This proclamation is respectfully presented by

Chairman of the Central
Government of the Chinese
Soviet People’s Republic    Mao Zedong

Order of the Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Soviet Republic on Changing the Policy Toward the Rich Peasants

(December 15, 1935)

In view of the active aggression by the Japanese imperialists and the imminent danger of China’s ruin, workers, peasants, and other noble-minded patriots throughout the country are all taking an active part in the national revolutionary struggle against the Japanese aggressors and their running dogs, Chiang Kaishek and his ilk. Moreover, as a result of rule by Chiang Kaishek and other traitors who are selling out their country, China’s economy, and especially its rural economy, has sunk into a desperate and hopeless state, and the peasant masses of the whole country have risen in opposition and rebellion. The rich peasants have already changed their attitude of hostility against the Soviet revolution, and begun to sympathize with the struggle against imperialism and the struggle to carry out the land revolution. The Central Committee of the Soviets, in order to broaden the revolutionary front to resist Japan and suppress Chiang, has decided to alter its policy toward the rich peasants.

1. The land of rich peasants—except for that portion rented to tenant peasants at high rates of a feudal character, which should be treated like landlord property and therefore confiscated in its entirety—the balance of the land owned and tilled by rich peasants themselves, or cultivated by hired hands, regardless of whether it is good or bad, should not be confiscated.

2. The movable property owned by rich peasants, including livestock and agricultural implements, except for the part they rent out at usurious feudal rates of interest, thereby exploiting the peasants, should not be confiscated.

3. Apart from the unified progressive tax, local governments are forbidden to impose levies or special taxes on rich peasants.

4. Governments at all levels should protect the right of the rich peasants to manage their industrial and commercial enterprises and their freedom to employ labor, as long as they are not violating Soviet laws.

5. In areas (townships and districts) where all the land is being divided equally at the demand of the great majority of the masses, rich peasants enjoy the same rights as ordinary peasants to redistributed land.

6. When a rich peasant violates Soviet laws or decrees, he is to be punished

Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 374–75, where it is reproduced from the version published on December 21, 1935, in *Hongse Zhonghua*. 

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in accordance with the law; when he engages in counterrevolutionary activity, he is to be punished in accordance with the Temporary Regulations for Punishing Counterrevolutionaries.

7. Rich peasants are not entitled to join the Red Army or any other armed force (including Red Guards). They also have no right to vote.

8. The previously promulgated Land Law, and any other relevant laws and decrees, wherever they are in contradiction with this Order, are to be abrogated without exception.

9. This order goes into effect on the day of its promulgation (or on the day of the reception of this order in areas not directly linked [to the Central Soviet Area]). What has been decided in accord with previous laws and decrees before this order goes into effect remains in force. There should be no reversal of verdicts.

Chairman Mao Zedong

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We Agree with the Decision to Take Ganquan and Yichuan

(December 17, 1935, 9:00 P.M.)

[Peng] Dehuai:

1. We agree with the present dispositions. The one regiment of the First Army Group that is going to attack Ganquan may set out at once, employing resolute but clever and flexible means, and we anticipate that they will capture Ganquan within about seven days. The main force of the First Army Group may set out from its present location on the 21st, advance to the Longquanzen area of Yichuan, and begin work. It should take Yichuan when the occasion offers. The main force of the Fifteenth Army Group may also set out on the 21st, advance to the area between Niwuzhen and Longquanzen, and begin to work. The future direction of expansion for both army groups is straight south, but they should first turn Luochuan and Yichuan Red, and speed up the recruitment of the Red Army.

2. The entire Twenty-sixth Army should proceed northward at once, in cooperation with the cavalry regiment, under the command of Liu Zhidan and Song Renqiong, and carry out the task of wiping out Jing Yuexiu.

Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 410–12, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Longquanzen is located in the western part of Yichuan xian.
2. Liu Zhidan (1902–1936), a native of Shaanxi, joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1925, and was a member of the Fifth Class at the Huagpu Military Academy in 1925–26. In the period from 1929 to 1933, he struggled to organize guerrilla operations in Shaanxi. He and his comrades finally succeeded in 1934 in establishing the Shaanxi-Gansu Border Region Revolutionary Committee, which subsequently gave birth to the Shaanxi-Gansu Provisional Soviet Government. In 1935, Liu was the commander of the Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh Red Armies, which, as noted above in the Introduction, welcomed Mao and his comrades on their arrival in the Northwest at the end of that year. In early 1936, he played a leading role in the “Eastern Expedition” to Shaanxi Province, and was killed in action there.
3. Song Renqiong (1909– ), a native of Hunan, joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1926. He spent the years 1930–1934 in the Jiangxi Soviet Republic, and participated in the Long March as political commissar of the Red Cadres’ Regiment, which guarded Mao and the other Party leaders. In January 1936, he became political commissar of the Twenty-eighth Red Army. He participated in the Eastern Expedition, and assumed command of the Twenty-eighth Army after Liu Zhidan was mortally wounded.
4. Jing Yuexiu (1875–1936) was a native of Shaanxi. At this time, he was deputy commander of the Third Defense Area of the Guomindang Northwest “Encirclement and Suppression” Headquarters, and commander of the Eighty-sixth Division. He died on February 1, 1936, as a result of the accidental discharge of his own pistol.
Resolution of the Central Committee on Problems of Military Strategy
(December 23, 1935)

Part I. Strategic Orientation

Under circumstances in which Japanese imperialism is turning China into its colony, and in the present state of the Chinese Red Army and the other revolutionary armed forces, the Party's military tactics or strategic orientation should include the following:

1. In the context of the general task of resisting the invasion of Japanese imperialism through a resolute national war, we must first decide on the orientation of "combining civil war with national war" in all of our political and military appeals, and in our actual operations. This means slogans and actions such as "the United Anti-Japanese Army," "the Red Army is the vanguard of the Chinese people in resisting Japan," "all those soldiers and armies who do not want to become slaves without a country should unite with the Red Army to fight Japan," "let all of our fellow countrymen arm themselves to oppose the invasion of China by Japanese imperialism," "let all the workers, peasants, merchants, students, and soldiers unite to defend China with arms," "down with the Chinese traitors and collaborators who are helping Japanese imperialism to attack the Chinese," "down with the head traitor who is helping Japan destroy China—Chiang Kai-shek," "down with the Chinese traitors selling out the country who have infiltrated into the anti-Japanese base areas," "oppose the Chinese traitors selling out the country who disrupt the anti-Japanese rear area," "consolidate the anti-Japanese rear areas," "expand the anti-Japanese bases," "let the Red Army and the White Army unite to defeat Japanese imperialism," "confiscate the property of the Chinese traitors selling out the country and use it to finance the anti-Japanese armies," "confiscate the property of Japanese imperialism in China and use it to finance the anti-Japanese armies," "those who have money should give money, those who are strong should contribute their strength, those who have guns should contribute guns, those who have knowledge should contribute knowledge, down with Japanese imperialism," "fight to the last drop of blood to defeat Japanese imperialism," "long live the national revolutionary war," and so on.

2. Make a correct estimate of the strength of the enemy and of our own strength. The general orientation of our Party's military deployment in the year

3. If Ganquan is taken, send some captured officers to Yan'an; then it is possible that the enemy troops in Yan'an may flee. We should change the assignment of the Twenty-seventh Army, and use the entire army to wipe out this enemy. Instead of encircling the city, the tactics should be to station our troops in the vicinity of Ganguyi, wait till the enemy has fled out of the town, and then destroy him.

4. During the early period, it would be appropriate for the headquarters of this front army to be located near Ganquan, in order to exercise direct command over the battle to take Ganquan and Yan'an. The troops in Yichuan and Luochuan can be commanded by radio. Attention should also be given to building up the transportation and communication line between Ganquan and Longquanzheng.

5. Please send Regimental Commander Li of the 107th Division to the provincial committee at once. Tell [Li] Fuchun and [Xiao] Jingguang to give him good guidance, and consult with Company Commander Lishi. It is of extremely great importance to persuade this company to surrender.

6. Have you received the 3,700 sets of winter uniforms we sent to the front? If you have received them all, please check and report. There is currently a shortage of 2,400, and both the front and the rear should share the responsibility for solving this problem. The share of the front is 1,000, and that of the rear is 1,400, because the rear also has to find uniforms for the new recruits.

7. When will the Twenty-sixth Army begin its advance toward Zichang? This army is short of supplies. For instance, how many more bowls and chopsticks does it still need? Please find out and report to us so we can try to find more for them.

8. It is cold at night at the front. We hope to solve this problem by distributing cotton. We plan to give 1.5 jin of cotton to each person; two men will get 3 jin if they share a quilt. During the next 15 days, the rear can provide you with 10,000 jin of cotton. The [problem of the] remaining 8,000 jin (we estimate that you have 12,000 men) should be solved by Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], and Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], by purchasing from Yichuan and Luochuan.

Mao Zedong  Zhou Enlai

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5. The reference is to Li Dongpo, who was at this time the commander of the 630th Regiment of the 107th Division of the Guomindang Sixty-seventh Army.
1936 should be "make ready the strength for fighting directly against Japan." Therefore, the principal fighting target of the main forces of the Red Army in 1936 should still be the armies of the Chinese traitors selling out the country. Nevertheless, in the region occupied by Japan, as well as the autonomous region, we should try our best to organize, expand, and unite all the anti-Japanese armed forces—the Anti-Japanese Volunteer Army, the anti-Japanese guerrillas and so on, to fight a direct and powerful guerrilla war against the Japanese army. At the same time, we should take into account the possibility that in the second half of 1936 the First Front Army may be obliged to engage in partial conflict with the Japanese army (in the Shanxi-Suiyuan-Chahar area).

3. Vigorously expand the Red Army. In 1936, the main forces of the Red Army in the whole country should have 200,000 men, and the First Front Army should have 50,000.

4. In order to carry out resolutely and forcefully the general policies enunciated under items 1, 2, and 3 above (combine the civil war and the national war, prepare the forces to fight against Japan, expand the Red Army), the foundation of the operational deployment of the First Front Army should definitely rest on the two tasks of "fighting a way through to the Soviet Union" and "consolidating and expanding the present soviet areas." "Fighting a way through to the Soviet Union" should be taken as the central task, and "consolidating and expanding the present soviet areas" should be closely linked to it. The concrete steps will consist in situating the major direction of the Red Army's operations and of the expansion of the soviet areas in provinces such as Shanxi in the east, and Suiyuan to the north.

5. The weakening and pinning down of the armies of the traitor in Nanjing by the rest of the Red Army, apart from the First Front Army (the Second and the Sixth Army Groups, and the Fourth Front Army) has great strategic importance. Their operations should receive proper leadership.

6. Guerrilla warfare is of very great strategic efficacy in the task of defeating Japanese imperialism and the Chinese traitors selling out the country. The guiding principles should be as follows:
   a. All the guerrilla units should appear in the guise of the national war (in Japanese occupied territory, the autonomous region, and neighboring provinces, they should be called the Chinese Anti-Japanese Volunteer Army. In the other regions—Central and Southern China—they should be called Chinese Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Detachments. In these places, when the guerrilla units in Central and Southern China have grown larger and stronger, they should be called the Chinese Anti-Japanese People's Revolutionary Army). The agrarian revolution should be carried out under the slogans, and with the tactics, of the national war.

b. Develop guerrilla warfare in every province, but place the emphasis on the major provinces (Hebei, Shanxi, Rehe, Chahar, Suiyuan, the Three Northeastern Provinces, Shandong, Henan, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Shaanxi, and Gansu). In the areas to the north as well as the south of the Yangzi River that used to be soviet regions but have become guerrilla regions, we must quickly raise them from a situation of revival to one of development.

c. The local Party is the only leader of guerrilla warfare in the White areas, and in the soviet regions it is the principal leader.
d. Attract a great number of soldiers from the White armies and young students who are caught up in the anti-Japanese tide into the guerrilla warfare.

e. The guerrilla units should have bases, but we must oppose conservatism (which can easily cause damage to the guerrilla units).
f. The guerrilla units should unite closely with the revolutionary masses in their localities.
g. Raise the level of guerrilla tactics.
h. Turn the guerrilla units into a regular revolutionary army.
i. The guerrilla units are the creators of the soviet regions.
j. Increase the planned character of guerrilla warfare.

7. Combine the revolutionary movements of the White army soldiers with the anti-Japanese Red Army and the anti-Japanese guerrillas under the banner of the national war. Attention should be paid to the following guiding principles:
   a. Without the assistance of the soldiers (Chinese, and also Japanese), complete victory in the national war is impossible.
   b. The assistance of the soldiers is possible (the circumstances of being slaves without a country, and the pressure of hunger and cold, give them no rest).
   c. Place the movement on the broad foundation of the masses, liberate ourselves from closed-doorism, combine open work with secret work.

8. Raise the level of the struggle of the Mongolian and Muslim nationalities (first of all the former) against Japan and their Chinese rulers to the level of armed struggle. Moreover, combine directly their struggle with ours.

9. Carry out the tactics of a "United Anti-Japanese Army," organize the contradictions and splits within the enemy camp so as to create a national front, combine our camp with the "third camp," and make it into a united national camp.

10. Unite the Soviet Red Army with the Chinese Red Army on the basis of opposing the common enemy, Japanese imperialism, first of all by unifying the technical conditions.

Part II. Basic Principles Guiding Military Operations

1. At times of strategic defensive:
   a. Oppose pure defense, carry out active defense.
b. Oppose taking preemptive measures, carry out (in general) the policy of gaining control by striking last. Gaining control by striking last means to lure the enemy in deep, it is not the so-called “opportunistic line of pure defense” (the Ningdu Conference and after). It is rather the correct principle of fighting on interior lines.

2. At times of strategic offensive:

a. Oppose opportunistic underestimates, struggle to enlarge the fruits of victory (when changing from counter-offense in the strategic defensive to the strategic offensive, and also during the whole process of the strategic offensive, we should at all times struggle to expand the fruits of victory), struggle to gain the initiative.

b. Oppose adventurism:

i. Stop at the right time, to guarantee the victory we have already won (it is quite possible that the victory we have already won might be lost).

ii. Move the battlefield to a new direction, so that the Red Army will have a temporary rest between two big battles, and so that the Soviet area will be expanded. At the same time, link the task of expanding the Soviet area with that of creating new battlefields in order to face new battles. Connect two or more Soviet regions into one, and wipe out the White strongholds between and near the Soviet regions (attack the fortified villages). This is not so-called “opportunistic wavering” (see the Party periodical in 1932). It is rather the carrying out of a correct policy.

iii. Develop the policy of moving forward in the context of the situation, a wavelike pattern of development, development in which there is both a battlefield and a rear area (that is, what is called “consolidated development of the Soviet area,” or “expand, and at the same time deepen”), oppose the policy of adventurism (except when the relation between our strength and that of the enemy permits).

iv. Certain conditions are required in order to attack the cities and the enemy’s strong points. In the past, it was wrong to oppose “mountaintopism” and the “northeast line” (1932).  

3. General principles (whether in times of defense or offense):

a. Oppose the desperationist policy of only “fighting” and never “retreating.” We must both fight and retreat; of course, we retreat in order to fight. The guerrilla character of the form taken by the war means that there is no fixed front. This is a peculiarity of the operations of the Chinese Red Army, determined by its primitive technical conditions. It is also precisely a strong point of military leadership in the past. Here it is wrong to oppose “guerrillism.” The attempt to build a fixed front in opposing the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression” failed. If we exchange the temporary loss on this front (the occupation of territory by the enemy) for victory on another front, the problem of this front can also be solved (territory can be regained).

b. If we seize such a possibility, rapidly change the technical conditions of the Red Army, and transform the situation of having no fixed front into a situation where in general there will be a fixed front, it will still be mobile warfare, but its guerrilla character will be greatly reduced. Without this modern condition, it is impossible to defeat Japanese imperialism and its running dogs completely. It is wrong to be negative about changing the technical conditions.

c. Mobile warfare is the basic principle. We oppose the conservative battlefield tactics of “not giving up an inch of land.” It is an unavoidable necessity that the main force of the Red Army switch drastically from marching forward to retreat.

d. Concentrate our forces on the major direction. Strategically hit the enemy with one fist, fight on exterior lines while carrying on a campaign on interior lines, a campaign of extermination. Oppose the policy of dividing our forces, oppose the policy of striking the enemy with both fists, oppose the strategy of launching an offense “on all fronts,” oppose the policy of waging war simply to scatter the enemy (either strategically or in a single campaign).

e. Strategically, we must fight a protracted war; in each campaign, we must fight a war of quick decision. We must oppose the policy of a protracted campaign, oppose the policy of “attrition.”

f. We must have plenty of rest and training, oppose useless haste, learn necessary patience.

g. We must be fully prepared for every battle.

h. Determine the method of command on the basis of the actual situation. It is permissible and necessary to divide the command, provided there is united resolve.

i. Use the strategic orientation to guide the specific tactical orientation of a campaign, link today with tomorrow, link the small with the big, the part with the whole. Oppose the policy of wait-and-see.

j. The Military Commission has absolute power in the military domain.

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2. At the Ningdu Conference of October 1932, Mao was criticized for his tactics of “luring the enemy deep” into the Soviet area, and subsequently deprived of his role as political commissar of the First Front Army. See the materials in Volume IV of our edition.

3. The reference is to an article published in no. 37/38 of Hongzi zhoubao (Red Flag Weekly), April 25, 1932, criticizing “opportunistic wavering” within the Party.

4. In March 1932, Mao convened a meeting of the Central Bureau of the Soviet areas in Jiangkou, Gan xian, Jiangxi, at which he argued that the Red Army was too weak to attack Ganzhou, and proposed that the base area be extended toward the northeast. This was criticized by his opponents as shangshanchu (literally, “going-up-the-mountains-ism,” here translated “mountaintopism”) and “the northeast line.” On this meeting, see also the Introduction to Volume IV, p. lIII.
Part III. Through Three Major Steps, Fulfill the Task of Fighting a Way Through to the Soviet Union and Strengthening and Developing the Present Soviet Regions

The first step—In Shaanxi:

Accomplish the following tasks before February 5:
1. Recruit 5,000 new soldiers.
2. Strike a heavy blow at the enemy forces in the north who are attacking us.
3. Take the two cities of Ganquan and Yichuan.
4. Turn the two xian, Yichuan and Luochuan, Red.
5. Organize the Twenty-eighth Army in the north and the Twenty-ninth Army in the south.
6. Start organizing the cavalry brigade.
7. Expand the guerrilla detachments to one-half of the original number.
8. Complete the preparations for the crossing of the Yellow River.
10. The expansion and consolidation of the Young Pioneers.
11. Three hundred local cadres should be prepared to leave for Shanxi.
12. Begin the deployment toward Suiyuan.
13. The first class of the Red Army School is ready for graduation, and the second class is about to begin its study.
14. In order to prepare three hundred platoon commanders to be employed in three months, the front army should set up training battalions.
15. Launch a campaign of medical treatment (obtain the medicine), strive to make it possible for half of the wounded and sick to leave the hospital by the end of January.
17. Other organizational preparations (of the Party, the political authority, and the military).

The second step—In Shanxi:

Prepare to carry out the following tasks within six months (February-July), either extending or shortening the time, depending on circumstances:
1. Shatter the main forces of Yan Xishan, wipe out one division.
2. Open up an area of more than five xian in western Shanxi (close to the Yellow River valley), so that they will become first-stage soviet regions.
3. Expand the Red Army by 20,000: 13,000 from Shanxi, and 7,000 from Shaanxi.

4. Establish guerrilla detachments of up to 1,000 men in the occupied territories.
5. Move the enemy forces, regain all or part of the enemy-occupied areas in Shenmu, Fugu, Jiuxian, Wubu, Qingjian, Mizhi, and Suide xian. The greater part, or a part of the guerrillas in northern Shaanxi should cross the river and go to Shanxi.
6. Begin propaganda work directed toward the Mongolian nationality, obtain some partial but real achievements.
7. Expand the Mongolian guerrilla detachment by at least 200 men.
8. Speed up the deployment in Suiyuan.
9. Complete the cavalry brigade.
10. Strengthen the guerrilla warfare in Hebei in terms of organization and command.
11. Create guerrilla warfare in the regions on the boundaries of Shanxi, Zhili, Chahar, and Suiyuan, and in those between Shanxi and Henan.
12. Strengthen guerrilla warfare in Shaanxi and Gansu in terms of command.
13. The Twenty-eighth and Twenty-ninth Armies should each recruit their full complement of 2,000 men.
14. The guerrilla detachments in the two soviet regions in northern Shaanxi and Shaanxi-Gansu should double their strength by January.
15. Complete the communication lines with the Soviet Union.
16. The Red Army School should produce 500 company commanders, 300 political instructors, 50 battalion commanders, and 350 cadres for guerrilla warfare, in two sessions (600 each session, 1,200 in all).
17. Complete the communication lines with the Second and Sixth Army Groups.
18. Start organizing the anti-Japanese united army.
19. Complete the political, military, and organizational preparations for going to Suiyuan.
20. Secure the Yellow River ferry; if necessary, go back to Shaanxi.

The third step—In Suiyuan:

1. The moment for marching from Shanxi to Suiyuan should be determined by the Japanese imperialists’ operation in Suiyuan.
2. We predict that there will be some difficulty in moving toward Suiyuan (possible obstruction by Japan, Yan Xishan’s cavalry, the weakness of political communication between the Inner Mongolian nationality and ourselves), and yet it is possible (the three kinds of difficulties are all relative).
3. Even if the situation does not allow us to have Outer Mongolia in our rear for the time being, or if such contact cannot solve our problems immediately, nevertheless, because of the breadth of China’s territory, the vastness of the population, and the rising anti-Japanese tide, many chapters can still be written in the sequel.

5. The Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army School had been organized in Wayaobao in November 1935. In January 1936, it was renamed the Northwest Anti-Japanese Red Army University, and in June of that year it was further expanded as the Chinese People’s Anti-Japanese Red Army University.
Preparing the Operational Plans for the Eastern Expedition

(December 24, 1935, 9:00 P.M.)

Peng [Dehuai] and Yang [Shangkun], Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], and Zuo [Quan]:¹

1. The Central Committee has discussed the strategic orientation, operational principles, and plans for action, and approved the report by the Military Commission. As regards the direction of the operations, it remains the same as we decided in Dongcun.

2. The preparatory period is forty days, during which all the preparatory work for the action must be completed.

3. We must carry out the following work during the next forty days:
   a. Take Ganquan and Yichuan.
   b. Turn the two xian of Yichuan and Luochuan Red.
   c. The units at the front should try their best to expand the Red Army.
   d. Launch a campaign of medical treatment. All the hospitals at the front as well as in the rear should try to release half of their patients by the end of January.
   e. The rear should fulfill the plan of recruiting 5,000 men for the Red Army (including those already sent to the front).
   f. Strike a heavy blow at the enemy forces that are attacking us in the north. Our Northern Route Army should set out at once.
   g. The rear should prepare 200 local cadres who will set out together with our troops, and the front should prepare 100.
   h. The first class has graduated from the Red Army School, and the second class is entering the school.

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 423–25, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Yang Shangkun (1907–1998), a native of Sichuan, joined the Communist Party in 1926, studied in the Soviet Union from 1926 to 1931, and went to Jiangxi in 1933. He participated in the Long March and in the Zunyi Conference. At this time, he headed the Political Department of the First Front Army, of which Peng Dehuai was the commander. Regarding Lin Biao and Nie Rongzhen, see the relevant note to the text of March 5, 1935. Regarding Xu Haidong, see the relevant note to the text of November 6, 1935. Regarding Cheng Zihua, see the relevant note to the text of November 23, 1935. Zuo Quan (1906–1942), a native of Hunan and a graduate of the Huangpu Military Academy, had been an army commander in the Red Army during the Jiangxi period, and participated in the Long March. At this time he was chief of staff of the First Army Group of the First Front Army.

i. Prepare 300 platoon commanders to be employed in three months. The Front Army is to set up a training battalion (200 from the First Army Group, and 100 from the Fifteenth Army Group, choose good soldiers).

j. Start organizing Mongolian guerrilla units (there are already some leads).

k. Start organizing the cavalry brigade. Select men, horses, and weapons from the units and organs at the front as well as in the rear. First organize them into two companies of the second regiment, and ask Comrade Li De to instruct them.

l. Organize the Twenty-eighth Army in the north and the Twenty-ninth Army in the south, fill them up with independent regiments and battalions.

m. Expand the Red Guards and Young Pioneers to defend the localities.

n. Political preparation.

o. And many other things that will be taken care of by the rear. Seven of the fourteen points mentioned above are the responsibility of the Front Army. Please start carrying them out in practice, concretely and resolutely.

4. Please answer the following questions:
   a. The concrete deployment and work plan of our units in Yichuan and Luochuan.

b. Purchase more than 8,000 jin of cotton in ten days from the two xian of Yichuan and Luochuan (if you add to this the 10,000 jin the rear is buying just now, it will total 18,000 jin), and distribute it to the soldiers to make quilts to protect themselves from the cold. Can you accomplish this or not?

c. Can the front itself make 1,000 sets of cotton uniforms? Can it make more or not? How many can the Front Army Headquarters, the First Army Group, and the Fifteenth Army Group each make?

d. We plan to select fifty good horses from the First Army Group (the men and guns are already complete) and thirty good horses from the Fifteenth Army Group (the men and guns are already complete) to come to the rear to be organized into a cavalry company. Can you provide this number? Can you add more?

e. Is Comrade Lin Biao on his way to the Central Committee?

Mao Zedong  Zhou Enlai
On Tactics Against Japanese Imperialism

(December 27, 1935)

Characteristics of the Present Political Situation

Comrades! A great change has already taken place in the present political situation. Our Party has already defined its tasks in light of this changed situation.

What is the present situation?

The main characteristic of the present situation is that Japanese imperialism wants to turn China into its colony.

As we all know, for nearly a hundred years China has been a semicolonial country jointly dominated by several imperialist powers. As a result of the Chinese people's struggle against imperialism and of conflicts among the imperialist powers, China has been able to retain a semi-independent status. For a time World War I gave Japanese imperialism the opportunity to dominate China exclusively. But the treaty surrendering China to Japan, the Twenty-one Demands signed by Yuan Shikai, the arch-traitor of that time, was inevitably rendered null and void as a result of the Chinese people's fight against Japanese imperialism and of the intervention by other imperialist powers. In 1922 at the Washington Nine-Power Conference called by the United States, a treaty was signed that once again placed China under the joint domination of several imperialist powers. But before long the situation changed again. The Incident of September 18, 1931, began the stage of turning China into a colony of Japan. Only the fact that Japanese aggression has been temporarily limited to the Four Northeastern Provinces has led people to feel that the Japanese imperialists may not necessarily advance any farther. Today things are different. The Japanese imperialists have already shown their intention of going into China proper, and occupying all of China. Now Japanese imperialism wants to convert the whole of China from a semicolonial shared by several imperialist powers into a colony monopolized by Japan. The recent Hebei Incident and diplomatic talks are clear indications of this trend, which threatens the very survival of the whole nation's people. This situation raises for all classes and political groups in China the question of what to do. Resist? Surrender? Or vacillate between the two?

Now let us see how the various classes in China answer this question.

China's workers and peasants all demand resistance. The revolution of 1924-1927, the agrarian revolution from 1927 to the present, and the anti-Japanese tide

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong xuanji, 2nd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 142-69. No contemporary version is available to us.

since the Incident of September 18, 1931 have proven that the working class and the peasantry are the most resolute forces in the Chinese revolution.

China's petty bourgeoisie also wants resistance. Have not the young students and the urban petty bourgeoisie already started a broad anti-Japanese movement? This section of the Chinese petty bourgeoisie took part in the revolution of 1924-1927. Like the peasants, they are small producers in their economic status, and their interests are irreconcilable with those of imperialism. Imperialism and the Chinese counterrevolutionary forces have done them great harm, driving many into unemployment, bankruptcy, or semibankruptcy. Now, faced with the immediate danger of becoming slaves without a country, they have no alternative but to resist.

And how does the question present itself to the national bourgeoisie, the comprador and landlord classes, and the Guomindang?

The big local bullies, the big bad gentry, the big warlords, the big bureaucrats, and the big compradors long ago made up their minds. They have said in the past, and still say, that revolution (of whatever kind) is after all worse than imperialism. They have formed a camp of traitors, for whom the question of whether or not to become slaves without a country simply does not exist, because they have already obliterated national boundaries, and their interests are inseparable from those of imperialism. Their chieftain is Chiang Kai-shek. This camp of traitors are deadly enemies of the Chinese people. Japanese imperialism could not have become so blatant in its aggression were it not for this pack of traitors. They are the running dogs of imperialism.

The national bourgeoisie presents a complicated problem. This class took part in the revolution of 1924-1927, but terrified by the flames of this revolution, it subsequently went over to the side of the enemy of the people, the Chiang Kai-shek clique. The question is whether there is any possibility that the national bourgeoisie can undergo a change under present circumstances. We think there is such a possibility. This is because the national bourgeoisie is not the same as the landlord class or the comprador class; there is a difference between them. The national bourgeoisie does not have such a marked feudal character as the landlord class, nor does it have the same comprador character as the comprador class.

Within the national bourgeoisie there is a section having more ties with foreign capital and Chinese landed interests, which constitutes its right wing. We shall not, for the time being, speculate regarding its capacity for change. The problem lies with those sections that have no such ties, or relatively few such ties. We believe that given the new situation in which China is threatened with being reduced to a colony, the attitude of these sections of the national bourgeoisie may undergo a change. This change will be marked by vacillation. On the one hand they dislike imperialism, and on the other they fear the thoroughness of revolution, so they vacillate between the two. This explains why they took part in the revolution of 1924-1927 and why, at the end of that period, they went over to

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Chiang Kaishek’s side. How does the present period differ from 1927, when Chiang Kaishek betrayed the revolution? China was then still a semi-colony, but now is on the way to becoming a colony. Over the past nine years they cast off their ally, the working class, and made friends with the landlord and comprador classes, but have they gained anything by it? No, nothing, except for the bankruptcy or semi-bankruptcy of national industrial and commercial enterprises. For these reasons we believe that given the present situation the attitude of the national bourgeoisie could change. What would be the extent of the change? The overall characteristic is vacillation. But at certain stages of the struggle, one section of them (the left wing) may join in, while another section may vacillate toward neutrality.

Whose class interests does the Nineteenth Route Army, led by Cai Tingkai and others, represent? Those of the national bourgeoisie, the upper petty bourgeoisie, and the rich peasants and small landlords in the countryside. Did not Cai Tingkai and his associates once fight bitterly against the Red Army? Yet they subsequently concluded an anti-Japanese and anti-Chiang alliance with the Red Army. In Jiangxi they attacked the Red Army, but later in Shanghai they fought against Japanese imperialism; later still, in Fujian they came to terms with the Red Army and turned their guns against Chiang Kaishek.1 Whatever course Cai Tingkai and his associates may take in the future, and despite the fact that the Fujian People’s Government at the time clung to old ways in failing to arouse the people to struggle, it must be considered an action beneficial to the revolution that they turned their guns, originally trained on the Red Army, against Japanese imperialism and Chiang Kaishek. This marks a split within the Guomindang camp. If the circumstances following the September 18th incident could cause this group to split off from the Guomindang camp, then why would not present circumstances create a breakup of the Guomindang? Those in our Party who hold the view that the entire landlord and bourgeois camp is united and permanently fixed and cannot be changed by any circumstances are wrong. They not only fail to recognize today’s serious situation, they have even forgotten history.

Let me speak a little more about history. In 1926 and 1927, during the time when the revolutionary army advanced on Wuhan, entered it, and marched into Henan, what happened is that Tang Shengzhi and Feng Yuxiang took part in the revolution.2 In 1933 Feng Yuxiang even cooperated for a time with the Communist Party in forming the Anti-Japanese Allied Army in Chahar.

As for another clear example, did not the Twenty-sixth Route Army, which, together with the Nineteenth Route Army had attacked the Red Army in Jiangxi, stage the Ningdu Uprising in December 1931 and become part of the Red Army?3 The leaders of the Ningdu Uprising, Zhao Bosheng,4 Dong Zhentang,5 and others have become steadfast revolutionary comrades.

The anti-Japanese actions of Ma Zhanhuan6 in the Three Northeastern Provinces also represent a split in the camp of the ruling class.

All these instances clearly indicate that splits will occur in the enemy camp when all of China comes within the range of Japanese bombs, and when the struggle changes its normal pace and suddenly surges forward.

Now, comrades, let us turn to another aspect of the question.

Would it be correct to object to our view on the grounds that China’s national bourgeoisie is politically and economically weak, and to argue that it cannot possibly change its attitude even though it finds itself in new circumstances? I think not. If weakness is the reason for its inability to change its attitude, why did the national bourgeoisie alter its stance in 1924 to 1927 and not merely vacillate but actually join the revolution? Could it be that the national bourgeoisie’s weakness is a new illness, and not one they brought with them from the very womb? Could it be that they are weak today but were not weak in those days? One of the main political and economic characteristics of a semicolonial country is the weakness of its national bourgeoisie. That is precisely why imperialism dares to bully them, and it follows that one of their characteristics is dislike of imperialism. Naturally, far from denying it, we fully recognize that this is the very thing that makes it easy for imperialism and the landlord and comprador classes to win them over with the bait of some temporary advantage, and accounts for their lack of thoroughness when it comes to revolution. Nevertheless, it still cannot be said that in present circumstances there is no difference at all between them and the landlord and comprador classes.

Therefore, we emphatically assert that when the national crisis reaches a crucial moment, splits will occur in the Guomindang camp. Such splits manifest themselves in the vacillation of the national bourgeoisie and the emergence of such anti-Japanese figures as Feng Yuxiang, Cai Tingkai, and Ma Zhanhuan, who are in the limelight for a time. Such situations are basically detrimental to the counterrevolution and favorable to the revolution. Their possibility is increased by China’s uneven political and economic development and the consequent uneven development of the revolution.

3. The Ningdu Uprising took place in December 1931, when a group of officers in the Guomindang Twenty-sixth Army, stationed in Ningdu, mutinied and led the entire force over to join the Red Army.
4. Zhao Bosheng had been killed in action in January 1933. See, in Volume IV, pp. 353–54, the order on renaming a xian in his honor.
5. Dong Zhentang (1895–1937), a native of Hebei, was a graduate of the Baoding Military Academy. As indicated by Mao, he participated in the December 1931 Ningdu Uprising, and joined the Chinese Communist Party in April 1932. At this time he was commander of the Fifth Red Army. He was killed in combat in January 1937.
6. On Ma Zhanhuan, see Volume IV, p. 209n2.
Comrades! So much for the positive side of the question. Let me now take up the negative side, which is the fact that certain elements among the national bourgeoisie are often masters at deceiving the popular masses. Why? Because among them, apart from genuine supporters of the people’s revolutionary cause, there are many who temporarily appear as revolutionaries or semi-revolutionaries and thus acquire a deceptive status that makes it difficult for the popular masses to see through their lack of thoroughness and their false trappings. This increases the responsibility devolving on the Communist Party to criticize its allies, expose fake revolutionaries, and gain the leadership. To deny the possibility that the national bourgeoisie may vacillate and join the revolution during times of great upheaval amounts to abandoning, or at least minimizing, our Party’s task of contending for the leadership. For if the national bourgeoisie were exactly the same as the landlords and compradors and appeared with the same vile and traitorous visage, then the problem of contending with it for the leadership would virtually disappear, or at least be greatly reduced.

In making a general analysis of the attitude of the Chinese landlord class and bourgeoisie in this great upheaval, another aspect should be pointed out, which is that even the landlord and comprador camp is not entirely united. This is a product of China’s being a semicolonial, a country for which many imperialist powers are contending. When the struggle is directed against Japanese imperialism, the running dogs of the United States, or even of Britain, obeying the varying tones of their masters’ commands, may engage in veiled strife, or even in open conflict with the Japanese imperialists and their running dogs. There have been very many such dog-fights in the past, and we shall not dwell upon them. We will mention now only the fact that Hu Hanmin, a Guomindang politician once detained by Chiang Kai-shek, has recently added his signature to the Six-Point Program for Resisting Japan and Saving the Nation that we have put forward. The warlords of the Guangdong and Guangxi cliques who are behind Hu Hanmin are also opposing Chiang Kaishek under the deceitful slogans of “Recover our lost territories” and “Resist Japan and at the same time suppress the bandits” (Chiang Kaishek’s is “First suppress the bandits, then resist Japan”). Does this not seem rather strange? No, it is not strange at all, but merely a particularly amusing fight between large and small dogs, between well-fed dogs and hungry dogs. It is neither a big rift nor a small one, and it is at once an irritating and painful contradiction. But such fights, such rifts, such contradictions are actually of use to the revolutionary people. We must turn to good account all such fights, rifts, and contradictions in the enemy camp and use them against our present main enemy.

To sum up this question of class relations it may be said that the basic change in the situation, which is that Japanese imperialism has invaded China proper, has led to changes in the relationship among the various classes in China, strengthened the camp of national revolution, and weakened the camp of counterrevolution.

Now let us discuss the situation in the camp of China’s national revolution.

First, the situation in the Red Army. Just consider this, comrades. For about a year and a half the Chinese Red Army’s three main forces have been making major shifts in position. The Sixth Army Group, led by Comrade Ren Bishi and others, began to move to Comrade He Long’s area in August of last year, and following that we ourselves began to shift positions in October. In March of this year the Red Army in the Sichuan-Shaanxi Border Area began its shift. All three Red Army branch forces abandoned their old positions and moved to new areas. These big shifts have turned the old areas into guerrilla zones. In the process of making these shifts, the Red Army itself has been considerably weakened. Looked at from this aspect of the overall situation, the enemy has won a temporary and partial victory, while we have suffered a temporary and partial defeat. Is it right to say this? I think it is, for these are the facts. But there are people (Zhang Guotao, for example) who say that the Central Red Army has been defeated. Is this statement correct? No, it isn’t, because this is not a fact. In approaching a problem, a Marxist should see the whole as well as the parts. A frog sitting in a well says, “The sky is as big as the mouth of a well.” This is not

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7. For a biography of Hu Hanmin, including an account of his conflict with Chiang Kai-shek in 1930-1931, see Volume IV, p. 64, n.21. As regards the “Six-Point Program,” Mao appears to be conflating here two separate documents. On April 10, 1934, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party had issued a “Statement to the People of the Whole Country on the Japanese Imperialists’ Invasion of North China and Their Threat to Swallow All of China.” (Text originally published in Dousheng, no. 59, April 20, 1934; summary in Hsiao Tso-liang [Xiao Zuliang], Power Relations within the Chinese Communist Movement, 1930–1934 [Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961], pp. 226–27.) The following month, on May 3, 1934, Song Qingling and others put forward a somewhat different proposal, likewise in six points, which was ultimately signed by more than 1,700 persons. Hu Hanmin presumably signed this latter document, in which the six points were: (1) Mobilize all sea, land, and air forces to fight Japan; (2) Mobilize the people throughout the country; (3) Arm all the people; (4) Conspire the fate of the Japanese imperialists in China and of all the traitors to defray war expenditure; (5) Establish an All-China Committee for Armed National Self-Defence; and (6) Form an alliance with all the forces opposed to Japanese imperialism.

8. For a biography of Ren Bishi, see the Introduction to Volume IV, p. xxxvii, n.18. In July 1934, he had become chairman of the political committee of the Sixth Army Group, then located in the Hunan-Jiangxi base area.

9. He Long (1896–1969) was a native of Hunan, who had commanded the Guomindang Twentieth Army in the Northern Expedition. He participated in the Nanchang Uprising, and joined the Chinese Communist Party in August 1927. In 1930, he became commander of the Second Red Army Group, located in the Hunan-Hubei border area. At the beginning of the Long March, this force broke through the Guomindang blockade and moved to Guizhou, where it was merged with the Sixth Army Group to form the Second Front Army.

10. On Zhang Guotao, see above, the Introduction to this volume.
right, as the sky is not merely as big as the mouth of a well. If it said, "A part of the sky is as big as the mouth of a well," that would be right, as it coincides with the facts. We say the Red Army has failed in one respect (that is, in maintaining its original positions), but won victory in another respect (completing plans for the Long March). The enemy has been victorious in one respect (that of occupying our original positions), but has failed in another respect (that of realizing his plans for "Encirclement and Suppression" and "Pursuit and Suppression."). This is the only appropriate formulation, for we have completed the Long March.

Speaking of the Long March, one might ask, "What is its significance?" We say that the Long March is unprecedented in the annals of history, that the Long March is a manifesto, a propaganda team, a seeding machine. Since the time when Pan Gu divided the heavens from the earth and the Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors reigned,11 has history ever witnessed such a Long March as ours? For a period of twelve months we were subject to daily reconnaissance and bombing from the skies by scores of planes, and on the ground to encirclement and pursuit, obstruction and interception, by a huge force of hundreds of thousands. We met with untold difficulties and dangers along the way, yet by using each person's two legs we swept across a distance of more than 20,000 li through the length and breadth of eleven provinces. Let us ask, has history ever known a long march to equal ours? No, never. The Long March is, indeed, a manifesto. It has proclaimed to the world that the Red Army is made up of brave heroes, whereas the imperialists and their running dogs, Chiang Kaishek and his ilk, are utterly useless. The Long March proclaimed the total failure of imperialism and Chiang Kaishek in encircling, pursuing, obstructing, and intercepting us. The Long March is also a propaganda team. It has announced to some 200 million people in eleven provinces that the road of the Red Army is their only road to liberation. If it were not for this undertaking, how would the broad popular masses have learned so quickly about the existence of the great truth embodied by the Red Army? The Long March is as well a seeding machine. In eleven provinces it has sown many seeds that will sprout, leaf, blossom, and bear fruit, and eventually will yield a harvest. In a word, the Long March has ended with victory for us and defeat for the enemy. Who brought about the victory of the Long March? The Communist Party. Without the Communist Party, a long march of this kind would have been inconceivable. The Chinese Communist Party, its leading organs, its cadres, and its members fear no difficulties or hardships. Whoever doubts our ability to lead the revolution—

11. Pan Gu, according to one Chinese cosmogonic myth, was the earliest being brought into existence, who set the universe in order and constructed the world. The Three Sovereigns (including Fuxi and Shen Nong, who is said to have invented agriculture) and Five Emperors (beginning with Huang Di, the Yellow Emperor, and ending with Yao and Shun, who were idolized as model Confucian rulers) belong to another and older tradition. Mao's writings include numerous references to all these figures.

ary war will sink into the morass of opportunism. As soon as the Long March was over, a new situation began. In the battle of Zhaluozhen, the fraternal solidarity between the Central Red Army and the Northwestern Red Army shattered T'ai-pan Kaishek's "Encirclement and Suppression" campaign against the Shaanxi-Gansu Border Area, thus laying the cornerstone for the Party Central Committee's task of establishing the national headquarters of the revolution in northwestern China.

This being the situation with regard to the Red Army's main forces, what about the guerrilla warfare in the various southern provinces? Guerrilla warfare in the south has suffered certain setbacks but has not been wiped out altogether. In many places it is undergoing revitalization, growth, and expansion.

In the areas under Guomindang rule, the workers' struggle is moving beyond the factory walls, and from being an economic struggle toward becoming a political struggle. The heroic struggle of the working class against the Japanese and the traitors who are selling out the country is now in intense ferment, and appears to be on the verge of erupting.

The peasants' struggle has never ceased. Harassed by aggression from abroad, difficulties at home, and natural disasters in addition, the peasants have unleashed widespread struggles in the form of guerrilla warfare, popular rebellions, famine riots, and so on. The anti-Japanese guerrilla warfare now going on in the Northeastern Provinces and eastern Hebei is replying to the attacks of Japanese imperialism.

The student movement has already grown considerably and will surely go on doing so. But for it to sustain itself in the long run and to break through the martial law imposed by the traitors and the policy of sabotage and massacre practiced by the police, the secret service, the scoundrels in the educational world, and the fascists it is necessary to coordinate with the struggles of the workers, peasants, and soldiers.

The vacillation of the national bourgeoisie, the rich peasants in the countryside, and the small landlords, and the possibility of their participating in the anti-Japanese struggle has already been discussed above.

The national minorities, and especially the people of Inner Mongolia, who are directly menaced by Japanese imperialism, are now rising up in struggle. As time goes on their struggle will merge with that of the people in northern China and with the actions of the Red Army in the Northwest.

All of this indicates that the revolutionary situation is changing from a localized one into a nationwide one and that it is gradually changing from a state of unevenness to a certain degree of evenness. We are on the eve of a great change. The Party's task is to form a national revolutionary united front by combining the activities of the Red Army with all the activities of the workers, the peasants, the students, the petty bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie throughout the country.
The National United Front

Having surveyed the situation with regard to both the counterrevolution and the revolution, we shall find it easy to define the Party's tactical tasks.

What is the basic tactical task of the Party? It is none other than to establish a broad national revolutionary united front.

When the revolutionary situation undergoes a change, then revolutionary tactics and methods of leadership must change accordingly. The task of Japanese imperialism and Chinese traitors and collaborators is to turn China into a colony; our task is to turn China into a free and independent country with full territorial integrity.

To win China's independence and freedom is a tremendous task. It demands doing battle against foreign imperialism and domestic counterrevolutionary forces. Japanese imperialism is determined to bludgeon its way deep into China. So far the domestic counterrevolutionary forces of the despotic gentry and comprador classes are still stronger than the people's revolutionary forces. The job of overthrowing Japanese imperialism and China's counterrevolutionary forces is not something that can be accomplished overnight, and we must be prepared to devote a long time to it; it cannot be successfully achieved with a small amount of forces, so it is necessary to accumulate solid and abundant forces. In China as in the rest of the world, the counterrevolutionary forces are weaker than before and the revolutionary forces stronger. This is an accurate estimate of one aspect of the matter. We should point out at the same time, however, that at present in China as in the rest of the world, for the time being the counterrevolutionary forces are stronger than the revolutionary forces. This too is an accurate estimate of another aspect of the matter. China's uneven political and economic development has given rise to the uneven development of the revolution. As a rule revolution begins, starts to develop, and first triumphs in those places where counterrevolutionary forces are relatively weak, whereas it has yet to begin or develops very slowly in places where counterrevolutionary forces are strong. Such has long been the situation for the Chinese revolution. It may be anticipated that in future the general revolutionary situation will develop further at certain stages but that the unevenness will remain. To transform this unevenness into a general evenness will require a very long time, expending a great deal of effort, and reliance on the correctness of the Party's tactical line. Seeing that the revolutionary war led by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was concluded in three years, we must be prepared to devote to the already protracted revolutionary war led by the Chinese Communist Party the even longer time necessary to dispose finally and thoroughly of the domestic and foreign counterrevolutionary forces. The kind of impatience displayed in the past will never do. It is also necessary to work out sound revolutionary tactics; nothing great can be accomplished by spinning around within narrow confines as before. Which is not to say that in China things must be done slowly. Things in China must be done boldly, as the danger of national subjugation does not allow us a moment's slackening.

From now on the revolution is sure to develop much faster than before, as both China and the rest of the world are on the verge of a new period of war and revolution. Even so, China's revolutionary war will remain a protracted one; this is determined by the strength of imperialism and the uneven development of the revolution. We say that the present situation is one in which a new high tide in the national revolution is imminent and in which China is on the eve of a great new nationwide revolution. This is one characteristic of the present revolutionary situation. This is a fact that has to do with one aspect of the matter. Now we say in addition that imperialism is still a force to be reckoned with, that the uneven state of the revolutionary forces is a serious weakness, and that to defeat the enemy it is necessary to prepare to fight a protracted war. This is another characteristic of the present revolutionary situation. This, too, is a fact, and it has to do with another aspect of the matter. These two characteristics, these two facts, both teach us and demand that we modify our tactics and our ways of deploying troops and carrying on the struggle according to the situation. The present situation requires that we boldly discard closed-doorism, form a broad united front, and guard against adventurism. We cannot plunge into decisive battles until the time is ripe and unless we have the necessary strength to fight them.

Here I shall not discuss the relationship between closed-doorism and adventurism, nor shall I talk about the possible dangers of adventurism as events unfold on a larger scale; these can be left to discuss later. Here I shall confine myself to explaining that united front tactics and closed-door tactics are diametrically opposed to each other.

The one requires recruiting large forces so as to surround and annihilate the enemy.

The other means fighting single-handed in desperate combat against a formidable enemy.

Arguments in favor of the one say that unless an adequate estimate is made of how Japanese imperialism's actions to turn China into a colony may alter the alignment of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces in China, an adequate estimate cannot be made of the possibility of organizing a broad national revolutionary united front. Without a proper estimate of the strong points and weak points of the Japanese and Chinese counterrevolutionary forces and the Chinese revolutionary forces, no proper account will be taken of the necessity of organizing a broad national revolutionary united front; no firm measures will be taken to break down closed-doorism; the weapon of a united front will not be used to organize and rally millions of the popular masses and all armies that are potentially friendly to the revolution for the purpose of advancing in attack against the central target of Japanese imperialism and its running dogs, the Chinese traitors; and instead of using our own tactical weapon to strike at the main target before us, the targets will be dispersed so that the principal enemy will not be hit and our bullets will rather strike our lesser enemies, or even our allies. This could be called an inability to single out the main enemy and a waste
of ammunition. It would be impossible in this way to close in on the enemy and drive him into an isolated position. It would be impossible in this way to draw over to our side from the enemy camp and the enemy front all those who are in the enemy camp under compulsion, who were our enemies in the past but could become our friends today. It would in fact mean helping the enemy and holding back, isolating, and constricting the revolution, bringing it to a low ebb and even to defeat.

Arguments in favor of the other set of tactics say that all these criticisms are wrong. The forces of revolution must be the purest of the pure, and the road of revolution must be straighter than straight. Only what is recorded in the Bible is correct. The national bourgeoisie is entirely and forever counterrevolutionary. Not a single inch may be conceded to the rich peasants. The yellow trade unions must be fought tooth and nail. If one shakes hands with Cai Tingkai, one must call him a counterrevolutionary even as one does so. How could there be such a thing as a cat that does not love fish, or a warlord who is not a counterrevolutionary? Intellectuals have only about three days’ worth of revolution in them, so they are dangerous to recruit. It follows, therefore, that closed-doorism is the only magic weapon, and the united front is an opportunistic tactic.

Comrades, which is right, the argument for a united front or the argument for closed-doorism? Which of them, after all, does Marxism-Leninism favor? I answer without any hesitation: it favors the united front and opposes closed-doorism. Among people there are three-year-olds, and three-year-olds have many correct ideas, but they cannot be entrusted with serious national or world affairs because they have yet to understand such matters. Marxism-Leninism opposes the infantile disorders found in the ranks of the revolution. What staunch exponents of closed-door tactics advocate is an infantile disorder. The road of revolution, like that of all other phenomena and activities in the world, is always a tortuous one, never a straight one. The alignment of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces can change, just as can all else in the world. The two basic facts, that Japanese imperialism is bent on turning China into its colony and that China’s actual revolutionary forces still have serious weaknesses, constitute the starting point for the Party’s new tactic of a broad united front. To organize millions upon millions of the popular masses and move a mighty revolutionary army into action are necessary in the attack of today’s revolution on the counterrevolution. The plain truth is that only a force of such magnitude can topple Japanese imperialism and the Chinese traitors and collaborators. Therefore, only united front tactics are Marxist-Leninist tactics. Closed-door tactics are, on the other hand, the tactics of a regal isolationism. Closed-doorism “drives the fish into deep waters and the sparrows into the thickets,” and will drive the “millions upon millions” and the “mighty army” over to the enemy’s side, and

cannot but win the enemy’s acclaim. Closed-doorism is actually the faithful servant of Japanese imperialism and the Chinese traitors and collaborators. Closed-doorism’s so-called “purity” and “straightness” will be condemned by Marxism-Leninism and commended by Japanese imperialism. We definitely do not want closed-doorism. What we want is a national revolutionary united front that will deliver a death blow to Japanese imperialism and the Chinese traitors and collaborators.

The People’s Republic

If we say that in the past our government has been that of an alliance of the workers, the peasants, and the urban petty bourgeoisie, then from now on it should be transformed to include, in addition to these classes, all those elements from other classes who wish to participate in the national revolution.

At present the basic task of this government is to oppose Japanese imperialism’s annexation of China. The class composition of this government will expand to encompass a much broader scope. Not only can those who are interested in national revolution but not in agrarian revolution participate, but even those who are unable to oppose European and American imperialism, because they have ties with them, but who may oppose Japanese imperialism and its running dogs, can also participate. Therefore, as a matter of principle, this government’s program should be in keeping with the basic task of fighting Japanese imperialism and its running dogs, and our past policies should be modified accordingly.

A special characteristic of the revolutionary side at present is the existence of a well-trained Communist Party and a well-trained Red Army. This is of utmost importance. If a well-trained Communist Party and Red Army did not yet exist, then great difficulties would arise. Why is this? Because there are many Chinese traitors and collaborators in the country, and they are powerful and are sure to devise every possible means to wreck the united front. They will sow dissension by means of intimidation and bribery and by maneuvering among various groupings, and will use military force to oppress and crush, one by one, all forces weaker than themselves who wish to part company with the traitors and join with us in fighting Japan. If the anti-Japanese government and the anti-Japanese army were lacking the crucial factors of the Communist Party and the Red Army, this situation would hardly be avoidable. The main reason the revolution failed in 1927 is the opportunist line then prevailing in the Communist Party, which meant that no effort was made to expand our own ranks (the workers’ and peasants’ movement and the army led by the Communist Party) and reliance was placed exclusively on a temporary ally, the Guomindang. The result was that imperialism ordered its running dogs, the despotistic gentry and comprador classes, to spread out their innumerable tentacles and first draw over Chiang Kaishan, after which they drew over Wang Jingwei, thereby causing the defeat of the

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12. I.e., the unions controlled by the Guomindang, which therefore, in the view of the Communists, betray the working class.
revolution. At that time the revolutionary united front had no mainstay and no strong revolutionary armed forces, and when defections broke out all over, the Communist Party was forced to fight single-handed and was powerless to foil the imperialists’ and Chinese counterrevolutionaries’ tactics of crushing their opponents one by one. At the time there was a military force under He Long and Ye Ting, but it was not yet a politically consolidated army, and the Party was not very good at leading them, so that in the end they were defeated. This was a lesson paid for with blood, that the lack of a revolutionary core force brings the revolution to defeat. Today things have changed. A strong Communist Party and a strong Red Army already exist, as do the Red Army base areas. Not only are the Communist Party and the Red Army serving as the initiators of the anti-Japanese national united front at present, but in the future as well they will inevitably become the powerful mainstay of the anti-Japanese government and anti-Japanese army, rendering it impossible for the Japanese imperialists and Chiang Kai-shek to accomplish the final goal of their policy of dismantling the anti-Japanese national united front. Without a doubt the Japanese imperialists and Chiang Kai-shek are bound to use all manner of intimidation, bribery, and maneuvering among the various groupings, so we must be highly vigilant.

Naturally we cannot expect every section of the broad ranks of the anti-Japanese national united front to be as firm as the Communist Party and the Red Army. In the course of their activities some bad elements may very well withdraw from the united front under the enemy’s influence. But we need not fear the withdrawal of such people. Just as bad elements may leave under the enemy’s influence, some good people will come in under ours. So long as the Communist Party and the Red Army themselves exist and develop, the anti-Japanese national united front is bound to exist and develop as well. Such is the leading role of the Communist Party and the Red Army in the national united front. Communists are no longer infants, and they are able to take care of themselves and deal with their allies. If the Japanese imperialists and Chiang Kai-shek can use manipulatory tactics in relation to the revolutionary forces, the Communist Party can do the same in relation to the counterrevolutionary forces. If they can draw bad elements in our ranks away from us, we can just as well draw over from their ranks “bad elements” (good elements in our view) to our side. If we can draw more people from their ranks over to our side, then the enemy’s forces will be diminished and ours will be expanded. In sum, two basic forces are now struggling against each other, and it is in the nature of things that all the intermediate forces must line up with one side or the other. The fact is that the Japanese imperialists’ and Chiang Kai-shek’s respective policies of subjugating China and selling out China cannot fail to drive many forces over to our side, either to join the ranks of the Communist Party and the Red Army directly, or to form a united front with the Communist Party and the Red Army. As long as we do not adopt the tactics of closed-doorism, this goal can be achieved.

Why should we change the workers’ and peasants’ republic into a people’s republic?

Our government represents not only the workers and peasants but the whole nation. This fact has been implicit in the original slogan of a workers’ and peasants’ government, because workers and peasants constitute 80 to 90 percent of the nation’s population. The Ten-Point Program adopted by our Party’s Sixth Congress13 embodies the interests of the entire nation and not only those of the workers and peasants. But the present situation requires us to modify this slogan and change it to that of a people’s republic. This is because Japanese invasion has altered class relationships in China, and it is now possible not only for the petty bourgeoisie but even for the national bourgeoisie to take part in the anti-Japanese struggle.

Beyond a doubt, the people’s republic will certainly not represent the interests of the enemy classes. On the contrary, the people’s republic stands in direct opposition to the despotic gentry and comprador classes, those lackeys of imperialism, and does not count such elements among the people. This is the same as Chiang Kai-shek’s “National Government of the Republic of China” representing only the very wealthiest and not the common people, whom it does not count as part of the “nation.” As 80 to 90 percent of China’s population is made up of workers and peasants, the people’s republic should first and foremost represent their interests. But by throwing off imperialist oppression to make China free and independent and by throwing off landlord oppression to free China from the semifeudal system, the people’s republic will benefit not only the workers and peasants but the rest of the people as well. The sum total of the interests of the workers and peasants and of the rest of the people make up the interests of the whole Chinese nation. Although the comprador and landlord classes also live on Chinese soil, they have no regard for the national interest; their interests clash with those of the majority of the people. We break and clash only with this small minority, so we have the right to call ourselves the representatives of the whole nation.

There is also a conflict between the interests of the working class and those of the national bourgeoisie. The national revolution cannot be successfully unfolded

13. The reference is to the “major slogans” or “ten great demands” included in the Political Resolution adopted on July 9, 1928, at the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, held in Moscow. The points were (1) Overthrow the rule of imperialism; (2) Confiscate enterprises and banks of foreign capitalism; (3) Unify China and recognize national self-determination; (4) Overthrow the warlord and Guomindang régime; (5) Establish the régime of councils of workers’, peasants’, and soldiers’ deputies; (6) Realize the eight-hour day, higher wages, unemployment relief, social security, etc.; (7) Confiscate the land of all landlords—land should belong to the peasants; (8) Improve the livelihood of the soldiers and allot them land and work; (9) Abolish taxes imposed by the government, warlords, and local administrations; institute unified, progressive taxes; (10) Unite with the proletariat of the whole world and with the Soviet Union. For the context, see Saich, Rise to Power, pp. 341–58.
unless its vanguard is accorded political and economic rights, unless the working class is enabled to direct its strength against imperialism and its running dogs, the traitors to their country. But if the national bourgeoisie takes part in the anti-imperialist united front, then the working class and the national bourgeoisie will share interests in common. During the period of bourgeois-democratic revolution the people’s republic will not expropriate private property other than imperialist and feudal private property, and far from confiscating the national bourgeoisie’s industrial and commercial enterprises it will rather encourage their development. We shall protect any national capitalist who does not support imperialism or the Chinese traitors. During the stage of democratic revolution there are limits to the struggle between labor and capital. The labor laws of the people’s republic will protect the interests of the workers but will not oppose the national bourgeoisie’s making profits or developing national industrial and commercial enterprises, because such development is bad for imperialism and good for the Chinese people. From this it is clear that the people’s republic will represent the interests of all strata of the people opposed to imperialism and feudal forces. The government of the people’s republic will be based primarily on the workers and peasants, but at the same time will encompass all other classes that are opposed to imperialism and feudal forces.

Is it not dangerous to let such people take part in the government of the people’s republic? No, it is not. The workers and peasants are the basic masses of this republic. Giving the urban petty bourgeoisie, the intellectuals, and other elements who support an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal program a voice in and the right to work in the government of the people’s republic, and the right to vote and to stand for election, cannot violate the interests of the workers and peasants, the basic masses. The essential part of our program must be to protect the interests of the basic worker-peasant masses. The fact that the representatives of the basic masses of workers and peasants comprise the majority in the government of the people’s republic, and the leadership and activities of the Communist Party in this government, all serve to guarantee that the participation of these others will present no danger. It is perfectly obvious that the Chinese revolution at the present stage is still a bourgeois-democratic revolution in nature, not a proletarian-socialist one. Only the counterrevolutionary Trotskyites talk such nonsense as that China has already completed its bourgeois-democratic revolution, and that any further revolution can only be a socialist one. The revolution of 1924 to 1927 was a bourgeois-democratic revolution in nature, and that revolution was not completed but failed. The agrarian revolution we have led from 1927 to the present is also bourgeois-democratic in nature, because its task is to oppose imperialism and feudalism, not capitalism. This will remain true of the revolution for a rather long time to come.

The motive forces of the revolution are still basically the workers, the peasants, and the urban petty bourgeoisie, but now the national bourgeoisie can be added.

The transformation of the revolution is in the future. In the future the democratic revolution will inevitably be transformed into a socialist revolution. As for when such a transformation will take place, that must depend on the presence of the necessary conditions for transformation, and this may take a rather long time. There should be no holding forth on transformation until all necessary political and economic conditions are present and until such a transformation would be advantageous rather than detrimental to the overwhelming majority of the country’s people. It is wrong to have doubts on this point and expect the transformation to take place in a short period of time, as some comrades did in the past when they maintained that the transformation of the revolution would begin the moment the democratic revolution began to triumph in key provinces. They did so because they failed to see what kind of country China is with regard to political and economic conditions, and they failed to realize that, compared with Russia, it will be much more difficult for China to complete her democratic revolution politically and economically, and it will require much more time and effort.

International Support

Finally, something needs to be said about the relationship between the Chinese revolution and world revolution.

Ever since the monster of imperialism came into being, the affairs of the world have become so closely interwoven that it is impossible to separate them. We Chinese have the spirit to fight our enemy to the last drop of blood, the determination to recover our lost territory through our own efforts, and the ability to stand on our own two feet in the world’s family of nations. But this does not mean that we can dispense with international support. No, international support is necessary for the revolutionary struggle of any country and any nation today. The ancients said: "In the Spring and Autumn Period there were no righteous wars."14 This is even more true of imperialism today, and only oppressed nations and oppressed classes can wage just wars. All wars anywhere in the world in which the people rise up to fight their oppressors are just wars. The February and October revolutions in Russia were just wars. The revolutions of the people in various European countries after World War I were just wars. In China, the Anti-opium War, the War of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, the Boxer War, the Revolutionary War of 1911, the war of the Northern Expedition in 1926–1927, the war of agrarian revolution from 1927 to the present, and today’s resistance against Japan and punitive actions against traitors are all just wars. In the current rising tide of nationwide resistance to Japan and of worldwide struggle against fascism, just wars will spread all over China and the world. All just wars support each other, and all unjust wars should be turned into just wars. This is the Leninist line. Our war of resistance against Japan needs the

support of the people of the whole world, first and foremost the support of the people of the Soviet Union, which they will certainly give us, as we are bound together with them in a common cause. For a time in the past, Chinese revolutionary forces were cut off from world revolutionary forces by Chiang Kaishek, and in this sense we were isolated. Now this situation has changed, and changed to our advantage. Henceforth the situation will continue to change to our advantage. We can no longer be isolated. This provides a necessary condition for China's victory in the war against Japan and in the Chinese revolution.
Dispositions Regarding the Operations of the First Army Group and of the Twenty-fifth Army

(January 5, 1936, 2:00 P.M.)

Peng and Yang, Zuo and Nie, Xu and Cheng, Guo and Zhu:¹

1. In order to bring about a balanced development toward the south of the Soviet areas to the east and to the west of the Luo River, to develop the Soviet areas farther southward in general, to make it more difficult for the enemy coming from the south to launch a northward attack, and to reduce the threat from the enemy forces in Shanxi, the tasks of the First Army Group and the Twenty-fifth Army² are, passing in and out between the five xian towns of Luochuan, Baishui, Chengcheng, Hancheng, and Yichuan, to expand the Soviet areas, expand the Red Army, expand anti-Japanese propaganda, and raise adequate funds for battle.

2. Deployment: Place the main forces to the east and south of the mountain range situated between the Luo River and the Yellow River. In principle one unit is to be stationed to the east and an initial-stage Soviet area is to be created along the mountain range, and handed over to the local troops to continue its development in depth.

3. The time to start the movement southward is the 18th, and to end it, the 25th, so as to prepare for a new operational task beginning on the 26th.

Our source for this document is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 426–27, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

¹ Peng and Yang are Peng Dehuai, the commander-in-chief of the main Red Army force, which had now resumed the name of First Front Army, and Yang Shangkun, the head of the Political Department. For a biography of Yang, see above the relevant note to the text of December 24, 1935. Zuo and Nie are Zuo Quan (1906–1942), a native of Hunan, and Nie Rongzhen, who were, respectively, chief-of-staff and political commissar of the First Front Army’s First Army Group. Xu and Cheng are Xu Haidong and Cheng Zhihua, who were, respectively, commander and political commissar of the Fifteenth Army Group of the First Front Army. Guo and Zhu are Guo Shushen and Zhu Rui, respectively, heads of the Political Department of the First Army Group and of the Fifteenth Army Group of the First Front Army.

² The Red Army’s Twenty-fifth Army had been established in Hubei in late 1932. After the Long March it was combined in September 1935 with the Twenty-Sixth and Twenty-Seventh armies of Shaanxi and Gansu to form the Fifteenth Army Group. The Twenty-fifth Army itself became the Seventy-fifth Division. Here Mao is using the old designation, as he often did during this transitional period.
4. The headquarters of the Front Army can remain as before near Ganquan.
5. Peng is the one to plan and issue orders to carry out the details of deployment.
6. Before commencing its operations, the Twenty-fifth Army is to choose ten of the better Party members from southern Shaanxi, preferably including people from the xian of Ningshan, Zhen’an, and Shangnan, and send them to the Shaanxi-Gansu Provincial Committee so that they may be assigned to work in southern Shaanxi.
7. The Provincial Committee should send local cadres and local troops to operate together with the First Army Group and the Twenty-fifth Army to develop and take charge of the soviet areas.
8. Yang should have a plan for political work.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]

Approved of Dispositions for the Northern Expeditionary Army to Attack the Enemy’s Reinforcements

(January 7, 1936, 9:00 A.M.)

Liu, Song:

1. In order to provide more room for maneuver to the forces that are lying in wait to ambush the enemy, we agree that the northern expeditionary army should change the direction of its operations to Hanjiacha and Shipazi. If the enemy has completed most of his fortifications in this area, then attack should be changed to encirclement, and preparations made to attack the enemy’s reinforcements. If the enemy has already withdrawn you should press on toward Hengshan and engage the enemy’s reinforcements.

2. To encircle the enemy’s fortifications and cities and towns it is necessary to cut his communication lines, which enable the enemy to increase his reinforcements quickly. In attacking the enemy’s reinforcements, whether they are large or small, it is necessary to operate with the main forces, surround them from both wings (with a primary direction of attack, naturally), and completely cut off the enemy’s escape route so that his forces will be eliminated all at once and none of them escapes the net.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 428–29, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The Northern Expeditionary Army (also called the Northern Route Army) had been set up in December 1935 to defend the Shaanxi-Gansu Soviet Area against threats from Guomindang forces. It was composed of the Twenty-eighth Army, the Seventy-eighth Division, and a cavalry regiment.

2. Liu and Song are Liu Zhidan, commander of the Twenty-eighth Army, and Song Renqiong, political commissar of the same army. For their biographies, see the relevant notes to the text dated December 17, 1935.

3. Hanjiacha is a village located in the central part of Hengshan xian in Shaanxi Province.
Dispositions for Wiping Out Yuan Kezheng’s Regiment and Other Units

(January 9, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

To Peng, Xu, and Cheng, and for transmittal to Zuo and Nie:¹

1. Apart from Yuan’s enemy regiment² and five companies of the 684th Regiment, today (the 9th) two battalions of the 630th Regiment and four battalions of the 117th Division were added, making in all three regiments and five companies. What is the situation today? It is hoped that Xu and Cheng will inform Peng and also let me know.

2. Xu and Cheng, Zuo and Nie should, in accordance with the telegram of 7:00 A.M. on the 9th from Peng and Yang regarding deployment,³ resolutely destroy this enemy. The troops should be concentrated for this purpose. If Zuo and Nie have not yet arrived, then a smaller unit may pin down the enemy’s main force while our largest main force surrounds one of the enemy’s regiments and wipes it out. If Zuo and Nie and the Thirteenth Regiment have arrived, then the plan of surrounding and eliminating the enemy’s main force is to be adopted.

3. When is it estimated that Zuo and Nie can reach Luoshengzhen? Please have Peng inform me.

Mao

Rest, Train, and Prepare to Take on New Tasks

(January 13, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

To Peng [Dehuai], Zuo [Quan] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], Chen and Peng:¹

1. Zuo and Nie should be able to reach Luoshengzhen today. The Fourth Division has already arrived at Wuzhuangzhen.

2. All units of the First Army Group and Fifteenth Army Group should be concentrated in Luoshengzhen and Xiangzhen and the nearby areas. They are not to go far from these places, and should emphasize rest and physical strength, training in offensive battle, and politically raising to the highest level feelings of resistance to Japan and condemnation for the Chinese traitors, and are not to be distracted by other work.

3. The Fourth Division should remain close to the main force, and should be commanded by Zuo and Nie.

4. Be prepared to carry out a new task beginning on the 18th, securing enough good food for five days to use during the march.

5. Three clinics have already set out for Qiaojiazhuan and Bailonggou. Peng is requested to check and see whether they have arrived, and to order them to begin taking in wounded soldiers at once so as to relieve the field hospital and the troop station hospital. They are to reach Mazijie by the 19th.

6. Whether or not Ganquan comes into our hands, the current tasks of the Eighty-first Division and the First Regiment must be brought to completion by the 19th, and preparations made for new operations.

7. If Ganquan is not taken, the one regiment of the Twenty-ninth Army that is already concentrated is to be responsible for surrounding the city. Peng is requested to order this regiment immediately to set out for Ganquan.

8. The two army groups are to terminate all unfinished matters in the rear immediately. All personnel capable of moving with the troops must concentrate at Mazijie by the 19th, but those in Linzhengzhen are to remain where they are.

Mao

¹ Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 430–31, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

² Peng is Peng Dehuai. Xu and Cheng are Xu Haidong, Commander of the First Front Army’s Fifteenth Army Group, and its political commissar, Cheng Zihua. Zuo and Nie are Zuo Quan and Nie Rongzhen, mentioned above in the text of January 5, 1936.

³ The reference is to the 685th Regiment of the 129th Division of the Guomindang’s Sixty-seventh Army, commanded by Yuan Kezheng.

⁴ The reference is to a telegram from Peng Dehuai and Yang Shangkun to Xu Haidong and Cheng Zihua, to be copied and transmitted to Zuo Quan and Nie Rongzhen and reported to Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. The telegram ordered the Seventy-fifth Division of the Fifteenth Army Group, together with the Second Division and the Thirteenth Regiment of the First Army Group, to annihilate the enemy advancing toward Sanhuangzhen and Yongxiangzhen.
Letter from the Red Army to All Officers and Men of the Northeastern Army Concerning Its Willingness to Join with the Northeastern Army in Resisting Japan

(January 25, 1936)

To Deputy Commander Zhang, Chairman Yu, Army Commander Wang, Army Commander He, Army Commander Dong, and Army Commander Wan,¹ and for transmission to all divisional and regimental commanders and all officers and men of the Northeastern Army:

It has already been over four years from “September 18th” to the present. In these four years, not only have our thirty million compatriots of the Three Northeastern Provinces been turned into ghosts under the butcher knives of the Japanese imperialist bandits, or pieces of meat on their chopping blocks. In addition, the provinces of Rehe, Chahar, and Hebei have been occupied one after the other. The whole of North China is about to become a second “Manchukuo.” The “long-term resistance” of Chiang Kaishek’s Nanjing government has proved to be in reality nothing but permanent nonresistance. Chiang Kaishek is the greatest Chinese traitor to sell out his country that China has known since ancient times, and he is about to sell out the whole of China to Japanese imperialism.

Under orders from Chiang Kaishek’s Nanjing government not to resist, the Northeastern Army has given up your own native villages and your own land and property, leaving behind your own parents, wives, brothers, and sisters to be trampled, oppressed, raped, and slaughtered by the Japanese imperialist bandits. How heartrending and detestable it is to think about these things! The Japanese imperialist bandits and the chief traitor, Chiang Kaishek, are the absolutely irreconcilable enemies of your Northeastern Army. You should pledge yourselves to fight to the death to overthrow Japanese imperialism and the chief traitor, Chiang Kaishek, and to recover our Three Northeastern Provinces and the whole of North China!

Because the overwhelming majority of the officers and men of the Northeastern Army wish to fight Japanese imperialism, and to fight to the death against it, the Japanese imperialist bandits and the head traitor, Chiang Kaishek, do not like the Northeastern Army. Ever since the Northeastern Army withdrew from the Three Northeastern Provinces, Chiang Kaishek has never given them space and time for rest and reorganization. He does not want the Northeastern Army to fight Japanese imperialism, but rather wants them to fight the Red Army, because the Red Army opposes Japanese imperialism and the selling out of the country by Chiang Kaishek and the Guomindang! One day he orders the Northeastern Army to Hubei, Henan, and Anhui to fight the Red Army, and the next day he transfers it again to Gansu and Shaanxi to fight the Red Army. He wants Chinese people to kill one another savagely. He wants the Northeastern Army, which is willing to resist Japan, to fight the Red Army, which is resolved to resist Japan, so that Japan will be happy and the Northeastern Army will suffer casualties and losses. What do you think—is Traitor Chiang Kaishek’s vicious plot detestable or not?

Not only does Chiang Kaishek want the Northeastern Army to fight the Red Army, but he is oppressing the Northeastern Army in every way. He has not assigned the Northeastern Army a good location, but has sent them to the two extremely poor provinces of Shaanxi and Gansu. He was not even willing to allocate the relatively rich and populous portions of these two provinces, southern Gansu and southern Shaanxi, to the Northeastern Army. His treatment of the officers and soldiers of the Northeastern Army is extremely unfair. The pay of the officers and men of the Northeastern Army is not even half of that in the armies that are under his direct control. The life of the officers and men of the Northeastern Army is truly miserable, to say nothing of their being able to support families and raise children.

That is not even the end of Chiang Kaishek’s vicious plot. He has placed members of his own fascist clique in the Northeastern Army to keep watch on the actions of the officers and men. They go around causing divisiveness, using intimidation and material corruption to sabotage the internal unity of the Northeastern Army and bring about its disintegration. The Northeastern Army cannot possibly get any additional recruits or any supplement of arms and ammunition from Chiang Kaishek.

In sum, Chiang Kaishek wants to destroy the Northeastern Army and cause the officers and soldiers of the Northeastern Army to become separated and dispersed, and to die from cold and disease, or in combat, to make one fewer enemy for Japanese imperialism and one fewer rival for Chiang Kaishek. Do you not think that the future of the Northeastern Army is in jeopardy? The Northeastern Army is now wandering on a side road; it is beset with difficulties. Internally, the Northeastern Army lacks a common objective for struggle, so that morale is falling to pieces and there is no unity between upper and lower levels. If the Northeastern Army were to go on like this for long, how dangerous that would be!

¹ Zhang is Zhang Xueliang, who was at this time deputy commander-in-chief of operations against the Communists in northwest China. Yu is Yu Xuezong (1890–1964), zi Xiaohou, a native of Shannxi. After serving as commander-in-chief of the Second Route Army of the “Encirclement and Suppression” forces in the northwest, he was at this time chairman of the government of Gansu Province. We have been unable to identify army commanders Wang, He, Dong, and Wan.

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It has already been over four years from “September 18th” to the present. In these four years, not only have our thirty million compatriots of the Three Northeastern Provinces been turned into ghosts under the butcher knives of the Japanese imperialist bandits, or pieces of meat on their chopping blocks. In addition, the provinces of Rehe, Chahar, and Hebei have been occupied one after the other. The whole of North China is about to become a second “Manchukuo.” The “long-term resistance” of Chiang Kaishek’s Nanjing government has proved to be in reality nothing but permanent nonresistance. Chiang Kaishek is the greatest Chinese traitor to sell out his country that China has known since ancient times, and he is about to sell out the whole of China to Japanese imperialism.

Under orders from Chiang Kaishek’s Nanjing government not to resist, the Northeastern Army has given up your own native villages and your own land and property, leaving behind your own parents, wives, brothers, and sisters to be trampled, oppressed, raped, and slaughtered by the Japanese imperialist bandits. How heartrending and detestable it is to think about these things! The Japanese imperialist bandits and the chief traitor, Chiang Kaishek, are the absolutely irreconcilable enemies of your Northeastern Army. You should pledge yourselves to fight to the death to overthrow Japanese imperialism and the chief traitor, Chiang Kaishek, and to recover our Three Northeastern Provinces and the whole of North China!


1. Zhang is Zhang Xueliang, who was at this time deputy commander-in-chief of operations against the Communists in northwest China. Yu is Yu Xuezhong (1890–1964), a native of Shansi. After serving as commander-in-chief of the Second Route Army of the “Encirclement and Suppression” forces in the northwest, he was at this time chairman of the government of Gansu Province. We have been unable to identify army commanders Wang, He, Dong, and Wan.

Because the overwhelming majority of the officers and men of the Northeastern Army wish to fight Japanese imperialism, and to fight to the death against it, the Japanese imperialist bandits and the head traitor, Chiang Kaishek, do not like the Northeastern Army. Ever since the Northeastern Army withdrew from the Three Northeastern Provinces, Chiang Kaishek has never given them space and time for rest and reorganization. He does not want the Northeastern Army to fight Japanese imperialism, but rather wants them to fight the Red Army, because the Red Army opposes Japanese imperialism and the selling out of the country by Chiang Kaishek and the Guomindang! One day he orders the Northeastern Army to Hubei, Henan, and Anhui to fight the Red Army, and the next day he transfers it again to Gansu and Shaanxi to fight the Red Army. He wants Chinese people to kill one another savagely. He wants the Northeastern Army, which is willing to resist Japan, to fight the Red Army, which is resolved to resist Japan, so that Japan will be happy and the Northeastern Army will suffer casualties and losses. What do you think—is Traitor Chiang Kaishek’s vicious plot detestable or not?

Not only does Chiang Kaishek want the Northeastern Army to fight the Red Army, but he is oppressing the Northeastern Army in every way. He has not assigned the Northeastern Army a good location, but has sent them to the two extremely poor provinces of Shaanxi and Gansu. He was not even willing to allocate the relatively rich and populous portions of these two provinces, southern Gansu and southern Shaanxi, to the Northeastern Army. His treatment of the officers and soldiers of the Northeastern Army is extremely unfair. The pay of the officers and men of the Northeastern Army is not even half of that in the armies that are under his direct control. The life of the officers and men of the Northeastern Army is truly miserable, to say nothing of their being able to support families and raise children.

That is not even the end of Chiang Kaishek’s vicious plot. He has placed members of his own fascist clique in the Northeastern Army to keep watch on the actions of the officers and men. They go around causing divisiveness, using intimidation and material corruption to sabotage the internal unity of the Northeastern Army and bring about its disintegration. The Northeastern Army cannot possibly get any additional recruits or any supplement of arms and ammunition from Chiang Kaishek.

In sum, Chiang Kaishek wants to destroy the Northeastern Army and cause the officers and soldiers of the Northeastern Army to become separated and dispersed, and to die from cold and disease, or in combat, to make one fewer enemy for Japanese imperialism and one fewer rival for Chiang Kaishek. Do you not think that the future of the Northeastern Army is in jeopardy? The Northeastern Army is now wandering on a side road; it is beset with difficulties. Internally, the Northeastern Army lacks a common objective for struggle, so that morale is falling to pieces and there is no unity between upper and lower levels. If the Northeastern Army were to go on like this for long, how dangerous that would be!
Just think, where does the way out lie for the Northeastern Army? Is it a way out for the Northeastern Army to fight the Red Army? Is it a way out for them to attack the Soviet areas? No. That is not only not your way out, but is rather your road to ruin. Make no mistake in identifying your enemy, and do not take your friend for your foe. Mistakes should not be repeated, and who can afford to err repeatedly?

The enemies of the Northeastern Army are the Japanese imperialist bandits and the head traitor, Chiang Kai-shek. Hence your only way out is to resist Japan and oppose Chiang. Of all the patriotic soldiers in the Northeastern Army, who is not ready and eager to step out bravely to fight Japanese imperialism and the Chinese traitors, and to win credit for the Chinese nation? Who among Northeasterners is not willing to go through fire and water in order to recover the Three Northeastern Provinces and all the provinces of North China?

If only the Northeastern Army raises the righteous banner of resisting Japan and opposing the traitors who are selling out the country, then morale within the Northeastern Army will be unified, officers and men will be at one, and the Northeastern Army will become the revolutionary army of the Chinese people. When that happens, what Chinese is there who will not support, cherish, and offer moral and material support to the Northeastern Army? What warm-blooded patriotic young man would not wish to offer his services to the Northeastern Army and join in a concerted effort to kill the enemy, give expression to the indignation of the Chinese nation, and win glory? Will not all the officers and men of the Northeastern Army be regarded as Chinese national heroes whose names are known throughout China and throughout the world? Should not any man worthy of the name, after all, act in this manner if he wishes to establish merit and save his country?

The Northeastern Army has had a glorious history of resisting Japan in the past. The battles at the various passes along the Great Wall won it resounding fame throughout China. Had the entire Northeastern Army of the time, with the support of the Chinese people, fought to the end against Japan, the Three Northeastern Provinces would have long ago been recovered and Japanese imperialism would not have run wild in this way. But what’s past is past, and we must now reorganize our forces, summon up that same spirit of resistance against Japan, and fight to the end for the independence and liberation of the Chinese nation. We vow to die rather than become slaves without a country—this is the loud and clear answer of the whole Chinese people to the aggression of the Japanese imperialist bandits, and it is also the clear-cut anti-Japanese slogan of the Northeastern Army.

The Chinese Soviet Government and the Red Army cherish in the highest degree the Northeastern Army with its glorious history of resisting Japan, and are very much concerned about its future development. Therefore we dare presume to offer some ideas to the commanders of the Northeastern Army and to its officers and men. The Chinese Soviet Government and the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army are willing to join together with any armed forces that resist Japan, to organize a government of national defense and a united anti-Japanese army, and to fight directly against Japanese imperialism. We would like to begin putting this proposal into practice together with the Northeastern Army, to play the role of vanguard for the whole nation in resistance against Japan. All officers and men of the Northeastern Army are known to be ardent patriots with a deep understanding of righteousness, so they can surely discard past suspicions and misunderstandings and be the first to respond to the call for resistance against Japan made by the Soviet government and the Red Army. Except for the extremely small number of Chinese traitors and betrayers of the nation, none of our four hundred million compatriots are willing to become the filial and obedient sons of Japanese imperialism or slaves without a country. We are convinced that as soon as we ascend a height to give a shout, the response will come not from hundreds of thousands or millions of Chinese people, but rather from tens or hundreds of millions of Chinese people. The human power, financial power, military power, and intellectual power of our four hundred million Chinese compatriots are sure to triumph over Japanese imperialism! “China has not the strength to fight Japan” is the slogan with which Chinese traitors and betrayers of their country such as Chiang Kai-shek deceive the Chinese people and capitulate to the Japanese imperialist bandits; it is not the slogan of us descendants of the Yellow Emperor who boast a history of several thousand years. We are Chinese, and we will fight to the end for the independence and liberation of China! The salvation of China is the responsibility of us Chinese ourselves!

As to concrete methods for organizing a government of national defense and a united anti-Japanese army, both sides can designate representatives to discuss the matter together. All individuals and representatives who are willing to resist Japan are friends of the Soviets and of the Red Army. We welcome them to the Soviet areas, and will treat them with utmost sincerity. In addition, you are cordially invited to come and do your own investigation and make up your own mind as to whether the Soviet system is suited to China.

Words are inadequate to express everything we have to say, but we have laid before you with respect what is on our minds and in our hearts in the hope that you gentlemen will give it due consideration. With respectful national revolutionary salutations!

Mao Zedong, Peng Dehuai, Ye Jianying,
Nie Rongzhen, Cheng Zihu, Zhang Yunyi,
Liu Zhidan, Liu Yalou, Xiao Hua,
Gao Gang, Zhou Enlai, Lin Biao,
Yang Shangkun, Zhu Rui, Xu Haidong,
Guo Shushen, Chen Guang, Peng Xuefeng,
Yang Sen, Yan Hongyan, and others
Talk with a Correspondent of Red China Press
(January 1936)

News from the Shanghai Workers' News Agency: Yesterday our agency received a talk that had been broadcast on the radio between Mao Zedong, Chairman of the Soviet Government's Central Executive Committee and Wang Jiaqiang. People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs on one hand, and a Red China Press correspondent on the other. It is of extreme importance as regards the current situation, and we record it here as follows:

Question: What are the views and proposals of the Chinese Soviet Government regarding the current question of North China?

Answer: Under coercion by the Japanese invaders, the Nanjing government set up the so-called Hebei-Chahar Political Affairs Council, which actually amounts to carrying out so-called "North China autonomy," in turn a metamorphosis of the so-called "state of North China" that figures in the Japanese invaders' predetermined plans. In his speech on foreign affairs at the Fifth National Congress of the Guomindang, Chiang Kai-shek, an old hand at machination and maneuver, played with diplomatic rhetoric and made a lot of ambiguous statements. The actual situation, however, did not allow him to get away with such equivocation. Doiha1 pitilessly demanded the immediate realization of "North China autonomy," and this forced Chiang Kai-shek to supply concrete footnotes to his diplomatic rhetoric. The merely verbal condemnation of Yin Rugeng2 and the open recognition of a variant of "North China autonomy" all reveal Chiang Kai-shek's true intentions. Therefore, as the Japanese invaders now attack without cease and Nanjing is still not resolved to resist, the survival of our nation is indeed hanging by a single thread. It is imperative that the whole people rise up spontaneously to carry out a movement to resist Japan and save the country, and create a great anti-Japanese national salvation alliance. To save the country is to save oneself, and to save oneself, the country must first of all be saved. This is true for everyone, whether workers or capitalists, peasants or landlords, those in industrial, agricultural, commercial, military, or political circles, for any Chinese person it is the same. All parties and organizations should discard any sectarian bias and cooperate sincerely in order to save the country from ruin. The Soviet Government of China has long proposed that the whole country arm itself for united resistance against Japan, and has repeatedly proclaimed its willingness to cooperate with all parties and groups that are sincerely resisting Japan, and to join in a concerted effort to save the country. In August of last year, this party and this government issued a declaration proposing to enter into talks with all other parties and sides so as to establish together a national defense government and a united anti-Japanese army, and also put forward ten great demands to serve as a program for the national defense government. The Chinese Soviet Government maintains that only unity can save the nation from extinction. It is willing, therefore, to cooperate sincerely with all those who take as their premise unity to achieve national salvation, regardless of their stand on other matters, in order to pursue the goal of saving the country and avoiding national extinction.

Question: What are the reflections and proposals of the Chinese Soviet Government concerning the recent national salvation movement of the students throughout the country?

Answer: The students of our country have always played a glorious role in the history of the national salvation movement. The current great national salvation movement is particularly praiseworthy. These young people are the children of the people of the whole country, the hope of the Chinese nation. We have utmost respect for their indomitable courage, and are extremely indignant over the relentless persecution inflicted upon them. The Chinese Soviet Government is determined to give all possible support to the students' national salvation movement. It has already encouraged the students of all universities, middle schools, and primary schools in the Soviet areas to rise and express their support, and is calling on the workers, peasants, city dwellers, and people in all walks of life throughout the country to take concerted action and help the students achieve their goal of condemning the traitors and saving the country. The current student

1. See above, the manifesto dated November 28, 1935. The ten great demands refer to the Ten-Point Program (shida zhenggang).
movement is truly a reflection of the national salvation movement of the people of the whole country, and their slogans of “stop the civil war” and “unite to save the nation” are truly the unanimous demands of the people of the whole country. The civil war now going on in our country is the war that Chiang Kaishek has mustered all his forces to fight in order to “suppress the Communists.” The Red Army is the only force in our nation that is faithful, courageous, and dedicated to fighting Japan, so we naturally could never allow Chiang Kaishek to do harm to it at his will. The people in the soviet areas are all fighters determined to resist Japan and save the nation. They are the fellow countrymen, the elders, brothers, cousins, and sisters of our compatriots in all circles everywhere, and we cannot allow Chiang Kaishek to harm them. Thus we have been forced to fight this war of self-defense. On behalf of the Chinese Soviet Government I formally declare: As soon as Chiang Kaishek or any other military forces cease to attack the Red Army, the Chinese Soviet Government will immediately order the Red Army in the relevant locality to cease its military operations and mobilize for a joint war of resistance against Japan. This is our response to the demands of the students and the people.

**Question:** Recently it has been widely rumored that Chiang Kaishek has concluded a truce agreement with the Red Army. What is the real inside story?

**Answer:** Ever since “September 18,” the Chinese Soviet Government has constantly called on compatriots all over the country regardless of party affiliation, beliefs, or any sort of previous involvements, to join together and save the country from ruin. With that as our established and unchanging principle, the Chinese Soviet Government’s attitude toward Chiang Kaishek has been extremely frank and clear. If Chiang is truly ready to resist Japan, the Chinese Soviet Government can naturally join hands with him on the battlefront of resistance to Japan. Clear proof of this can be found in the fact that, although in the past the Nineteenth Route Army had also made war on the people and the Red Army, as soon as that army started to resist Japan the Red Army immediately began to cooperate with it. In sum, whether or not an agreement can be established between the Red Army and Chiang Kaishek depends not on the Chinese Soviet Government, but rather entirely on whether Chiang Kaishek is determined to resist Japan. The Chinese Soviet Government definitely has no reservations about and makes no exceptions to the principle of uniting people to resist Japan regardless of party affiliation or previous relationships, and will certainly stop no one from turning over a new leaf. On the other hand, if Chiang Kaishek still refuses to make up his mind to resist Japan, the Chinese Soviet Government will not be the least bit dazzled by whatever empty words he may utter. The bitter struggle over the past few years between the Red Army and Chiang Kaishek is not a private battle, but rather a form of self-defense that has been forced upon us in order to resist Japan and save the country. Precisely because Chiang may deceive the country’s citizens, we know nothing other than to serve the country’s citizens. Chiang Kaishek may completely write off the public will, but we know nothing other than respect for the public will of the people. If Chiang Kaishek continues to capitulate to Japan and sell out the country, we are resolved to resist Japan to the end. We are convinced that all our compatriots and all armies throughout the country will eventually join us in resisting Japan. We sincerely welcome all compatriots of whatever party, whatever army, and whatever walk of life, and young people of all circles to quickly join the anti-Japanese united front for national salvation.
Snow

(To the Tune "Spring in [Princess] Qin's Garden")

(February 1936)

Behold the scene in that northern land:
A thousand leagues sealed in ice,
Ten thousand leagues of whirling snow.
Within and without the Great Wall,
One vast expanse meets the gaze.
Upstream and downstream,
The torrential flow of the great river has suddenly vanished,
Mountains dance like silver snakes,
Highlands' gallop like waxy elephants,
Striving to vie in height with heaven's lord.
Should the day be fine,
See the white-clad beauty adorned with red,
Fascinating beyond compare.

Drawn by these manifold beauties of our land,
Countless heroes contended to bow in homage.
Alas, Qin Shihuang and Han Wudi,
Were somewhat lacking in culture,
Tang Taizong and Song Taizu,
Had modest literary talents,
And Genghis Khan, favored son of heaven for a time,
Knew only how to bend his bow to shoot great vultures.
Now all are gone.
To find men of untrammeled spirit,
We must look rather to the present age.

We have translated this poem from Mao Zedong's Shici ji, pp. 68–73. It also appears in Shici duilian, pp. 63–66, and we have cited some notes from that source as well. In the fall of 1945 when Mao was in Chongqing he wrote out this poem and presented it to Liu Yazi as a gift, and told him in an accompanying letter (dated October 7) that he had composed it "when we first arrived in Northern Shaanxi and saw the Great Snowy Mountains." According to Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 510, this took place during the first ten days of February 1936. The poem was published on November 14, 1945, in the evening edition of Chongqing's Xinmin bao. Subsequently other papers published various versions of it, and on January 8, 1951, Mao's original handwritten poem given to Liu was reproduced in the supplement to Wenhu bao. The first official publication of the poem was in the January 1957 issue of Shikan. Mao's own annotation to the poem reads as follows: "'Snow': Opposing feudalism, criticizing a reactionary side of two thousand years of feudalism. As for 'culture,' 'literary talents,' and 'great vultures,' it can only be this way—this is composing poetry, after all! Otherwise, how could one hurl invectives against such figures? Any other explanation is wrong. The last three lines refer to the proletariat."

1. The Yellow River, which at this moment the First Front Army was about to cross from Shaanxi into Shanxi.
2. Mao's own note here reads: "This refers to the highlands of Shaanxi and Shanxi."
3. The editors of Shici duilian indicate that Mao originally had here a different character, homophonous in Chinese with the word for "waxy" (la), meaning "Cambodian," and that the emendation was at the suggestion of Zang Kejia.
4. The editors of the Shici duilian suggest that these two lines may allude to a poem by the Tang dynasty poet Han Yu, "On Snow, presented to Zhang Ji," which also refers to snakes and elephants.
The Problem of Transmission and Discussion of the Order for the Eastern Expedition and of the Advance of the Units

(February 12, 1936, 8:00 A.M.)

To Ye and Yang; Lin, Nie, and Zhu; Cheng, Xu, and Guo:

1. The order for the Eastern Expedition is about to be issued, and its transmission and the explanation of it are to be completed in two days on the 13th and 14th. On the 15th the First Army Group, and on the 16th the Fifteenth Army Group and the forces directly under the Front Army are to begin their advance toward the point for crossing the river. Each of them is to reach the designated crossing position in four days and await further orders to cross the river. During the advance, the order for the Eastern Expedition is to be discussed within the companies so as to establish strengthened confidence among the commanders and fighters and promote a high degree of activism.

2. The operations of the Eastern Expedition must remain strictly secret from the masses of local residents before the day of the actual crossing, and every commander and fighter is to pay attention to the strict maintenance of secrecy.

3. The route of the advance covers Yanshuicheng, Shuanghemiao, Liujiahe, and Chuankouzhen, to arrive and concentrate forces in the area near Hekou and Yuanjiaogou. The area of concentration will be according to a separate telegram.

Please also tell [Zhou] Enlai that the order for the Eastern Expedition is still not to be promulgated in the rear.

Peng [Dehuai]   Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 434–35, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Ye and Yang are Ye Jianying and Yang Shangkun, respectively chief of staff and head of the Political Department of the First Front Army. Lin, Nie, and Zhu are Lin Biao, Nie Rongzhen, and Zhu Rui, who were respectively the commander, political commissar, and head of the Political Department of the First Front Army’s First Army Group. Cheng, Xu, and Guo are Cheng Zihua, Xu Haidong, and Guo Shashen, respectively the political commissar, commander, and head of the Political Department of the First Front Army’s Fifteenth Army Group.

2. This order, entitled “Order to Advance Eastward to Resist Japan and Punish Yan Xishan,” had been issued by Mao, Zhou Enlai, and Peng Dehuai on January 19. For reasons of security, it was made known to the troops only when the Red Army had reached the Yellow River and was poised to cross into Shanxi Province. For the context, see above, the Introduction.

Pay Attention to the Promotion of Cadres Before Crossing to the East

(February 13, 1936)

Comrades Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen]:

The problem of cadres is one of decisive importance. We have raised this question with you several times. It is not only from the standpoint of developing the First Army Group, but from the standpoint of developing the revolutionary armed forces in the north and in the whole country that we ask you to pay greater and more specific attention to this, both in principle and in practice. Once the troops have crossed the river to the east it would be difficult to carry out such organizational work. For this reason, please make use of these few days to solve in earnest the following problems:

1. Look into who has been demoted and have them promoted (in the battle for Ganquan, two battalion commanders serving as company commanders were killed).

2. Promote veteran soldiers and set up a training battalion (it should have three to four companies).

3. In addition, the latest group of graduates from the Red Army School should in principle be kept on and continue their training.

Peng [Dehuai]   Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 436–37, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. In late September of 1935 the Red Army made several unsuccessful attempts to take the xian town of Ganquan in northern Shaanxi.

2. On the Red Army School, which had just been renamed the Red Army University, see above the relevant note to part III of the resolution of December 23, 1935.
Pay Strict Attention to Concealment
While on the March
(February 16, 1936, 11:00 P.M.)

Nie [Rongzhen], Cheng [Zihua]:

1. Concealing your movements to avoid being discovered by the enemy is a crucial condition for winning victory. All army units should act in accordance with repeated orders to stop any movement while the enemy’s planes are flying, and dispatch the responsible commander to direct the troops around exposed areas and areas where forces are concentrated. If our plans are exposed for lack of strict concealment, the commanding officer of the army unit concerned will be held accountable.

2. Zihua is to order the sailors in Yanshui, and Rongzhen is to order the sailors in Shuanghemiao to come to Gaojiecu.

3. Zihua is to have someone give this telegram to Chief of Staff Ye [Jianyong]. Have all past telegrams that were to be transmitted to Ye been delivered to him as ordered? Reply immediately.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]

Making All-Out Efforts to Win Victory in the East, and Operational Dispositions for the Twenty-eighth Army
(February 17, 1936)

Zhou [Enlai]:

1. Whether in terms of strategy or of the campaign as a whole, or in terms of wiping out the enemy in Shanxi or wiping out the enemy in northern Shaanxi, it is necessary to concentrate all-out efforts to strive for victory in the east.

2. Consequently, the main force of the Twenty-eighth Army should be moved to the area near Wubao. The first step is to take advantage of Li Shengda’s retreat to eliminate the enemy troops in the vicinity of Wubao, Jiaxian, Shenmu, and Fugu. The second step is to cross the river one after the other in coordination with the armed forces along its banks, and expand the soviet areas to localities in Shanxi north of Liulin and Jundu.

3. The Third Regiment of the Twenty-eighth Army and the local armed forces are adequate to deal with the enemy forces under Gao and Jing. Gao and Jing have now adopted a defensive stance, and if the Twenty-eighth Army is deployed here, it will almost certainly have nothing to do. The three Bian are not places that should be emphasized.

4. If Gao and Jing invade, the Twenty-eighth Army can still move to deal with them. The basic tasks of the Twenty-eighth Army and of the local armed forces in northern Shaanxi remain the same.

5. Zhou Enlai’s command center is to be temporarily moved to where the Qingjian xian Party Committee is located, and he is to take charge of the Twenty-eighth Army and the troops under Yan and Cai, and of mobilizing the

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 440–41, where it is taken from a copy preserved in the Central Archives.

1. Li Shengda was at this time commander of the Guomindang Nineteenth Army, and concurrently of its Seventy-second Division.

2. Jundu was in what is today the western part of Liulin xian, Shaanxi Province.

3. The reference is to Gao Guizi and Jing Yuxiu, respectively commanders of the Guomindang Eight-fourth and Eighty-sixth Divisions, who held places in Shaanxi such as Suide, Mizhi, Yulin, and Jingbian. Jing Yuxiu had, in fact, died on February 1, 1936, from the accidental discharge of his own pistol.

4. The reference is to Dingbian, Anbian, and Jingbian in northwestern Shaanxi.

5. This refers to Yan Hongyan and Cai Shufan, respectively the commander and political commissar of the Red Army’s guerrilla troops along the riverbanks.

masses in the seven or eight xian along the west bank of the river, dismantling the fortifications in the seven or eight xian along the east bank, winning over the masses, and maintaining transportation and crossover points between the eastern and western banks and the front and the rear. Without unified command along such a long front there would surely be chaos. We await your prompt reply.


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Order Regarding Military Operations During the Eastern Expedition

(February 18, 1936)

I. The Situation:

1. One division of the Manchurian army has occupied Zhangjiakou, Japan has set up military organs in Taiyuan and Baotou, and the puppet régime in Beijing is in the process of turning North China into another Manchuria.

2. Under orders from Japan, Yan Xishan is conducting all kinds of traitorous activities. His troops are deployed as follows: one division in Taiyuan; one division in the area of Datong in northern Shanxi; one division in the area of Changzhi and Changzi in southern Shanxi; one division in the area of the lower part of the Fen River, Daning, and Ji xian; one division in the area of Yonghe, Shilou, Zhongyang, Lishi, Fenyang, Liulin, and Jundu, as well as the garrison division along the river (Yang Yaofang’s Seventy-first Division) in western Shanxi; two independent brigades in the area of Xing xian, Lin xian, Jikou, and Baode in northwestern Shanxi; one division that has invaded the area of Wubu, Suide, and Jia xian in northern Shaanxi (Li Shengda’s Seventy-second Division); and two divisions in the entire province of Suiyuan. Sun Chu’s “bandit suppression” general headquarters appears to be in Jikou (Sun Chu himself has gone to see Chiang [Kaishek] in Nanjing and his duties are assumed in his stead by the chief of staff). Yang Yaofang’s western Shanxi defense headquarters is in Fenyang.

3. The Anti-Japanese Volunteer Army in Hebei is growing (in Daming, Changping, Fuping, and other places). There are Red troops operating along the

Our source for this order is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 442–46, where it is reproduced from a printed text located at the Academy of Military Science of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army.

1. Regarding the Eastern Expedition, which began with the crossing of the Yellow River on February 20, 1936, see the Introduction to this volume. In the face of Chiang Kaishek’s strong reaction to this offensive, and in the context of efforts to achieve a new united front against Japan, the Red Army withdrew back across the river into Shaanxi in early May.

2. Yang Yaofang, commander of the Guomindang army’s Seventy-first Division, was at this time commander of the western Shansi garrison forces.

3. Sun Chu (1886–1962), a native of Shansi, was a graduate of the Baoding Military Academy. He had commanded the 101st Division of the Guomindang Army since 1934, and continued to do so, but was at the same time the commander of the Third Defense District of the North-West “Bandit Suppression” Headquarters.
border between Shanxi and Henan (Yan Xishan sent a brigade there to deal with it). Prince De⁴ of Inner Mongolia has declared independence and confronted Shanxi. The anti-Japanese revolutionary enthusiasm among Yan Xishan’s troops is developing. There have been signs that the popular masses on the east bank of the Yellow River welcome the Red Army.

II. Our Tasks:

The Party Central Committee’s and Military Commission’s basic policy is to resist Japan, punish traitors to their country, go to Shanxi to wipe out Yan Xishan’s forces, develop the anti-Japanese bases, expand the anti-Japanese Red Army, call for a nationwide movement to resist Japan and punish the Chinese traitors, and make steady military progress. In accordance with this orientation, the Front Army’s first step includes the tasks of crossing the Yellow River to the east, wiping out the enemy troops in the area on the eastern bank through firm measures, taking all xian in the Lüliang Mountain Range, first occupying Shilou, Zhongyang, Yonghe, and other xian, smashing all fortifications along the river, gaining control over ferry operations, and creating temporary operational bases on the eastern bank.

III. The Battle to Cross the River:

1. Assessment of the enemy’s situation

The area in which our troops will cross the river is within the defense zone of Yang Yaofang’s Seventy-first Division. It is estimated that his six regiments are positioned as follows: one regiment in Yonghe, one regiment in the town of Shilou (according to one account, there is a regiment with one artillery company attached to it), two regiments in the defense area along the river subordinated to Shilou (about one hundred li between Xinguan, across the river from Hekou, and Sanjiaozhen, across from Goukou), one regiment in the town of Zhongyang and for defense along the river near Zhongyang, one regiment in Liulin, and the unit directly under the division in Fenyang. On the second day of our armies’ crossing (the 22nd), there is a possibility that two or three of the enemy’s regiments will fight us in the vicinity of Sanjiaozhen, and that one or two of the enemy’s regiments will fight us near Yidiezen. Within three to seven days there is a possibility that the enemy will fight us in the area around Shilou.

2. Our military dispositions

In accordance with our objective of crossing the river around Goukou and Hekou, occupying Liuyuzhen and Yidiezen, and seizing an opportunity to occupy the town of Shilou, the deployment of our armies is as follows:

a. Areas of concentration

- The First Army Group near Goukou.
- The main forces of the Fifteenth Army Group near Hekou.
- The Eighty-first Division of the Fifteenth Army Group near Jiejiagou.
- Units directly under the Front Army near Chuan Kouzhou.

b. Areas of river crossing

- The First Army Group near Goukou.
- Main forces of the Fifteenth Army Group and units directly under the Front Army, near Hekou.
- The Eighty-first Division of the Fifteenth Army Group is to prepare to cross the river following the First Army Group.
- Goukou and Hekou are the two main crossing points; Laoguan and Sheyuli are the two supplementary crossing points. (Both supplementary crossing points belong to the Fifteenth Army Group.)

c. Command during crossings

- At every crossing point, both army groups should appoint crossing commanders, political commissars, and boat instructors (one for each boat), to guarantee that the crossing is carried out with the utmost speed and in good order.

d. Time of the crossing

- All army units will begin crossing the river simultaneously at each point at 8:00 P.M. on February 21.

e. Method of crossing

- The vanguard is to be absolutely concealed, cross the river stealthily under cover of night, seize the enemy’s fortifications through resolute and rapid action, cut the electric lines [dianxian],⁵ control the locations that will allow us to advance as well as the covering locations on the wings, so as to secure an advantageous position that will guarantee the subsequent crossing of our troops and the fight against the enemy’s reinforcements. If the secret crossing is discovered by the enemy, it should be changed immediately to a crossing in force.

f. Operations after the crossing

- The First Army Group must prepare and advance to the area twenty or

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4. Demchukdangrub (1902–1966), commonly known in Chinese as De Wang or Prince De, was a Mongolian prince of the West Sunid Banner, born in Inner Mongolia. He had begun moving toward autonomy in 1933, and in February 1936 called a conference to proclaim the independence of Inner Mongolia, under the protection of the Japanese. In November and December 1936, he commanded Mongolian forces, allied with those of Manchuko, in an attack on Suiyuan Province.

5. Dianxian could refer either to power lines or to telegraph lines, but given the context, the latter seems more probable.
thirty li from the crossing point, fight the enemy’s reinforcement troops, and eliminate them. After wiping out the given enemy, or if there are no enemy troops in the given area, it must seize an opportunity to take the area near Liuyuzhen on the second (that is, the 22nd) or third day (depending on the speed of the crossing and the situation of the enemy).

Exploiting the Victory, Both Army Groups Should Advance Swiftly Toward Shilou

(February 21, 1936, 7:00 A.M.)

Peng [Dehuai], Nie [Rongzhen] and Lin [Biao], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua]:

1. The main forces of both our army groups will be able to complete the river crossing today before noon, and the crossing can be completely finished in the afternoon.

2. Approximately two regiments of enemy troops along the river from Hekou to Sanjiaozhen are currently held in our large-scale encirclement. We think there is a possibility that this enemy may retreat to Shilou today.

3. Our First Army Group should advance swiftly to Xiaosuanzhen, and the Fifteenth Army Group should advance swiftly to Yidiezhen to intercept and pursue this enemy. Both army groups should, moreover, order their vanguard divisions to advance expeditiously toward Shilou on the heels of victory, and take it when opportunity offers.

4. Yidiezhen and Hekou are the communication lines between the main forces of the Front Army and the rear. The Fifteenth Army Group should assign a small unit to protect them, and wait to be replaced by the anti-Japanese guerrillas tomorrow or the day after.

Mao Zedong

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 447–48, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
The Tasks of the Guerrilla Detachments After Crossing the River and the Problem of Organizing Stretcher Teams

(February 21, 1936, 12:00 noon, at Hekou)

Comrade Lisan:¹

1. A copy of the orders for battle is enclosed. They will enable you to understand the direction of movement and the tasks of the Red Army.

2. After crossing the river at Hekou, the five or six hundred guerrilla fighters led by Yang Sen, Cai Shufan, and Lai Chuanzhu² are to establish headquarters at Yidiezheng. Their tasks are: (1) to maintain communications between Shilou, Yidie, and Hekou; (2) to destroy the fortifications along the river and wipe out the remaining enemy troops; (3) to mobilize the mass struggle within the four points of Xinguan, Loayuguan, Qingshuiguan, and Yidiezheng, and organize local guerrilla detachments in Shanxi; (4) to maintain major crossing points.

3. The order has already been issued to mobilize three thousand people from the three xian of Suide, Qingjian, and Yanshui as a team of stretcher-bearers; one thousand are to be gathered together by the end of this month, a thousand by March 15, and another thousand by March 30. But as the populations of the three xian vary, these average figures may not be appropriate, so that the mobilization should be based on the principle of actual and possible conditions, gathering together one thousand first and awaiting orders to gather two or three more groups if the need arises at the front. Methods: (1) to have proper organization and leadership by good cadres; (2) to have [Party] branch organizations; (3) to organize mess groups; (4) to bring clothing, blankets, and eating utensils; (5) the period of service is a month and a half; (6) four people to a stretcher; (7) all should gather where you are at Hekou, to be sent forward when orders are given.

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 449–50, where it is reproduced from a manuscript in the Central Archives. The text also appears in Mao Zedong ji, Bujian, Vol. 4, pp. 265–66, where it is taken from a Red Guard compilation.

1. This telegram is addressed to Yang Lisan, then commander of the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission’s department of military depots.

2. Yang Sen (not to be confused with the Guomindang general of the same name referred to in the document of January 22, 1935) and Cai Shufan were at this time respectively acting commander and political commissar of the guerrilla detachments along the river. Lai Chuanzhu was political commissar of the Chinese Communist Party Shaanxi-Gansu Provincial Committee’s Military Affairs Department.

4. Dai Jiyong³ is responsible for seeing to it that twelve new boats are built, figuring on three at Mahuaping, three at Loayuguan, and six at Hekou (these six boats are to prepare to travel down to the lower reaches for use at the appropriate ferry crossings). Please establish liaison with him.

5. You must keep in close contact with the Party Committee of Qingjian xian and the district soviets of the various districts along the river.

6. Vice-Chairman Zhou [Enlai] is coming in the next few days to the banks of the river to direct things. Ask him for instructions in doing your work. He will bring along a transmitter-receiver.

7. I am leaving for Shilou from Yidiezheng.

Mao Zedong

³. Dai Jiyong was then commander of the mobilization and military equipment department of the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission.
The Basic Policy of Our Army at Present
Is to Establish Base Areas
for Military Operations

(February 23, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

To Comrade [Peng] Dehuai, and for him to inform Comrades Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua]:

1. Enemy Yan [Xishan] appears to be in a state of panic and confusion because of our sudden crossing to the east [of the Yellow River], and is now arranging his defense. Our judgment is that this enemy will not be able to concentrate large forces to launch an attack against us within a short time.

2. Sanjiaozhen, Liuyuzhen, and Yidiezhen have all been captured by us, the defensive troops along the river from Sanjiao[zheng] to Xinguan have all scattered and retreated, and the ferry crossings at Sanjiao[zheng], Zhuanjiao, Laoyaguan, and Xingguan are all in our hands. The masses have expressed their welcome toward the Red Army, and the broad masses are in sympathy with the slogan, “Down with Yan Xishan.” But we have been unable to take Shilou, there is no report from Zhongyang, and it is unclear whether the enemy’s defensive forces along the river south of Xinguan have retreated or not.

3. Regardless of whether towns such as Shilou and Zhongyang can be captured or not, and no matter how big the force Yan Xishan is going to use to attack us and when, the basic policy of the Front Army at present is to strive with all our might to set up base areas for future campaigns in the territory stretching for about two hundred li from Zhongyang, Shilou, and Yonghe to Xixian, to be used as starting points for turning Red the whole province of Shanxi, and since this is the battlefield where Yan Xishan is going to attack us, to place the emphasis in the whole of our work on a basis of larger-scale battles.

4. It is planned to place the First Army Group in Liuyuzhen, Nuanquanzhen, Shuitouzhen, Pingdi, and near the city of Zhongyang, and the main forces of the Fifteenth Army Group in the two xian of Yonghe and Xixian. Also to seize the opportunity to occupy the two towns and have one unit near Shiloucheng control the Yellow River so that more than two hundred li, from Sanjiaozhen in the north to Matouguan in the south, will be in our hands. The above deployment is to be carried out beginning on the 25th.

5. Inform us as soon as possible regarding the opinions of all the comrades as well as about information on matters of the military, politics, and the masses.

6. The unit directly attached to the Front Army is to encamp today between Yidie and Shilou, and remain in the same place tomorrow.

7. Have Peng [Dehuai] lead the Eighty-first Division to the vicinity of Shilou tomorrow.

Mao

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 451–52, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Instruction to Strive to Develop Anti-Japanese Base Areas in Shanxi

(February 24, 1936, at Zhangjiapain)

To commanders of all army groups, divisions, and regiments:

1. Our front army has already successfully crossed the Yellow River, shattered Yan Xishan’s blockade line, occupied an area of several hundred li on the east bank of the Yellow River, and fulfilled the first task of the strategy for the Eastern Expedition.

2. In a situation of strategic defense, Traitor Yan Xishan is now preparing an offensive campaign. He is attempting to concentrate his forces to attack our troops, relieve the town of Shilou, and drive our forces to the sixty-li line of blockade on the west bank of the Yellow River.

3. Because Yan Xishan is responding in haste to the attack, he must transfer troops from northern Shaanxi and other remote places. Because he is not clear about our intentions, ten days or so will still be needed between transferring his forces, advancing, deploying his army, and launching the attack. Moreover, his force will be no larger than three divisions. His dispositions seem to be to have one contingent go toward Shilou from Lishi by way of Zhongyang, and another go toward Shilou by way of Xiaoyi and Shuitouzen. These two groups will constitute the main offensive force. Another contingent is to advance from Liuyuzhen in the vicinity of Liulin toward Shilou, and one from Xixian to Shilou; these two groups are to constitute the auxiliary force.

4. The front army has the task of resolutely smashing the enemy’s reinforcements. The basic orientation is to surround Shilou along the line from Liulin to Lishi, Zhongyang, Xiaoyi, Xixian, and Yonghe, and seek to attack the reinforcements; rapidly to win over the masses of the inhabitants to unity with the Red Army; concentrate our forces to wipe out one or two contingents of the enemy; secure advantageous conditions for the development of anti-Japanese base areas in Shanxi; and accomplish the second task of the plan for the Eastern Expedition.

5. During a very short period of time at present (estimated to be about ten days) we are situated between two fighting tasks. That is to say, the battle to cross the river is already over, but the time for the offensive has not yet come.

The task during this interim period is to concentrate all our strength to prepare for battle. The concrete tasks are as follows:

a. To make the Red Army unite with the masses of residents. 

b. To make Red Army cadres combine understanding of and familiarization with the enemy situation, the topography, the political experience, the social conditions, and so on in Shanxi.

c. To increase fighting capacity by means of political and military work.

6. Deployments:

a. The First Army Group is to be stationed in the area of Liuyuzhen, Anjiangong, Nuanquanzhen, Pingdi, and Tumen. The scope of its task of turning this region Red includes the area within the line of Liulinzheng, Jinluoyu, Zhongyangcheng, Nuanquanzhen, Pingdi, Xiaosuanzhen, and Sanjiaozhen.

b. The Fifteenth Army Group is to take Shilou as its center, using a small unit to surround the city and positioning its main forces within the arc of Pingdi, Shuitouzen, Xixiancheng, Yonghecheng, and Zhangjiapain.

c. The anti-Japanese guerrillas are to take Yidiezheng as their center. Their working range is to include the area of Zhangjiata on the opposite shore from Zhanjiaozhen and Hejiapain.

d. Front army headquarters is to be located in Zhangjiapain, between Yidie and Shilou.

e. The troops of the various army groups should not be too dispersed. The work of turning Red should focus on major communication lines and important strongholds.

f. The working period is temporarily set at seven days (from the 25th to March 3rd).

Addendum: This order is to be distributed only down to the regimental level.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]
Send One Division to Advance to Chemingyu, Guanshang, and Other Places of Strategic Importance

(February 25, 1936, 10:00 A.M.)

Lin [Biao], Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. The line between Chemingyu and Guanshang, in the upper reaches of the Zhongyang River, is an important passage to the east, and the enemy is sending troops there. So as to get there first it is hoped that you will immediately send to that place one division equipped with a transmitter, mobilize the masses along the roads in that area leading east, south, and north, and create base areas for combat.

2. Nuanquanzhen should also be occupied at once.

3. Shuitouzhen, where the three xian of Xiaoyi, Shilou, and Xixian come together, is also a point of strategic importance for battle, and the Fifteenth Army Group has been ordered to occupy it.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

Wipe Out the Enemy in Guanshang and Shuitou

(February 25, 1936, 12:00 noon)

Lin [Biao], Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. According to Zeng Xisheng's report, Yang Yaofang stated in a telegram that Zhou's brigade in Fenyang (two regiments) may reach the village of Guanshang on the 24th. It has been determined upon investigation that Guanshang village is situated on the upper reaches of the Zhongyang River, about 40 li straight south of the town of Zhongyang, and is an important passage to the east for our troops. It is further reported that an enemy brigade has arrived at Xixian, and one of its units has reached Shuitouzhen. This latter town lies 90 li straight east of Shilou, and is also an important point in the east.

2. The First Army Group has the task of wiping out Zhou's brigade in the village of Guanshang, and the Fifteenth Army Group has the task of wiping out the enemy in Shuitouzhen.

3. The entire First Army Group should start moving today, advance toward the village of Guanshang, and surround and wipe out Zhou's brigade tomorrow.

4. The two regiments of the Fifteenth Army Group that are advancing toward Xixian should switch to going toward Shuitouzhen tomorrow to wipe out that enemy.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 458–59, where it is reproduced from a copy held in the Central Archives.

1. Zeng Xisheng (1904–1968), a native of Hunan, studied at the Huangpu Military Academy, participated in the Northern Expedition, and joined the Party in 1927. He was at this time head of the Second Section of the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission.

2. Zhou's brigade refers to the independent second brigade of the Guomindang Army, commanded by Zhou Yuanjian.
Make the Utmost Efforts to Destroy the Enemy in Guanshang

(February 26, 1936, 11:00 P.M.)

Lin [Biao], Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. The situation of the enemy is as described in a separate telegram.
2. As for the enemy in Guanshang, if the topography is advantageous you should resolutely destroy him tomorrow (the 27th).
3. If the topography is disadvantageous and there is no possibility of a decisive battle, then tomorrow a small unit should keep close watch over the said enemy while the main forces retreat south of Guanshang (that is, between Guanshang and Shuitouzhen) to conceal themselves and rest so as to await the enemy’s reinforcements, attack them and advance, wait for the Fifteenth Army Group to get close to you, and then make the utmost effort to destroy them.
4. The Fifteenth Army Group will arrive at Shuitouzhen tomorrow.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]

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Attack the Enemy in Shuitou If Conditions Are Favorable

(February 26, 1936, 11:00 P.M.)

Xu [Haidong], Cheng [Zihua]:

1. Tomorrow before you advance to Shuitou you must first conduct reconnaissance to see that the topography is favorable and the enemy has no strongholds, tenable defense positions, and fortifications on which to rely before you attack him; otherwise you should not launch an attack. You must also consider whether time permits a decisive battle before attacking; otherwise you should not attack but rather encamp near Shuitou.
2. The First Army Group did not reach Guanshang until 2:00 P.M. today and did not fight long before it got dark, by which time the enemy had retreated into their fortifications and village houses, so the battle has not yet been brought to a conclusion. They have been ordered to seize an opportunity tomorrow to wipe out this enemy or else withdraw to the area between Guanshang and Shuitou.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]

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**The Situation as Regards the Battle in Guanshang Village, and Our Dispositions for Continuing to Destroy the Enemy**

(February 28, 1936, 1:00 A.M.)

To Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], and for them to inform Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. According to the report of Lin and Nie, the Fourth Regiment of the independent Second Brigade has been completely wiped out by us, their brigade headquarters and Third Regiment are being pursued by us, and the situation is now in the process of resolution.

2. Two enemy regiments from Zhongyang, or some say three regiments, advanced to a place 30 li from Guanshang at 3:00 P.M. yesterday (the 27th), and are being resisted by one unit of our First Army Group. The main forces of the First Army Group will move toward the village of Guanshang today (the 28th).

3. After receiving this telegram, Xu and Cheng are to lead the Fifteenth Army Group’s Seventy-fifth Division, Eighty-first Division, and one battalion of its Seventy-eighth Division to set out from Shuitou and advance toward Guanshang (Guanshang is 60 li straight north of Shuitou and 50 li straight south of Zhongyang), and attack the enemy there from south to north.

4. The First Army Group will, in turn, attack from north to south.

5. If it is found that there are still enemy reinforcements from Zhongyang, the First Army Group is to send a small unit to stop them.

6. The First Army Group and the Fifteenth Army Group are under the unified command of Lin and Nie.

7. Lin and Nie on the one hand and Xu and Cheng on the other are each to send people to the vicinity of Guanshang to make contact with each other. Xu and Cheng are to order a cavalry company to keep Shuitou in our hands.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]

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**The Principle Governing the Location of the Encampment of Both Army Groups Is That It Should Be Favorable for Striking the Advancing Enemy**

(February 28, 1936, 6:00 P.M.)

Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua]:

1. Since the enemy has retreated to Zhongyang, our two army groups are to concentrate forces and rest in the areas to the south, north, and east of Guanshang, wait for the enemy to advance farther, and then eliminate him.

2. The principle governing the location of the encampment of the two army groups is that it should be favorable for striking the enemy advancing from Zhongyang to Guanshang, or the enemy advancing from Fujiata to Pushanzhuang, and favorable for striking the enemy advancing from Damaijiao to Shuitou. Lin and Nie are to draw the necessary distinctions.

3. Troops are to be sent to the five roads toward Damaijiao, Xiaoyi, Zhongyang, Fujiata, and Liuyu to conduct guerrilla reconnaissance.

4. The cavalry company that the Fifteenth Army Group left in Shuitou should conduct daily guerrilla missions toward Damaijiao; reconnoitering is also necessary in the direction of Shikou.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]

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Create Base Areas for Military Operations in the Region of Guanshang and Shuitou

(February 28, 1936, 7:00 P.M.)

To Lin [Biao], Nie [Rongzhen], and Zhu [Rui], and Xu [Haidong], Cheng [Zihua], and Guo [Shushen]:

1. The line between Guanshang and Shuitou, which is the area where the four xian of Shiliou, Zhongyang, Xiaoyi, and Xixian come together, is the pivotal point for our army in doing battle, and in terms of topography it is also the best temporary rear base area. It is hoped that you will resolve to create a base area for doing battle, work hard to conduct mass work within a radius of fifty li to the north, south, east, and west of that place, make a careful investigation of the conditions as regards the topography, roads, villages, population, economy, and so on of the area, and inform us by telegraph.

2. The emphasis of the work should be placed on the area near this line and on the major roads to Shiliou, Nuanquan, Liuyu, Zhongyang, Fenyang, Xiaoyi, and Damaijiao, to Shuitou, Shikou, and Chuankou, and to Shuangchi. One work group is to be sent to each place.

3. All roads that center around Guanshang are the responsibility of the First Army Group. All roads that center around Shuitou are the responsibility of the Fifteenth Army Group (the Fifteenth Army Group should be prepared to send the Third Battalion of the 224th Regiment back to Shuitou on the 2nd to work in coordination with the cavalry company).

4. The central task at present is to do battle. The task of local work is to strive hard to make its governing principle that of directly benefiting the battle instead of interfering with the battle (the troops need to concentrate forces and to rest).

Peng [Dehuai]    Mao [Zedong]

Public Notice Inviting Enrollment in the Northwest Anti-Japanese Red Army University of the Chinese Soviet People's Republic

(February 1936)

Purpose

At present the Japanese imperialists and the chieftain of the traitors who are selling out the country, Chiang Kaishek, are exerting their utmost efforts to turn China completely into a Japanese colony, and the Chinese nation is faced with the imminent danger of the destruction of the state and the extinction of the race. To keep pace with the development of the national revolutionary war against Japan and supply leaders to the various anti-Japanese battlefronts, this school has decided to recruit revolutionary youths and noble-minded patriots from all over to study here so as to train and develop on a regular basis large numbers of military and political cadres for the national resistance against Japan, to lead the national revolutionary war, overthrow Japanese imperialism, recover lost territory, and win independence, freedom, and complete emancipation for the Chinese nation.

Subjects and Enrollments

This school has four sections:

1. Military Command Section The aim is to train battalion and regimental commanders and other military officers, with an enrollment of a thousand.

2. Political Work Section The aim is to train political cadres at the regimental and division levels, with an enrollment of 1,200.

3. Guerrilla Warfare Section The aim is to train military and political cadres at all levels for anti-Japanese guerrilla and anti-Japanese volunteer troops, with an enrollment of 300.

4. Special Section The aim is to train military commanders for special arms such as engineer troops, mounted troops, artillery troops, and so on. The enrollment for each section is 300.

Entrance qualifications and treatment for them are the same as for the regular sections.

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 468–69.

1. Guo Shushen was at the time head of the political department of the First Front Army's Fifteenth Army Group.

We have translated this document from Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 4, pp. 267–69, where it is taken from Jiugo shibao, no. 83 (June 25, 1936).
Entrance Qualifications

1. All noble-minded patriots who wish to sacrifice everything to resist Japan resolutely and devote themselves entirely to the national revolution, and all those with the aspiration to study, whatever their class origin or family social background, and whatever the party or faction in which they may have participated in the past.
2. Those between the ages of sixteen and twenty-eight, regardless of sex.
3. Those in good health with no infectious diseases or bad habits.
4. Minimum required educational level is graduation from primary school or its equivalent. High school students, college students, unemployed office workers, and other intellectuals, and demobilized soldiers, especially those who have been cadres in anti-Japanese volunteer armies or anti-Japanese guerrilla troops, are all welcome, regardless of [educational] level.

Treatment

1. All tuition, board, and book fees are waived, and [students] are provided with clothing, blankets, and shoes and socks. They enjoy the same preferential treatment as those in active service in the Red Army.
2. The school will assign suitable anti-Japanese work to those who desire work assignment from the school after graduation. Travel expenses will be provided by the school to those who wish to work elsewhere (such as anti-Japanese armies, local anti-Japanese governments, volunteer armies, anti-Japanese guerrilla troops, and so on) and they will be recommended and sent to the places according to their own wishes.

Places for Application

1. Application may be made at soviet governments at all levels, anti-Japanese Red Army units, and anti-Japanese guerrilla troops. Board and lodging expenses on the road as well as escorts are to be provided by the relevant organs in charge.
2. If application deadlines are not met because of transportation problems, applications may be accepted upon arrival.

Length of Course and Opening Dates

1. The Military Command, Political Work, and Guerrilla Warfare Sections all last six months; the Special Section is for one year.
2. The first session opens on April 1, 1936, and thereafter one group will start on the first day of each month.

Location of the School

Near Wangyaobao in the Northern Shaanxi Soviet Area.
February 1936, by the Western calendar.

Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission

Chairman
Mao Zedong

Vice-Chairmen
Zhou Enlai
Peng Dehuai

University President
Zhou Kun

Political Commissar
Yuan Guoping

1. Yuan Guoping (1905–1941), a native of Hunan, had joined the Communist Party in 1925 and been trained at the Huangpu Military Academy. After the Long March, he became head of the Rear Area Department for Political Work.
Everything for the Objective of Winning a Second Victory

(March 1, 1936)

To Comrades Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], and to be transmitted to Comrades Zhou [Enlai] and Bo [Gu] and the commanders of the Twenty-eighth Army:

1. The consecutive victories of the First Army Group and the Fifteenth Army Group, particularly the victory in Guanshang and the occupation of Shuitou, have won for the Red Army the initial freedom to establish base areas in Shanxi. The future tasks are to shatter any new attacks decisively, and create base areas through conscientious, practical work.

2. The victories in Guanshang and Shuitou have completely exposed the Fenyang road and the Fenshui railroad before our eyes. This will place in an extremely difficult position Yan Xishan’s attacks and defense against us. But it should not be thought that Yan Xishan will switch to a defensive position right away; without a doubt, he will resolutely attack us with four or five divisions within a short space of time. The only correct slogan for us for now, therefore, is everything for the objective of winning a second victory.

3. The victories in Guanshang and Shuitou enabled us to take over the area along the borders of the five xian of Shilou, Zhongyang, Xiaoyi, Fenxi, and Xianxian, an area of extreme military importance because it placed the Red Army in the middle of the great arc of Jundu, Lishi, Fenyang, Xiaoyi, Jiexiu, Lingshi, Fenxi, Xixian, and Yonghe, and provided very favorable conditions for our battles and creating base areas.

4. In order to strengthen this region and strive to score a second victory, the main forces of the two army groups should, in the area centered around Guanshang and the area centered around Shuitou, build up the morale of the troops, mobilize the mass struggle, and connect the heroic Red Army with advantageous areas. Without hindering the ability of the main forces to concentrate their strength and to rest, every effort should be made to carry out the local work, in the spirit of making every minute count.

5. The entire xian of Shilou and the northern part of Yonghe constitute our army’s communication line with the rear. The units directly under the front army, the anti-Japanese guerrilla forces, and one unit of the Fifteenth Army Group are to undertake local work, plus construction of new boats and strengthening the ferry points.

6. The regaining and occupation of the large area consisting of Wu[bao], Jia[xian], Shen[mu], and Fu[gu] increased the strength of the Red Army’s strategic rear. The tactic of reconciliation in the south to make the Northeastern Army an army friendly to the revolution has already achieved initial success. All this is of great help to the main forces of the Red Army.

7. The above instructions are to be passed on to divisional and regimental commanders and to heads of army and divisional political departments.

Peng Dehuai    Mao Zedong

The Progress of the Battle Since Crossing the River and Military Deployments West of the Yellow River

(March 1, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

To Vice-Chairman Zhou [Enlai], Liu [Zhidan], and Song [Renzhong], and to be transmitted to Bo [Gu], Luo [Biao], Mai, Lin [Biao], Lin [Biao], and Nie [Rongzhen], and Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua]:

1. The Shaanxi Army’s five infantry brigades in Wu[bao], Jia[xian], Shen[mu], and Ful[gu] have been transferred completely to the east. Fang’s brigade,1 which is doing final garrison duty in Wubao and Songjaichuan, will also withdraw to Jundu today and tomorrow (there may be only a landlord militia in Wubao). There is still another cavalry brigade in Shenmu, and it is estimated that it may also be transferred to the east.

2. Our army wiped out and shattered five enemy regiments of Yan’s forces on the east bank and occupied the large area encompassed by the six xian of Shilou, Zhongyang, Xiaoyi, Fenxi, Xixian, and Yonghe, took hold of the strategically pivotal battleground area where the four xian of Shi[lou], Zhongyang, Xiao[yi], and Xian[xian] come together, consolidated the fighting positions, won the initial freedom to set up base areas, raised the fighting capacity of the Red Army, completed the necessary strategic reconnaissance, and began mobilizing the broad masses. At present we are striving to win a second victory.

3. It is requested that the Vice-Chairman directly command the 28th Army and the local forces in Wu[bao], Jia[xian], Su[de], and Mi[shi] to launch large-scale attacks on the enemy’s fortifications and expand our victories. More troops from west of the Wuding River must be moved to the east bank to connect up with the Red Army in Shen[mu] and Ful[gu] and try to take one or two towns.

4. As regards the work along the river, for the time being we will direct both Yang Lisan2 (in Hekou) and Cai Shufan3 (in Yidianzhen), and the Vice-Chairman is requested to concentrate on dealing with the enemy in the north.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]

We have translated this document from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 475–76, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Refers to the 206th Brigade of the 71st Division, Fourth Column, commanded by Fang Keyou, under the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office.
2. Yang Lisan was then head of the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission’s department of military depots.
3. Cai Shufan was then political commissar for the Red Army’s guerrilla troops along the river.

Proclamation of the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army of the Chinese People’s Red Army

(March 1, 1936)1

It is hereby proclaimed: Whereas Japanese imperialism is running rampant in North China, no one is putting a stop to it. Chiang Kai-shek, Yan Xishan, and Song Zheyuan are subservient lackeys whose nature is to fawn on foreign powers. The death and destruction of the whole country is imminent. The Central Government of the Chinese Soviet People’s Republic and the Military Commission of the Chinese People’s Red Army has sent this army eastward to resist Japan. Our army wants to unite with all noble-minded patriots and public-spirited revolutionaries, whether new or old, of whatever party or faction, and regardless of social origins, so long as they are in sympathy with fighting against the Japanese imperialists, to carry forward together the great cause of national revolution. Wherever this army goes, it protects the patriotic movement, protects the revolutionary people, protects the interests of the workers and peasants, protects the intellectuals, and protects industry and commerce. This army advocates the cessation of all civil war, and the union of the Red Army and the White army to resist Japan together. This army is willing to enter into negotiations with and conclude agreements or understandings with all patriotic military personnel, whether they actively join with this army to resist Japan, or passively refrain from opposing resistance against Japan on the part of this army and the patriotic people. The greatest enemy of our Chinese nation is Japanese imperialism. All those who are supported by this piece of earth,2 and are descended from Emperor Yan and the Yellow Emperor,3 should rise up as one and unite for the sake of the

We have translated this document from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 470–71, where it is reproduced from the April 24, 1936, issue of Doucheng (no. 96), the organ of the Chinese Communist Party’s Northeast Central Bureau.

1. Several documentary collections drawn upon in Mao Zedong ji. Bujian, Vol. 4, pp. 271–272, date this document March 10, as does Dierci guogong hexiude xingcheng, p. 91, where it is taken from the archives. On the assumption that the editors of Mao Zedong junshi wenji had access to more materials useful in elucidating this point, we follow them here.
2. To indicate the whole of China, the text alludes here to a passage from the Zuo zhuan, seventh year of Duke Zhao, translated by Legge as follows: "[W]ithin the State and the kingdom, what ground is there which is not the ruler’s? What individual of all whom the ground supports is there that is not the ruler’s subject?" (Legge, Vol. V, p. 616).
3. On the Yellow Emperor, see below, the note to Mao’s elegiac address to him dated April 5, 1937. Emperor Yan is also a legendary figure, equated in some sources with Shen Nong.
country. When the skin has been lost, where can the hair be placed? If the nation is about to perish, what is to become of the individual? Plant the banner of righteousness in the country’s center, and appeal to Heaven to punish [these crimes against] the land of Yu. Let those who have strength exert their strength, those who have money donate their money, those who have guns contribute their guns, and those who have knowledge contribute their knowledge. To pit one against ten shows our spirit; to pit ten against one shows our strength. That the Chinese nation will not perish, that Japanese imperialism will be overthrown, who is fated to win and who is fated to lose—all this is self-evident. Whoever does not understand great righteousness, fawns on the foreign powers and brings harm to the people, or even goes so far as to oppose this army, alienates himself from his own people and will surely be punished by this army as a Chinese traitor selling out the country. Workers, peasants, merchants, students, and soldiers, unite! Down with Japanese imperialism! Down with the Chinese traitors who are selling out the country! Long live the national anti-Japanese war! Long live the new China, endowed with freedom, equality, and territorial integrity! We hereby issue this proclamation.

Commander-in-Chief Peng Dehuai
General Political Commissar Mao Zedong

The Problem of Carrying Out the Policy of Good Treatment of Captives

(March 2, 1936, 9:30 P.M.)

To Lin [Biao], Nie [Rongzhen], and Zhu [Rui], Xu [Haidong], Cheng [Zihua], and Guo [Shushen], and to Zhang Yunyi, Liu Zhidan, Song Renqiong, Yan Hongyan, Cai Shufan, and Xiao Jingguang, and to be transmitted to the commanders of all local armed forces:

As regards modifications in the policy on treatment of captured officers, in the latest battle the First Regiment was still unable to carry them out fully (Battalion Commander Wang of the 405th Regiment was stripped of his coat and hat). It is necessary to explain to all Red soldiers and commanders the purpose of good treatment of captives, particularly captured officers, and in particular that when checking over senior and junior officers of the enemy army, once they are disarmed it is strictly unacceptable to strip them of their clothes, search their bodies, beat and curse them, tie them up, and ridicule them. Instead they are to be treated with an attitude of warm welcome and sincere care, using this tactic to undermine the White army.


4. This is another reference to the Zuo zhuan, the fourteenth year of Duke Xi, where in response to a question as to how the State may be preserved when certain virtues are absent it is said: “When the skin has been lost, where can you place the hair?” (Legge, Vol. V, p. 162).
5. I.e., China, Yu being another legendary emperor.

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 477–78, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
On the Three Basic Conditions for Talks About Joint Resistance to Japan

(March 4, 1936, 10:00 a.m.)

To Comrade Bo Gu, and also to Zhou [Enlai]:

1. The following three basic conditions are to be put forward to the other side as prerequisites for negotiations about concrete measures toward joint resistance to Japan: (1) Cease all attacks on the Red Army and allow the Red Army’s main forces to assemble in Hebei, first of all to check the advance of Japanese imperialism; (2) Political freedom; and (3) Release the political prisoners.

2. Deng Fa¹ and Jiaqiang² are both requested to come along to Shilou if possible.

Peng [Dehuai] has already sent a telegram to Wang Yizhe³ about permitting Gao Fuyuan⁴ to make a trip to the front for the purpose of discussing the question of the movement toward Shanxi-Hebei-Shandong.


Views Regarding Negotiations with the Nanjing Authorities

(March 4, 1936, 12:00 noon)

To Comrade Bo Gu for transmittal to Elder Brother Zhou Jiwu:¹

1. Your younger brother and the rest of us very much welcome the awakening and expression of wisdom on the part of the Nanjing authorities. In order to unite forces all over the country to resist Japan and save the nation, your younger brother and the rest of us wish to start concrete and practical negotiations with the Nanjing authorities.

2. When our elder brother reports back to Nanjing we hope that he will earnestly convey our suggestions as follows: (1) Stop all civil war. All armed forces in the land should unite against Japan regardless of their differences, Red or White; (2) Form a national defense government and a unified anti-Japanese army; (3) Allow the main forces of the Red Army throughout the country to concentrate quickly in Hebei, first of all to check the advance of the Japanese invaders; (4) Release the political prisoners and allow the people political freedom; and (5) Carry out initial and necessary reform in domestic politics and the economy.

3. We agree that our elder brother should return immediately to Nanjing so as to engage quickly in consultation on these matters of vital importance.


¹ Our source for this document is Wenshan he yanjiu, 1985 annual compendium, pp. 179–80.
² As might have been expected, Deng Fa, the chief of the Chinese Communist Political Security Bureau, was involved in the negotiations with Nanjing.
³ I.e., Wang Jiaxiang.
⁴ Wang Yizhe (1896–1937), zì Dingfang, was a native of Jilin. At this time he was one of Zhang Xueliang’s most trusted subordinates, and served as commander of the Guomindang Sixty-seventh Army. As noted above in the Introduction, he participated in Zhang’s discussions of April 1936 with Zhou Enlai.
⁵ Gao Fuyuan was involved in the work of liaison between the Northeast Army and the Red Army.

¹ Our source for this text is Wenshan he yanjiu, 1985 annual compendium, pp. 180–81.
² Zhou Jiwu was a pseudonym of Dong Jianwu, known to Edgar Snow as Pastor Wang, who was engaged at the time in underground work under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. Regarding his role, see above, the Introduction.
Dispositions for Wiping Out the Enemy Forces in the Zhongyang Area

(March 5, 1936, 12:00 midnight)

To Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua]:

1. It has become clear that there are three columns of enemy forces under Enemy Yan [Xishan] in the east, there should be three as well in the north, and there will undoubtedly be two in the south, which makes eight columns with an estimated total of sixteen regiments, or twenty regiments at most.

2. Our troops should use Guanshang and Shuitou as a pivot, with our back against Shilou, concentrate the largest main force from both army groups, and take as our basic fighting orientation that of continuous battle to wipe out two or three contingents of their forces in the east. If the enemy in the south gets close to Shuitou, the fighting could also be started in the south. The decision is to be made according to the situation tomorrow.

3. In order to prepare to do battle on the 7th, our arrangements for tomorrow (the 6th) are as follows:

   a. The First and Fourth divisions of the First Army Group will concentrate in the area about twenty 里 east of Guanshang. One unit shall maintain contact with the two enemy contingents in Duijiuyu and Gaoyang, and the main forces of the Second Division will control the area between Guanshang and Cheminyu, and move to Zhongyang to block the enemy. The First Army Group is to prepare to be in front during the fighting on the 7th.

   b. The Fifteenth Army Group’s Seventy-fifth Division is to place two regiments tomorrow about 30 里 east of Shuitou along the road to Damajiao. The Seventy-eighth and Eighty-first divisions are to concentrate in Shuitou, but one guerrilla unit should be placed in Shikou. The Fifteenth Army Group should be prepared to attack from the right wing during the fighting on the 7th.

   c. Tomorrow we will lead the Twenty-third platoon to meet with Xu and Cheng at Shuitou. The First Army Group’s maps should be sent to Shuitou without delay. Xu and Cheng are to remain at Shuitou tomorrow.

Peng [Dehuai]    Mao [Zedong]

Destroy the Enemy Forces Moving Toward Damajiao One by One

(March 6, 1936, 2:00 A.M.)

To Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua]:

1. It seems that there are no enemy forces in the direction of Fenxi, Xixian, and Yonghe that will attack Damajiao, and that the main forces are still the two units under Li Shengda¹ and Sun Chu² in the east and north. Their method is to advance along separate routes, not to advance prematurely.

2. Our army will use the tactics of waiting for the opportunity to attack them one by one, concentrating our main forces, fighting continuously, attacking first toward the east and then toward the north, and hitting them from behind the flank, then surrounding and annihilating them. Today both army groups need to concentrate their forces and rest, and should not do any fighting.

3. The First Army Group’s wounded should be moved quickly to the Jieyuanli area.

4. It is hoped that Lin and Nie will send to Shuitou their opinions about doing battle.

Peng [Dehuai]    Mao [Zedong]

¹ Li Shengda was at this time commander of both the Third Column and the Seventy-second Division under the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office.

² Sun Chu now commanded the Fourth Column under the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office.

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 481–82, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Use a Unit of Our Main Forces to Attack the Enemy from the Rear, Surround Him, and Wipe Him Out

(March 6, 1936)

Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen]:

In order to be prepared to fight the second and third battles after fighting the first, it is necessary to use one unit of our main forces to attack the enemy’s rear, surround him, and wipe him out to avoid pursuit. It is imperative to avoid pursuit, for only thus can we concentrate our forces in one place on the same day, will fighting the second battle be facilitated, and will we be able to deal with unexpected changes. Although the enemy’s fighting capacity is weak, his main forces are not small in number, and we should concentrate our troops and wage a serious battle.

Peng [Dehuai]   Mao [Zedong]

Deployment to Wipe Out the Enemy in Duijiuyu

(March 6, 1936, 8:30 P.M.)

Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. Under [Xu] Haidong’s leadership, the Fifteenth Army Group’s Seventy-fifth Division is to set out at dawn tomorrow, and the vanguard can reach Damaijiao by 12:00 noon.

2. If the enemy in Duijiuyu does not move tomorrow, the First Army Group will stay where it is, the Fifteenth Army Group will camp at Damaijiao, and the attack on Duijiuyu will begin the day after tomorrow (the 8th).

3. If the enemy in Duijiuyu does not move toward Damaijiao tomorrow but advances instead toward where the First Army Group is located, then the First Army Group is to withdraw 20 li back and encamp, and the Fifteenth Army Group will encamp at Damaijiao. The attack will be on the 8th.

4. If the enemy advances tomorrow to the area between Duijiuyu and Damaijiao and stops to encamp there, then the First Army Group stays where it is and the Fifteenth Army Group encamps at Damaijiao. The attack will be on the 8th.

5. If the enemy advances toward Damaijiao tomorrow, then the First Army Group should wait until the entire enemy force has passed and then attack the enemy from behind his right flank. The Fifteenth Army Group meets [the enemy] head on with one unit, and its main forces attack from the enemy’s right flank and wipe him out.

6. Given the four situations mentioned above, only when the enemy makes an attack toward Damaijiao should our army engage in battle with him; in all other cases the fighting will be on the day after tomorrow.

7. The Second Division is still pinning down Sun Chu north of Guanshang. One battalion of the Fifteenth Army Group is pinning down the Liang Brigade south of Shikou.

8. We will set out from Shuitou at 7:00 A.M. tomorrow with the Seventy-eighth and Eighty-first divisions, and can reach Damaijiao at 2:00 P.M.

Peng [Dehuai]   Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 483–84, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The reference is to the 203rd Brigade of the Sixty-ninth Division under the First Column of the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office, commanded by Liang Jiantang.
The Fourth Regiment Should Delay the Enemy’s Attack on Shuitou

(March 10, 1936, 3:00 P.M.)

To Li [Tianyou] and Deng [Hua]:

1. Yesterday (the 9th) the enemy’s Sixty-sixth Division advanced to and occupied a place 15 li from Damajiao, and it is possible that the main forces of Li Shengda’s unit may attack in the direction of Guojiaozhang today.
2. The main forces of our two army groups have the task today of wiping out the enemy’s left route.
3. The Fourth Regiment should continue to pin down the enemy troops that have entered Guanshang, and delay the enemy’s attempt to attack Shuitou. Dispositions are as follows:
   a. With our back against Fengweicun, protect the wounded in this area. The main forces are to control the major roads and strategic passes, and adopt a mobile defense.
   b. Send out small troop units to attack both of the enemy’s flanks, and also inform them as to the location for concentrating our forces.

Peng [Denghuai] Mao [Zedong]

Crush the Enemy’s Offensive and Achieve the Creation of a Soviet Area in Shanxi

(March 11, 1936, 12:00 noon)

To Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua]:

1. Yesterday we shattered the three divisions under the command of Yang, Li, and Li of the enemy’s Third and Second columns, and they have retreated in the direction of Duijuiyu.
2. Our army has the task of striving to create favorable conditions for the establishment of soviet areas by having the main forces advance eastward on the heels of victory to threaten Taiyuan, completely shattering the general offensive dispositions of the enemy under Yan [Xishan], expanding strategic results, expanding propaganda, expanding the soviet areas, expanding the Red Army, and winning over the popular masses.
3. Dispositions are as follows:
   a. The First and Fourth divisions of the First Army Group and one unit of its directly affiliated troops are to be led by Lin, together with the Seventeenth Platoon. The Fifteenth Army Group’s Seventy-fifth Division (minus one regiment) is to be led by Xu. Both army groups are under Lin’s command and are to advance to Nanbeiqiaohtang tomorrow (the 12th), occupy the road on the western edge of Fenxian on the 13th, and await further orders.
   b. The First Army Group’s Second Division and one of its directly attached units, led by Nie, is to control the triangular area between Zhongyang City, Duijuiyu, and Shuitou, force Sun’s column to withdraw, and consolidate this area as well as turn it Red.
   c. The Fifteenth Army Group’s Seventy-eighth and Eighty-first divisions, and its directly attached units, are to control the area south of Shuitou and Damaijiao, under Cheng’s leadership. The main forces are to press straight on to Xixian, lure Yang’s column into retreat, and turn this area Red.

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 488–89, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. These units all belonged to the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office. They are the Sixty-sixth Division of the Second Column, and the Sixty-eighth and Seventy-second divisions of the Third Column, under the command of, respectively, Yang Xiao’ou, Li Fuying, and Li Shengda.
2. Refers to the Fourth Column under the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office, commanded by Sun Chu.
3. Refers to the First Column under the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office, commanded by Yang Chengyuan.
The Fifteenth Army Group Should Profit from the Weakness of the Enemy’s Defense to Advance Northward, Seize the Opportunity, and Take Jiexiu and Other Places by Surprise

(March 17, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

To Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], and to be transmitted to Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. Today one unit of the enemy’s Second and Third columns entered and occupied Guojiazhang, and the main forces advanced to the area between Duijuyu and Guojiazhang. The main forces of the enemy’s Fourth Column reached Cheminu and the city of Zhongyang, and one unit reached Nuanquan and looks as if it is going to save Shilou. Today our First Army Group entered and occupied the Huoxian area.

2. The Fifteenth Army Group (minus the Eighty-first Division) has the task of taking advantage of the vacuum to advance northward, smashing the enemy’s rear, shaking the confidence and morale of the enemy soldiers, and expanding our propaganda. Tomorrow (the 18th) the main forces will advance to Beishitun and Nanshitun, and one unit should cross the river and seize the opportunity to take the town of Jiexiu by surprise. If Jiexiu comes into our hands, then enter Jiexiu and camp there, prepare to advance toward Pingyao on the 19th, and seize an opportunity to attack and take it by surprise. If Jiexiu does not come into our hands, then all troops are to encamp tomorrow at Nanshitun and Beishitun, set out before the 19th for the area between Jiexiu and Xiaoyi, and by way of Dazhuangcun and Yanwuzhen advance to Jinhancun near Fenshui, and at the same time have one unit seize the opportunity to occupy the town of Wenshui.

3. Concentrate the troops at all times and be prepared to wipe out the enemy’s cavalry.

4. Pay attention to propaganda and to mobilizing the masses. Shops and schools may not be sabotaged.

Peng [Dehuai]    Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 490–91, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The editors of the Junshi wenji note that this probably means East Dawangeun, located in the southeastern part of Fenyang xian in Shanxi.
The First Army Group as Well as the Fifteenth Army Group Should Expand Their Occupied Territory

(March 20, 1936, 3:00 A.M.)

To Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua]:

1. The Shanxi enemy remains hesitant and undecided about his new dispositions. Our First Army Group in the south and Fifteenth Army Group in the north should take advantage of this period of time to expand the occupied territory, build up a show of strength for an offensive, expand political propaganda, destroy the basis of Guomindang rule, intensify efforts to win over the popular masses to join the Red Army, and make every possible effort to occupy several xian towns.

2. Lin and Nie are to pay attention to reconnaissance and surveillance over the Sixty-ninth Division under Yang Chengyuan,¹ and Xu and Cheng are to pay attention to surveillance of Shang Zhen’s² troops and the enemy’s cavalry.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

The Basic Policy Guiding the Operations of the Fifteenth Army Group in Establishing Base Areas in Northwest Shanxi

(March 22, 1936, 10:00 P.M.)

To Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], and to be transmitted to Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen]:

Directive on operational principles:

1. The Fifteenth Army Group has the tasks of creating soviet base areas in northwestern Shanxi, and, in cooperation with the Twenty-eighth Army, which is operating in Shen[mu] and Fu[gu], controlling one section of the Yellow River and opening up communications with northern Shanxi.

2. The area of operations includes all xian centered around Kelan and Lanzhan, namely the xian of Jiaocheng, Jinghe, Ningwu, Wuzhai, Hequ, Baode, Xingxian, Lixin, and Fangshan, and includes the creation of soviet base areas in these xian, with an emphasis on Kelan, Lanzhan, Xingxian, and Lixin.

3. Within this region, wipe out the armed forces of the landlords, wipe out any enemy forces that are smaller than ours on the northward march, and make every possible effort in striving to get one or two xian towns into our hands.

4. Extensively expand propaganda, distribute various kinds of property, and mobilize the broad masses to the point where guerrilla troops and political power are widely established, and the land is distributed.

5. Vigorously expand the Red Army, striving to recruit 1,500 people within one month.

6. There are no restrictions as to time of operations and work.

7. In case telegrams cannot get through, you should continue to operate in the designated area, and we shall order Song Shilun¹ to lead the Seventh Platoon to search for you. During the present period, however, Song Shilun and his troops are still in the area centered around Shuitou engaging the enemy’s attention and carrying on their work.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 494–95, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

¹ Song Shilun (1907– ), a native of Hunan, had been trained at the Huangpu Military Academy, and joined the Communist Party in 1927. During the early 1930s he held a variety of increasingly important commands, and participated in the Long March. At this time, he was head of the operational section in the headquarters of the Fifteenth Army Group of the Red Army First Front Army.
Create a Battlefield East of the River, and Strengthen the Work on Major Roads
(March 25, 1936, 1:00 P.M.)

Ye [Jianying] and Li [Fuchun]:

1. In vigorously expanding the Red Army and creating a battlefield east of
the river, if certain difficulties are met, you must resolve to overcome them. You
should lay stress first of all on turning the entire xian of Shilou Red, as well as
the area north of Yonghe and Xixian, and the area south of Zhongyang and
Liu.1

2. In particular, work along the following major roads should be strengthened:
(1) Shilou to Shuitou. (2) Shilou to Shikouzhen. (3) Shilou to Xixian. (4) Shilou to
Yonghe. (5) Shilou to Pingdi and Liu. Along these five routes, the masses
should be fully mobilized, guerrilla work and cadre leadership should be
strengthened, preparations should be made to create a mass blockade against the
enemy in Shilou after they have penetrated deeply so that all the enemy’s sup-
plies are cut off, and the enemy should be worn down by relying on the strength
of the masses, and strengthening the walls and clearing the fields.1

3. Destroy the White army’s slogans and leaflets, and first arrange things
along the abovementioned major roads.

4. As for specific arrangements, it is hoped that you will send a report to
Sijiangcun.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

Basic Operational Policies of the First Army Group
(March 25, 1936, 8:00 P.M., near Shilou)

Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. In order to destroy the reactionary base wherever it exists, in order to mobilize
the popular masses all over, and in order to destroy the thousand-li fortification line
along the Yellow River and the major railway lines, from now on the operational
policies of the vanguard army (the right route army) are as follows:

a. Try to fight for as prolonged a period as possible in the present area. The first
stroke should be to divide forces between Yicheng and Jiangxian, surround
Qinshui with one small unit, and make it look as if going eastward.

b. The second stroke should be to fight in the five xian of Fencheng,
Xinjiang, Jishan, Hejin, and Xiangning. The task is to expand the Red
Army. One unit is to lure the enemy southward at Linfen and Xiangling.

c. The third stroke is to transfer to Yonghe, Daning, Xixian, and
Puxian. The tasks are first, to destroy the fortifications along the Yellow
River and second, to expand the Red Army.

d. The fourth stroke is to deliver a sudden blow at Jixiu, Pingyao, Qixian, and
Tai. The tasks are first, to destroy the railway, and second, to expand the
Red Army.

e. The fifth step is to occupy the Zheng-Tai Railroad1. The tasks are first, to
destroy the railway, and second, to expand the Red Army.

f. Afterward, go either to Hebei or to Changzhi and Jincheng, the decision to
be taken according to circumstances.

2. During this period of time, the Fifteenth Army Group (left route) will be
operating in northwestern Shanxi, [with tasks] including destroying the enemy’s
fortification line along the north end of the Yellow River, and fighting a way
through to the soviet area in Shen[mu] and Ful[gu].

3. During this period our troops in the Shilou area (central route army) are to
engage the enemy’s first column to prevent them from moving southward.

4. Your operations are to be based on this general policy, but if the enemy
situation does not permit this, ad hoc changes may be made.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 496–97,
where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. "Strengthening the walls and clearing the fields" (jianbi qingye) was a traditional
expression meaning to prepare for combat by strengthening town walls, evacuating
noncombatants, and hiding provisions and livestock. Originally used by imperial officials
to describe preparations to resist rural rebels, its meaning had been inverted by Mao
during the Jiangxi period to refer to efforts to prepare the rural populace for the incursion
of government armies. For an instance of such usage and a more detailed note about the
term, see the text dated July 4, 1931, in Volume IV of our edition.

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 498–99,
where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. This refers to a stretch of railroad running between Zhengding and Taiyuan.
Circular on the Discussion of Political and Military Issues at a Meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee

(March 28, 1936, 1:00 A.M.)

To Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], and to be transmitted to Zhu [Rui] and Guo [Shushen]:

1. The meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee, at which the three issues of politics, military affairs, and foreign relations were thoroughly discussed, is over. Those comrades who were present extended their profound good wishes and congratulations to the officers, commanders, and soldiers of all units of the Front Army on the valiant fighting as well as their great victory in expanding the Red Army.

2. As for political issues, the current situation in northern China was analyzed, and the decision was made that the important task of the Party and the Red Army is to strive to begin fighting against Japan as quickly as possible.

3. As for military issues, the Military Commission’s proposals were approved:
   a. Under the orientation of striving to begin fighting against Japan as quickly as possible, the basic strategic policy during the first period is to concentrate on Shanxi. Under such a policy it is permissible to launch some fighting campaigns within the three provinces of Hebei, Henan, and Shansi.
   b. The principle of seeking consolidation through development was decided upon. At present this means to destroy reactionary bases wherever they exist, mobilize the masses everywhere, vigorously expand the Red Army, and wipe out the enemy forces one by one.
   c. Before the anniversary of the October Revolution, expand the ranks of the Red Army by 36,000 men. The front is to take on 30,000, and strive to exceed that number.
   d. Accomplish the organization of three armies, nine divisions, and twenty-seven regiments in four months; each regiment should consist of 750 men.

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 500–501, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. This meeting of the Politburo was held from March 20 to 27 in Puxi. On this occasion, the decisions of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International were transmitted, and problems of the international situation and China’s internal situation, politics, military affairs, and the development of the anti-Japanese united front were discussed.
Concentrate All Your Forces to Fight a Contact Battle Against the Enemy Troops Coming from the East and West

(March 31, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], Liu [Zhidan] and Song [Renqiong]:

1. The Fifteenth Army Group should gather all its forces to seek an advantageous opportunity to fight a contact battle against the enemy coming from the east and west, wipe out another enemy regiment, stop pursuing the enemy, and disperse to carry on its work. But at this moment it certainly must not disperse. When it is not appropriate to engage in fighting, one unit should keep watch on the enemy while the main forces concentrate and rest, and prepare to engage in fighting.

2. Liu and Song are in charge of eliminating the enemy’s fortifications from the south to the north, and wiping out the enemy’s garrison troops.

3. Liu and Song should tell the Special Committee to make ten more large boats and ten more small boats and distribute them amongst the five ferry stations within a few dozen li north and south of Luoyukou.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]

Reorganization of the First Front Army into the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army of the Chinese People’s Red Army, Its Basic Policy, and Its Tasks

(April 1, 1936)

To our front armies:

1. In order to carry out the Party Central Committee’s decision to hasten to declare war on Japan, the entire First Front Army has been reorganized into the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army of the Chinese People’s Red Army, the First Army Group has been reorganized into the First Route Army of the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army of the Chinese People’s Red Army, the Fifteenth Army Group has been reorganized into the Second Route Army, and the Third Route Army will be established within five months.

2. The scope within which the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army is to engage in battle includes the five provinces of North China. The basic orientation for the first stage is to create base areas in Shanxi to fight against Japan. With Shanxi as the primary orientation, the entire [army] or a portion of it may leap into a section of Suiyuan or Hebei or Henan as a temporary step. We oppose making the basic orientation for the first stage that of going into Hebei and Suiyuan by marching across Shanxi. We also oppose the idea that temporary leaping over cannot be used as the orientation for a battle.

3. Seek consolidation through development.

4. Our basic principle in military command at present is, with regard to strategy, to defeat a large force with a small force, and with regard to battles, to defeat a small force with a larger one.

5. The Vanguard Army is to accomplish the organization of 50,000 men within seven months, and have them armed, expanding the Red Army being the task of first priority within the overall orientation.

6. The localities are to establish four local armies within three months, two armies each in Shaanxi and Shanxi.

7. Create an independent regiment in each xian in the new soviet areas.

8. Raise the status of the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army to that of leadership for the whole anti-Japanese Red Army throughout the country. Raise the political

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 504–5, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
and military standards of cadres and personnel in the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army and other Red Army forces to the level of Leninist principles and strategic principles, to guarantee the unity and unification of the Red Army.

(To be transmitted to cadres at and above the regimental level.)

Northwestern Revolutionary Military Commission

Mao [Zedong]  Peng [Dehuai]
Zhou [Enlai]

The Enemy’s Defensive Arrangements, and the Deployment of the Fifteenth Army Group of the Red Army

(April 2, 1936, 10:00 P.M.)

To Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], Liu [Zhidan] and Song [Renqiong]:

1. Yang Yaofang¹ is leading six or seven regiments in the Xingxian and Lanxian area, obstructing us from moving northward. Li Shengda² is leading two or three regiments toward the Loufan and Jingle area, obstructing us from moving eastward. In the area around Linxian, Fangshan, Lishi, Zhongyang, and Fenyang, there are only two regiments of Fang’s brigade and one regiment of Ding’s brigade of the Seventy-first Division,³ so it is very weakly defended.

2. Deployment of the Fifteenth Army Group:
   a. Gradually move southward after resting and training for three or four days at the present location, operate for a period after reaching the Lishi road and the Xixian area, and after that, depending on the situation, go either to Fenyang and Wenshui or to Jixiu and Lingshi.
   b. Pay attention to seeking opportunities, fight back when involved in contact battles, or advance and attack, and wipe out small groups of the enemy troops.
   c. With regard to the work as a whole, expanding the Red Army is the first order of business.
   d. Organize secret branches among the masses.

3. During the present period of rest, the Twenty-eighth Army and the Fifteenth Army Group should make every effort to expand the Red Army, and destroy the enemy’s fortifications along the line from Heiyukou to Luoyukou. While moving southward, the Fifteenth Army Group is to decide according to the situation and either go back to the Shen[mu] and Fu[gu] area, or operate for a time east of the [Yellow] River.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]


¹. Yang Yaofang was at the time commander of the Seventy-first Division of the Second Route river defense forces under the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office.

². Li Shengda at the time commanded both the Third Column and the Seventy-second Division of the Second Route under the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office.

³. The reference is to Fang Keyou’s 206th Brigade and Deng Bingqin’s 216th Brigade.
The Operational Plans of the Eastern Expedition Army and the Problem of the Expansion of the Forces in Shaanxi and Gansu

(April 3, 1936, 8:30 P.M.)

To Vice-Chairman Zhou [Enlai], and to be transmitted to Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], Liu [Zhidan] and Song [Renqiong], Song [Shilun], and Xiao [Jingguang]:

1. Because of changes in the enemy’s situation, it is ordered that the First Army Group not go to southeastern Shanxi for the time being, but that it start moving tomorrow to the Puxian area for concentrated training, and prepare for battle. For a certain period of time after that, we and the First Army Group together will take on the tasks of turning this area Red and destroying the blockade line.

2. The Fifteenth Army Group is now on the border between Fen and Lin. From tomorrow it will be ordered to move gradually southward to the area of Linxian, Lishi, and Zhongyang, vigorously expand the Red Army, and turn the area Red.

3. It has been decided to order the Twenty-eighth Army to operate together with the Fifteenth Army Group for a while and fight some small battles so that it may be tempered and expanded to 2,000 men, after which it will be ordered to cross over to the west, depending on the needs west of the river.

4. You are urgently requested to organize the Thirty-first Army immediately on the basis of the independent regiments and battalions in northern Shaanxi, and station it in the area around Shen[mu], Fu[gu], Mi[zhi], and Jia[xian].

5. In order to deal with the attacks by Zhang [Xueliang] and Yang [Hucheng], all April recruits into the Red Army through the expansion campaign in northern Shaanxi and Shaanxi-Gansu are to be organized into the Twenty-ninth Army and the Thirty-first Army. There should be a new plan for expanding the Red Army. Our opinion is that the numbers do not have to be large, but we must try to meet our goals.

6. As regards communication between the front and the rear, we plan to open two ferry points to the north of Yongheguan and Sanjiaozhen. The First Army Group is in charge of the south side and the Fifteenth Army Group is in charge of the north side. This should be carried out in one week’s time.


Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 508–9.

1. The editors of the Junshi wenji suspect that “Fen and Lin” is a misprint for “Xing and Lin,” meaning Xingxian and Linxian in Shanxi.

2. The Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission planned to organize the Thirty-first Army on the basis of local Red Army and guerrilla forces from Shenmu and Fugu, but the plan never came to fruition. In August 1936 these troops became the Independent Second Division.
Manifesto Protesting Against the Action of the Traitors Chiang Kaishek and Yan Xishan in Obstructing the Movement of the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army of the Chinese People’s Red Army to the East to Fight the Japanese and in Disrupting the Anti-Japanese Rear Areas

(April 5, 1936)

To patriotic fellow countrymen throughout China:

Ever since the five provinces in North China ceased to exist except in name, the Japanese imperialist bandits have been rushing toward their goal of annexing the whole of China.

At this crucial moment when the destruction of the state and the extinction of the race are imminent, the Central Government of the Chinese People’s Soviet Republic and the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Chinese Anti-Japanese Red Army have repeatedly demanded that all civil wars should cease; that both the Red Army and White army unite in joint resistance against Japan; that a national congress to resist Japan and save the nation be convened to form a national defense government and an anti-Japanese united army; and that the Red Army’s main forces all over the country should concentrate in Hebei to check the advance of Japanese imperialism. In response to the urgent national demands for resisting Japan and saving the nation, the Central Government of the People’s Soviet Republic and the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Chinese Anti-Japanese Red Army has specially organized the Chinese People’s Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army to cross the [Yellow] River in an Eastern Expedition against Japan and the traitors as a way to fight in the van and give vent to the righteous indignation of anti-Japanese compatriots all over the country. Yet Shanxi’s Yan Xishan is a willing lackey of Japanese imperialism, and has mobilized his entire armed forces to block the Red Army’s way in fighting Japan. The vicious traitor chieftain Chiang Kaishek, for his part, used ten or more divisions of his forces to help Yan Xishan attack the Chinese People’s Red Army’s Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army, and also ordered the troops of Zhang Xueliang, Yang Hucheng, and others to advance northward to disrupt the anti-Japanese rear areas in our Shaanxi-Gansu Soviet Area.

Have a look! Just as Japanese imperialism was annexing the five provinces of North China and the Japanese and Manchukuo troops were moving into Beijing, Tianjin, Chahar, and Suiyuan, Chiang Kaishek ordered all his troops to withdraw from the five provinces in North China. When the Red Army moved eastward to fight Japan and threatened the security of Japanese imperialism in the five provinces of North China, on the other hand, Chiang Kaishek turned around and sent his troops into Shanxi to attack the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army of the Chinese People’s Red Army. It is now clear to everyone that this is a new vicious scheme on the part of Japanese imperialism to annex North China, that it is the concrete application of the so-called three Hirota principles of Japanese imperialism. Now the joint “anti-Communist” agreement between China, Japan, and “Manchukuo” has been firmly carried out by the traitor chieftain Chiang Kaishek.

The Central Government of the Chinese People’s Soviet Republic and the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Chinese Anti-Japanese Red Army hereby proclaim to our patriotic compatriots all over the country that Japanese imperialism aims to destroy China in the name of a joint “anti-Communist” effort among China, Japan, and “Manchukuo” by mobilizing all armed forces of the Chinese traitors and collaborators to attack the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army of our Chinese People’s Red Army. For the sake of the freedom, independence, and territorial integrity of the Chinese nation, we vow to use all our might to wipe out the troops of the Chinese traitors and collaborators who are obstructing our Vanguard Army from fighting Japan and disrupting the anti-Japanese rear areas, so as to smash Japanese imperialism’s new scheme to destroy China, and strive to wage war directly against Japan very soon. Furthermore, we call upon patriotic fellow countrymen throughout the nation to rise up together to resist Japan and fight the traitors, [X][X] and to support the eastern expedition of the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army of the Chinese People’s Red Army in order to save the nation from extinction. The victory of the Red Army in resisting Japan and fighting the traitors is the victory of patriotic fellow countrymen all over China, and the victory of the Chinese nation.

Stop all civil war, unite as one to resist Japan, and create an anti-Japanese people’s united front of all parties and factions!

Oppose the “joint anti-communist” effort of China, Japan, and “Manchukuo” to destroy China!

1. The “Three Principles” adopted by Japan in November 1935, to which the name of Foreign Minister (subsequently Prime Minister) Hirota was attached, comprised (1) suppression of anti-Japanese activities; (2) de facto recognition of Manchukuo, and (3) cooperation between China and Japan in the eradication of Communism.
Ally with Russia and the Communists to unite in resisting Japan and winning
China's independence and freedom!
Convene a national congress to resist Japan and save the country, and orga-
nize a national defense government and an anti-Japanese united army!
Support the Red Army in hastening to make war directly on Japan!
Support the nationwide main forces of the Red Army in concentrating in
Hebei to fight Japan!
Let all naval, air, and ground forces nationwide concentrate in Hebei to fight
Japan!
Down with the Chinese traitors and collaborators Chiang Kaishek and Yan
Xishan, who are obstructing the Red Army's resistance to Japan and disrupting
the Red Army's anti-Japanese rear areas.
People of all China, rise up in arms and overthrow Japanese imperialism,
overthrow the Chinese traitors who are selling out their country!
Long live the victorious national-revolutionary war against Japan!

Chairman of the Central
Government of the Chinese
People's Soviet Republic           Mao Zedong

Chairman of the Revolutionary
Military Commission of the
Chinese Anti-Japanese
Red Army                         Zhu De

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Telegram from Mao Zedong and
Peng Dehuai to Wang Yizhe and
Zhang Xueliang

(April 6, 1936, at noon)

1. The representatives of our humble side, Comrade Zhou and Li Kenong, will
arrive at Fushi on the 8th, to meet with Mr. Zhang Xueliang and discuss
matters of vital importance concerning national salvation. They are scheduled to
set out from Wayaobao on the 7th, and arrive before 6:00 P.M. on the 8th at
Chuankou, 20 li east of the town of Fushi, in the expectation that Mr. Zhang
Xueliang will send people to Chuankou to guide them into the city. As regards
their security after entering the city, Mr. Zhang is kindly requested to make
suitable arrangements.
2. Our humble side makes the following proposal regarding the issues to be
discussed by the two parties:
   a. The question of the cessation of all civil war, and of all armies in the
country, Red or White, uniting as one to resist Japan and save the
nation.
   b. The question of the Red Army from the whole country concentrating its
forces in Hebei to resist the advance of Japanese imperialism.
   c. The question of concrete steps towards organizing a government of
national defense and a united anti-Japanese army, and their political
programs.
   d. The question of forming an alliance with the Soviet Union, and of select-
ing representatives to send to Moscow.

We have translated this telegram from Dierci guogong zhuzuo xingcheng, p. 92, where it
is reproduced from the original document in the Central Archives. It can also be found in
slightly different form in Mao Zedong Ji, Bujuan, Vol. 4, p. 273.
1. The Chinese character used to indicate the hour means between 11 A.M. and 1 P.M.
2. Li Kenong (1890–1962), a native of Anhui, had joined the Chinese Communist
Party in 1926, and had played an important role in security and intelligence matters since
1928. After participating in the Long March, he became head of the Liaison Bureau of
the Central Committee, and it was no doubt in this capacity that he accompanied Zhou
Enlai on his visit to Yan'an. As indicated above in the Introduction, he was the only
Communist participant in the talks of April 9, 1936, with Zhang Xueliang and Wang
Yizhe, apart from Zhou himself. Li also served as secretary general of the Chinese
Communist Party delegation sent to negotiate with Chiang Kaishek at the time of the
Xi'an Incident.
3. Fushi was the old name for Yan'an.
e. The question of signing a preliminary agreement between your esteemed side and our own on mutual nonaggression and economic and commercial relations.

3. If Mr. Zhang Xueliang has any suggestions, we look forward to learning of them as soon as possible.

Peng Dehuai  Mao Zedong

The Tasks of the First Army Group
While It Remains in Southwest Shanxi

(April 8, 1936, 2:00 A.M.)

Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. For you the problem is not hastening to leave southwest Shanxi, but rather staying and working in southwest Shanxi as long as possible, until the enemy situation prohibits your continuing to stay in this area, at which point you are to leave this area and move to another one.

2. In southwest Shanxi you must complete the following tasks to the extent possible:
   a. Fight battles, collect and confiscate guns, arm new recruits, and train new recruits.
   b. Mobilize the popular masses, establish guerrilla zones, and create new guerrilla zones.
   c. Shatter a section of the blockade line along the river; accept guerrilla forces from west of the [Yellow] River as well as their members who are rejoining their ranks so that they will send supplies west of the river after they cross to the east.
   d. Continue to expand the Red Army.

3. Prepare at present to move to the Xiangning area. The second step is to move to Puxian, Daning, and Yonghe.

4. For the purpose of expediting your later long distance advances to the northeast and the east, and so that you will have ample time to initiate your work after arriving at a new area, it is necessary to make every effort to lure the enemy to southwest Shanxi and along the river. Especially under the condition that Hu Zongnan enters Shanxi, it is necessary to bear this in mind. After this, victories in the east will make it impossible for the enemy in the west to stay long.

5. Not a single soldier is to be sent to the area of Lingshi, Xiaoji, Shuangchi, Damaijiao, and Shuitou to attract the enemy’s attention. The troops under our direct command are operating in the area between the two xian of Xixian and Puxian.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 510–11, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
At Present We Should Unite
to Resist Japan, and Not Issue an Order
to Suppress Chiang

(April 9, 1936, 12:00 midnight)

Luo Fu:

1. At present we should not issue an order to suppress Chiang, but should rather issue an open letter and a circular telegram to the people.

2. To issue an order to suppress Chiang at this point would be tactically to obscure our highest political banner. Our banner is a call to punish Japan. To carry out unified resistance against Japan under the banner of cessation of civil war, and to carry out the suppression of Chiang under the banner of a call to resistance against Japan is the political banner most convenient for waging the civil war and suppressing Chiang. The central slogan is the cessation of civil war. In addition to this slogan, to issue at the same time an order advocating civil war to suppress Chiang would be inappropriate today.

3. We propose that an open letter and circular telegram be issued immediately to the people of China in the name of the Party and the soviet régime, calling upon the people of the whole country and Chiang’s officers and soldiers, within the broader context of stopping the civil war and uniting to resist Japan, to stand together in opposing Chiang Kaishek’s acceptance of Hirota’s Three Principles, and opposing the obstruction of the Red Army’s resistance to Japan and disruption in the anti-Japanese rear areas. We should declare that we wish to sign an agreement to resist Japan and fight the traitors with all those forces under Mr. Chiang’s orders which are now obstructing the Red Army in carrying out its tasks. Such a position is the best way to win over backward people and Chiang’s troops, and to eliminate Chiang’s political capital.

4. Undoubtedly, Japan is attempting to smash our anti-Japanese united front with an anti-Communist united front. At this time we should firmly grasp the anti-Japanese united front, and use it to smash Japan’s anti-Communist united front. Thus our basic slogan is not to suppress Chiang, but rather to resist Japan.

5. As for the fact that it will eventually be possible and practical for a national defense government to order Chiang’s suppression, that is a necessary tactical action built upon support from more people and more armies. At this moment the propaganda and agitation slogan that must be insisted upon to

achieve the establishment of a national defense government is that of “stopping the civil war.” Please let us know what you think.


(Soon after we dispatched this telegram, we received Luo Fu’s telegram. We agree with the position stated therein, but we have not yet received the manifesto. Please send it.)

We have translated this text from the 1985 annual compendium of Wexian he yanjiu, pp. 158–59.
The Seventy-eighth Division Should Exhaust the Enemy Army and Delay His March to the South
(April 9, 1936, 2:00 A.M.)

To Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua]:

1. No matter how large an enemy force comes from Fangshan, the Seventy-eighth Division should adopt the methods of choosing advantageous topography and resisting step by step, using small units to occupy advantageous positions, building fortifications, using a small number of bullets (strict attention should be paid to conserving bullets) to fight against the enemy, and forcing the enemy to deploy his forces. Sometimes the method of marching towards the enemy may be used so as to force him to deploy his forces and exhaust his ammunition supply, delay his march to the south, and facilitate the work of our operating forces.

2. Except for the troops covering the Seventy-eighth Division, the rest should spread out in battalions and companies, and begin to mobilize the masses freely along the north-south line, engage in vigorous propaganda and agitation among the masses, distribute money and goods to the greatest possible extent, and make efforts to expand the Red Army.

3. Post slogans in each village, large and small, about striving to win over the Shanxi Army to resist Japan.

4. Be on the alert against Fang's brigade¹ in Linxian.

5. Pay attention to choosing a favorable situation for a counterattack in Dawuzhen.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

We Agree That You Should Concentrate Your Forces to Conduct Operations in Xiangning and Other Places
(April 12, 1936, 2:00 A.M.)

Comrades Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzen]:

We agree that you should first concentrate the whole of your military forces, and seek opportunities to conduct operations in the Xiangning, Jixian, Daning, and Puxian areas, trying to fight one or two battles in this area and wipe out one or two of the enemy's regiments. This is the best plan. You are to prepare to accomplish within ten to fifteen days the tasks of fighting battles and sabotaging the blockade line, with the fighting as the first stage. As long as you can fight one victorious battle, breaking the blockade line will no longer be an urgent problem.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 512–13, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

¹ See above, the relevant note to the telegram of March 1, 1936, to Zhou Enlai and others.
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Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 512–13, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. See above, the relevant note to the telegram of March 1, 1936, to Zhou Enlai and others.
Operational Deployments for the Fifteenth Army Group and the Twenty-eighth Army

(April 12, 1936, 4:00 P.M.)

To Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], Liu [Zhidan] and Song [Renqiong]:

In order to lure Sun Chu’s¹ main forces to Zhongyang to facilitate the Twenty-eighth Army’s subsequent movement toward Liuwu and Shilou; and in order to lure Yang Xiao’ou² to Wuchengzheng to facilitate Xu’s and Cheng’s movement to the area between Zhongyang, Guanshang, and Duijuju, the deployments are as follows:

1. Tomorrow the Fifteenth Army Group will move to the area between Zhongyang, Lishi, and Wuchengzheng (Socun, Taoyuanshang, Shidaishang, Chanshangshang); send troops in units on guerrilla missions to Wangyingzhong and Yijucun, sabotage power lines, and obstruct motorized transportation. In the west, send guerrilla [missions] to the town of Zhongyang, threaten Sun Chu, and send out plain clothes scouts in addition. Reconnoiter the enemy’s situation in the south to Zhongyang, and in the southeast to Xiangjiata, Guniucheng, and Shizhuangcun.

2. Tomorrow the main forces of the Twenty-eighth Army will move to Jinluozhen and Zhujianian, send forces northward toward Lishi and southward toward Zhongyang, engage in guerrilla warfare when close to the edge of the city, prepare to move on the 14th to Xiazaocun and Fengjiapo to the west of Zhongyang, and launch a simulated attack on Zhongyang from the west.

3. As for captives taken by the Fifteenth Army Group, direct plenty of propaganda to them, give them plenty of travel money, and set them free in groups in the direction of Zhongyang, Lishi, and Fenyang.

4. The Fifteenth Army Group and the Twenty-eighth Army are to prepare to work for two or three days in the abovementioned areas, make efforts to expand the Red Army, distribute material goods and property among the residents as much as possible, and compose plenty of anti-Japanese slogans to influence the White army.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 515–16, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. On Sun Chu, see above, the relevant note to the text of February 18, 1936.
2. Yang Xiao’ou was at the time commander of both the Second Column and the Sixty-sixth Division under the Guomindang Army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office.

Destroying the Defenses Along the River and Seeking the Enemy to Do Battle Should Not Be Undertaken at the Same Time

(April 14, 1936, 9:30 P.M.)

Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. Now that you have arrived in Jixian, if your estimate is that for several days there will be no good opportunities to do battle, it would be advantageous to begin by breaking through the [enemy’s] defenses along the river.

2. At present the enemy in the north is concentrated near Zhongyang, and the main forces of the enemy in the south are to the south of Xiangning. After a few days the enemy in the north is bound to move to the Guanshang-Zhongyang-Duijuju line, and the enemy in the south is bound to move to the Xiangning-Heilongguan line. If by then our river passage is clear, operations may be confidently conducted without being under pressure. If by any chance no good opportunity for battle can be found, it will also be relatively easy to move to another area. We hope that you will give some thought to the matter, and make the necessary arrangements.

3. It is inappropriate to undertake at the same time both destroying the defenses along the river and seeking the enemy to do battle.

4. In seeking the enemy to do battle, the best thing to do is to wage mobile warfare, and the worst thing to do is to strike the enemy when he has come to a halt.

5. After the victory in Sanjiaozhuang, the Fifteenth Army Group has had to go to Damaijiao to rest. They suffered relatively great casualties, and must reorganize.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 517–18, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Lure the Enemy in Daning to Advance Westward, and Wipe Him Out

(April 20, 1936, 12:00 noon)

1. Our First Army Group should pretend to cross the river to the west across a floating bridge so as to lure the enemy in Daning to advance westward, and then wipe him out.

2. The enemy in Daning consists of the two brigades of Liang Jiantang and Liu Guangdou, both of the Sixty-ninth Division. Of Liang’s brigade, one battalion of Fan’s regiment under it was wiped out by our Fifteenth Army Group in Pengmen to the north of Xixian, and its battalion commander was taken captive. Yesterday our Second Division wiped out one company of Liang’s brigade. Guo Zongfen’s brigade is in Linfen.

3. Today and tomorrow all divisions of the First Army Group should gather as a whole in the area west of Sangbizhen and east of Qingshuiguan, conceal themselves, and wait for an opportunity. Only the Second Division should be ordered to dispatch a small unit with transmitter to keep an eye on the enemy in Daning. Wait until he has left the town of Daning and is advancing on the roads toward either Matouguan or Qingshuiguan, and we can attack him whenever we encounter him.

4. If the enemy comes to a halt and stops advancing, then the First Army Group is to rest and train for several days in the area described above.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

The Present Plans of the First and Fifteenth Army Groups for Rest and Reorganization, and the Problem of Expanding the Red Army

(April 22, 1936, 1:00 A.M.)

To Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], to be transmitted to Vice-Chairman Zhou [Enlai] and Chief of Staff Zhang [Yunyi].

1. The whole of the enemy force in Shanxi has temporarily adopted a defensive posture. The enemy’s main forces are building a three-sided blockade line on the north, south, and east that starts from Sanjiaozhen and goes through Zhongyang, Xiaoyi, Lingshi, Linfen, and Xingjiao to Hejin. One unit is defending the towns of Yonghe, Daning, Xixian, and Shilou, and it is estimated that by the end of this month or the beginning of next month several groups will attack us. In Shaanxi, Wang Yizhe’s army, under Zhang Xueliang, has already advanced to the area between Fuxian and Ganquan and is building fortifications. Four brigades of Yang Hucheng’s forces have advanced to the area between Hancheng and Yichuan, and they are all prepared to continue to attack in a northward direction and to blockade the Yellow River from the west.

2. For a short period of time at present our army needs to rest, train, and continue to expand all of its units. Appropriate deployments of forces are to be made according to this guideline, and a plan is to be drawn up for the six days from the 23rd to the 28th.

3. The First Army Group is to dispatch one unit to take Yongheguan and ensure that all boats in Hejiapan are released. A small unit is to be dispatched separately to maintain in our hands the four ferry crossings at Qingshuiguan, Tielouguan, Matouguan, and Pingdouguan. Other troops are to be sent on guerrilla missions to the three towns of Yonghe, Daning, and Xixian, to establish connections between Sangbizhen and Yiquan. The Fifteenth Army Group is to dispatch forces along separate routes to reconnoiter the degree, location, gaps,

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshe wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 519–20, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Liang Jiantang and Liu Guangdou commanded, respectively, the 203rd Brigade and the 214th Brigade of the Sixty-ninth Division of the Second Route’s First Column, under the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office.

2. Guo Zongfen commanded the 202nd Brigade of the Sixty-ninth Division of the Second Route’s First Column, under the Guomindang army’s Taiyuan Pacification Office.

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshe wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 521–22, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Zhang Yunyi was at the time deputy chief of staff of the Red Army’s First Front Army and chief of staff of the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission’s Rear Office.
and roads of the enemy’s blockade lines between Zhongyang and Xiaoyi, Xiaoyi and Jixiu, and Jixiu, Lingshi, and Huoxian, so as to be prepared subsequently to break the blockade lines to the east or counterattack Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng in the west.

4. Apart from training, expanding the Red Army remains the top priority for all units. It has been decided that the First Army Group is to expand by one thousand men, the Fifteenth Army Group is to expand by five hundred men, and Song’s detachment, the Twenty-eighth Army, and the Thirtieth Army are each to expand by one thousand men.

5. In addition to daily food supplies, you should be prepared to carry with you enough grain for fifteen days.

Peng [Dehuai]  Mao [Zedong]

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2. Song Shilun was head of the combat section under the Red Army First Front Army’s Fifteenth Army Group command. This refers in particular to two battalions he led at the time, one belonging to the 224th Regiment of the Seventy-fifth Division, and the other belonging to the Eighty-first Division.

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Order to Cross the Yellow River to the West to Expand the Shaanxi-Gansu Soviet Area

(April 28, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

To Vice-Chairman Zhou [Enlai], Lin [Biao] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], Ye [Jianying] and Yang [Shangkun]:

1. The current situation
   a. In Shanxi it is Yan Xishan plus Chiang Kaishik (fifty-one regiments), plus blockhouseism.
   b. In Shaanxi it is Zhang Xueliang and Yang Huchén1 attacking northern Shaanxi under orders from Chiang Kaishik in an attempt to blockade the Yellow River. But the area around Shen[mu] and Fu[gu] and the area around Dingbian, Anbian, and Jingbian2 are weakly defended.
   c. In Gansu the situation is that Chiang Kaishik’s two units under Hu Zongnan and Zhou Pin have entered Shanxi; Mao Bingwen has been transferred to southern Gansu; Wang Jun, Wu Chengren, and others are in southern Shaanxi and southern Gansu; and most of Zhang Xueliang’s troops that were originally in the Huanshui area have been moved to Shaanxi. The Huanshui area as well as the area to its west are weakly defended.

2. Given the situation as described above, there are no longer favorable conditions for waging war in Shanxi for the Front Army, but such favorable conditions have arisen in Shaanxi and Gansu, which would permit us to go there and operate so as to carry out the tasks of expanding the soviet areas, tempering the Red Army, training cadres, and so on. On the other hand, another important task at present is to shatter the traitors’ plan to disrupt the anti-Japanese rear area. In addition, it is also necessary to dispatch a detachment to southern Shaanxi to expand the soviet areas and lure the enemy.

3. Our army has decided to cross the Yellow River to the west, and first concentrate in the Yanchang area. The time and order for crossing the river and the delineation of areas for concentrating our forces will be set out in a separate order.

4. The purpose of going westward to carry out the tasks described above remains that of accomplishing the basic political task of striving to wage war

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We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 523–25, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Yang Huchén is another form of Yang Hucheng’s name.

2. These three places in Northwestern Shaanxi are collectively referred to in the Chinese text as the “three bian.” Further occurrences of this usage are not noted.
quickly and directly against Japan. All the provinces in North China are still major targets of our orientation toward the strategic offensive. After Chiang Kaishek’s forces are moved out of Shanxi, and under conditions such as actively creating cadres in Shanxi, strengthening the soldiers’ movement in Shanxi, and expanding the Shen[mu] and Fu[gu] soviet areas, there will be another chance to enter Shanxi once more to fight. It is our firm overall guideline to maintain the policy of using the Shaanxi-Gansu Soviet Area as the center from which to launch battles in various directions, but with the various eastern provinces as the main orientation for the long term.

5. This order is exclusively for major military and political commanders of army group and division rank.

Peng [Dehuai] Mao [Zedong]

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Holding a General Review of Red Guards and Young Pioneers of the Whole Soviet Area on “May Day”

Order of the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission

(April 1936)

In order to carry out and respond to the call by the Party Central Committee and the Central Soviet Government to strive for rapidly engaging in direct war against Japan, this commission has decided to hold a general review of Red Guards and Young Pioneers of the whole Soviet Area on “May Day” this year in the middle of the war, so as to mobilize the anti-Japanese people’s military forces throughout the soviet areas, especially the anti-Japanese People’s Red Guards and Young Pioneers in the soviet areas, into active participation in the national revolutionary war against Japan and against the traitors, thereby accomplishing the task of the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army:

1. It is hereby ordered that heads of military affairs departments at all levels must ensure that, working at a rapid wartime pace, their respective plans of reorganizing and expanding the Red Guards and Young Pioneers are fully completed by the “May Day” celebration.

2. Immediately intensify wartime mobilization among the masses by explaining the significance of the “May Day” general review. Raise the political morale of the Red Guards and Young Pioneers; call on the masses to join the Red Army enthusiastically, and on the Red Guards and Young Pioneers to prepare actively for participation in the great “May Day” general review.

3. All Red Guards and Young Pioneers will undergo review by district units. The Red Guards and Young Pioneers must gather all together in the district on the afternoon of April 30, bringing with them their own food (for two days) and weapons. It must be ensured that no member of the Red Guards or Young Pioneers fails to attend and participate in the general review or fails to bring food and weapons, and so on.

4. The chairman of the district soviet has been designated as leader of the

This document originally appeared in Hongse Zhonghua, no. 268, April 16, 1936. We have translated it from Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 4, pp. 275–76, where it is reproduced from that source. Several characters which the editors of Mao Zedong ji were unable to decipher have been supplied from the reprint of Hongse Zhonghua.
Circular Telegram on the Cessation of Hostilities, Peace Negotiations, and Joint Resistance Against Japan

(May 5, 1936)

To the National Government in Nanjing, the Military Affairs Commission, all army, navy, and air forces, all parties and political groups, all organizations, all newspapers, and all compatriots unwilling to be slaves without a country:

Since the Soviet Central Government and the Red Army’s Revolutionary Military Commission organized the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army of the Chinese People’s Red Army to cross the [Yellow] River on its eastward expedition, it has been everywhere victorious and has met with a favorable response all over the country. But just as the Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army occupied the Datong-Puzhou Railway and was energetically preparing to drive eastward into Hebei to engage directly in battle with Japanese imperialism, Mr. Chiang Kaishek actually sent forces more than ten divisions strong into Shanxi, and cooperated with Mr. Yan Xishan in blocking the Red Army’s advance against the Japanese. He also ordered the troops of Messrs. Zhang Xueliang and Yang Huchen,1 as well as the troops in Northern Shaanxi, to advance on the Shaanxi-Gansu Soviet Area to disrupt our anti-Japanese rear areas.

The Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army of the Chinese People’s Red Army meant to concentrate its entire strength and wipe out Mr. Chiang’s troops blocking the way to fighting the Japanese so as to accomplish the goal of waging direct warfare against the Japanese. After much deliberation, however, the Soviet Central Government and the Red Army’s Revolutionary Military Commission decided that, given the present national crisis, a decisive battle between the two sides would only damage China’s strength for national defense, whichever side emerged victorious, and be to the delight of Japanese imperialism. Furthermore, among the troops of Messrs. Chiang Kaishek and Yan Xishan are quite a number of patriotic military men who are willing to end the civil war and unite to resist Japan, and it is truly against their consciences to obey at present the orders of the two gentlemen to block the Red Army on its way to resist the Japanese.

Therefore, in spite of its having won numerous victories in Shanxi, the Soviet Central Government and the Red Army’s Revolutionary Military Commission have withdrawn the People’s Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army to the western shore of the Yellow River in order to preserve China’s strength for national defense and thereby help to bring nearer a war of resistance against Japan, resolutely carry out our repeated

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1. Yang Huchen is an alternative form of Yang Hucheng’s name.
declarations to the nation's people on ending the civil war and uniting to fight Japan, and hasten the final awakening of Mr. Chiang Kaishek and the patriotic military men under him. With this demonstration of good faith to the Nanjing government, the whole country's army, navy, and air forces, and the people of the whole nation, we are willing to carry out cease-fire agreements with all armed forces attacking the anti-Japanese Red Army within one month, and enter into peace negotiations with them in order to achieve the goal of uniting to resist Japan.

The Soviet Central Government and the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Red Army hereby solemnly advise the gentlemen in authority of the Nanjing government at this critical juncture, when our country and our people are threatened with imminent destruction, to make determined efforts to avenge for past misdeeds and, in the spirit of "brothers who may quarrel inside the walls joining to oppose insult from without," to end the civil war in the whole country, beginning with Shaanxi, Gansu, and Shanxi, whereupon both sides should send delegates to discuss specific measures for resisting Japan and saving the nation. This will be a blessing not only to you gentlemen, but to the nation and the state as well. If, however, you obstinately stick to the wrong course and refuse to come to your senses and would rather be Chinese traitors selling out their country, your rule, sirs, will surely collapse in the end, and you will be spurned and overthrown by the people of all China. An old saying goes, "Faced with a thousand pointing fingers, one dies even without an illness." Another saying goes, "The butcher who lays down his knife at once becomes a Buddha." These are words you gentlemen would do well to ponder deeply and consider thoroughly.

What is more, the Soviet Central Government and the Red Army's Revolutionary Military Commission call upon all groups, all parties, and all people throughout China who refuse to be slaves without a country to support our proposal for a cease-fire and peace negotiations, and for joining together to resist Japan; to organize committees for hastening the cessation of civil war; to send representatives to the front to stop the firing on both sides; and to encourage and supervise the complete realization of this proposal.

Chairman of the Central Government of the Chinese People's Soviet Republic Mao Zedong
Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Chinese People's Red Army Zhu De

2. An allusion to a line from a poem in the Shi jing (Book of Poetry) II, I, IV, 4 (Legge, Vol. IV, p. 251), which Legge renders as, "Brothers may quarrel inside the walls/But they will oppose insult from without."
3. An allusion to the Hanshu, "Biography of Wang Jia."
4. An allusion to a line in a Song work by Peng Dayi, Shiangtian sikao, Zhengji, juan 1.

Order Regarding Operations During the Western Expedition

(May 18, 1936, at Daxiangsi)

1. Seeing that our forces have crossed the [Yellow] River to the west, the two traitors, Chiang [Kaishek] and Yan [Xishan], who are selling out the country appear to have the intention of sending more than four divisions of troops into Shaanxi from Wubao. There are no changes in the situation along the southern line, the northern line, and the western line.

2. For the purpose of making every effort to expand the anti-Japanese base area in the Northwest and consolidate it, expanding the anti-Japanese Red Army, and getting closer to Outer Mongolia and the Soviet Union, and in order that all anti-Japanese forces have a core around which to unite, the Northwest Military Commission has decided to have one unit of the Red Army pin down the troops under Chiang and Yan that have crossed the river to the west, as well as the enemy forces in northern Shaanxi and north of the Wei [River], and to organize the main forces into a western field army to operate in the large area of Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia. In addition, a powerful detachment will enter and go through southern Shaanxi, join with our forces under Chen Xianrui, operate in the three provinces of Shaanxi, Hubei, and Henan, and manipulate and lure Chiang Kaishek's main forces in this area so as to make it easier for our main force to win victory in the west.

3. To achieve these goals, the order of battle for our army has been newly established as follows:

[See the table on the following page.]

4. Initial operational instructions for each army unit are as follows:

a. As a first step for the purpose of taking and turning Red Anbian, Dingbian, Huanxian, and Quzi, the Field Army is to set out from its present location on May 19 and 20, march westward in two groups (marching plans to be distributed separately), and arrive in seven days along the Xinchengbao, Shaji, and Wuqijian line to gather and concentrate forces and rest for two days. The First Army Group is to take care of reconnaissance in the area around Huanxian, Quzi, and Qingyang, and the Fifteenth Army Group is to take care of reconnaissance in the area around Anbian and Dingbian. The Fifteenth Army Group is to prepare to take the two xian towns of Anbian and Dingbian, and Zuo [Quan] and Nie [Rongzhen] are to lead the First

Our source for this order is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 529–32, where it is reproduced from a copy held at the Academy of Military Science of the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

1. Refers to the Red Army's Seventy-fourth Division, commanded by Chen Xianrui.
Army Group in watching for an opportunity to take Quzi and Huanxian. Their battle arrangements and service operations in the rear are all to be determined by Commander Peng.

b. The Twenty-eighth Army should complete all preparations for its southern march by May 25th and await orders to depart.

c. For the purpose of delaying the westward march of the enemy in Shanxi, the Thirtieth Army is to set out from its present location on May 18, take a shortcut and arrive after five days' journey to operate near Songjiachuan, watch for an opportunity to destroy the enemy's fortifications, and press close to the river to engage in guerrilla warfare so as to sabotage the enemy's crossing.

d. For the purposes of entering and operating in the area around Shenmu and Fuju and threatening the rearguard of the enemy under Gao Shuangcheng, the Thirty-first Army should complete all preparations within seven days (by May 24th) and await orders to march northward.

e. The main forces of the Twenty-ninth Army (two regiments), still under the command of Deputy Army Commander Xie Song, are to carry out their original tasks in the Hancheng area. Its other regiment should coordinate actions with the Bao'an independent regiment and a regiment of the Central Shaanxi Plain Red Army (all under the unified command of Army Commander Xiao) and begin to operate in early June in the area between Huanxian, Quzi, and Qingyang to complement the operations of our First Army Group.

5. All army units under direct command of the Northwest Military Commission must maintain frequent wireless communication with the Military Commission so as to ensure timely receipt of the Military Commission's supplementary instructions and orders.

6. This order is to be transmitted only as far as the division and the independent army, and may not be distributed below that level.

It is so ordered.

Chairman
Mao Zedong

Vice-Chairmen
Zhou Enlai
Peng Dehuai

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3. Gao Shuangcheng was commander of the Guomindang army's Eighty-sixth Division under the "Bandit Suppression" General Command Headquarters in the Shanxi-Shaanxi-Suiyuan-Ningxia Border Area.

4. The expression translated here as "central Shaanxi plain" is Guanzhong, literally "within the pass." The pass in question is the Hangu Pass in neighboring Henan, which had played an important role in the military history of Henan and Shaanxi since the Qin and Han dynasties.
Telegram from Lin Yuying, Zhang Wentian, Mao Zedong, and Other Comrades to Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], Liu [Bocheng], Xu [Xiangqian], and Others on Slogans for External Propaganda, the Political Situation Inside and Outside of the Country, and Relations with [Zhang] Guotao

(May 20, 1936)

To Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], Liu [Bocheng], Xu [Xiangqian], Chen [Changhao], Ren [Bishi], He [Long], Xiao [Ke], Guan [Xiangying], and Xia [Xi], and to be transmitted to the various comrades in charge:

1. The national defense government and the unified anti-Japanese army are friendly armies in relation to the Soviet Red Army and the allied armies, which were jointly organized when the time was ripe, and they were not organized by us separately. Our organizations remain the Revolutionary Committee and the Soviet.

2. The current slogans for external propaganda are: convene a nationwide representative congress to resist Japan and save the nation, and establish a national defense government and a unified anti-Japanese army. With regard to plans for the Northwest national defense government, at present we can only let high-ranking cadres within the Party know about them, and should maintain secrecy towards the outside.

We have translated this document from Zhonggong zhongyang kangri minzu tongyi zhan-xian wenjian xuanbian, Vol. 2, pp. 147–49 (hereafter Documents on the United Front).

3. With regard to plans for close cooperation between the Red Army and the Northeastern Army so as to enter into a grand alliance in the Northwest and establish a Northwest national defense government, fight through to the Soviet Union, and sign anti-Japanese mutual assistance agreements with the Soviet Union and Outer Mongolia, we are in the process of making nationwide and international arrangements on the political, military, economic, and diplomatic fronts, and it is necessary to deal strictly with the sabotaging schemes and military attacks from Japanese imperialism and Chiang Kaishek, so it is particularly necessary to maintain strict secrecy in relation to the outside.

4. The Party’s December Political Resolution,2 the Political Declaration of the Seventh [Comintern] Congress,3 and Comrade [Chen] Shaoyu’s report to the Seventh Congress of the International have all received the sympathy and support of the broad masses of people nationwide, including the vast majority of those in intellectual circles. The Red Army’s Eastern March aroused the zealous support of the popular masses in North China and Central China. Letters have come in from many anti-Japanese groups in Shanghai, as well as from Lu Xun, Mao Dun, Song Qingling, Tan Zhen, and others, expressing support for the positions of the Party and the Central Soviet. Even Li Jishen issued a circular telegram of support, Feng Yuxiang advocates resisting Japan and not fighting the Red Army, and the Nanjing government is split from within into the faction that wants to unite with Japan to fight the Communists and the faction that wants to unite with the Communists to fight Japan, both of whom are engaged in struggle against each other. Openly published periodicals in Shanghai that support our political, economic, and cultural stands number as many as thirty or more. One of them, Dazhong shenghuo (Life of the Masses), has sold more than 200,000 copies, breaking an all-time historical record. Chiang Kaishek has no way to keep this in check. Ma Xiangbo4 and He Xiangning have led protest demonstrations on the streets of Shanghai, and many foreign journalists support the movement against Japan. Dozens of political factions nationwide, from the Blue Shirt Society and the Guomindang to the Elites,5 have undergone fragmentation, turmoil, and transformation around the question of unifying with the Communists against Japan or uniting with Japan against the Communists. The united front

2. See above, in the Introduction, the summary of the resolution of December 25, 1935, on the current political situation.
3. The reference is to the decision of the Seventh Congress of the International in favor of a broad united front.
4. Ma Liang (1840–1939), a native of Jiangsu, began his career as a Jesuit, but abandoned the priesthood in 1876. Thereafter, he became a government official, serving in Korea and Taiwan, and then turned his attention to Western science. From 1906 onward, he spoke out forcefully in favor of democracy. In 1931–1932, he published several articles denouncing Japanese aggression.
5. Regarding this ultra-nationalist faction, denounced by Mao in 1926, see Volume II, p. 268.
between our Party and all other parties and factions is now actively being organized. All of this demonstrates that China’s revolution is developing now like a raging storm.

5. Internationally, as the various countries step up their preparations for war, Italy has already occupied Abyssinia, Germany has occupied the Rhine, and Japan is actively expanding outward like an arrow poised on the bowstring. But on the other hand, the Communist International’s call for a united front has met with success already in many countries, particularly in countries such as France, Czechoslovakia, Spain, the United States, and so on. Four military mutual assistance agreements have already been signed, between the Soviet Union and France, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Mongolia, which means the peace ranks are in a powerful position. Relations between England and the Soviet Union are also improving. The International has on three or four occasions sent people to visit us, hoping that we will establish an overall arrangement in the Northwest.

6. There are no longer any political or strategic differences between Comrade [Zhang] Guotao and your younger brothers here; there is no need to mention our past differences. The only task now is for the entire Party and the entire army to unite as one and fight against Japanese imperialism and Chiang Kai-shek. Your younger brothers wish to express to you, our elder brothers, and to all the comrades of the second and fourth Front Armies, our boundless respect for your spirit of arduous struggle, and we unanimously welcome the adoption of the program to move northward. As for relations between the Center and the Fourth Front Army, they can be handled for the time being according to Elder Brother [Zhang Guo]Shi’s idea of negotiations. All in all, for the sake of the victory of the revolution, all inappropriate views and relationships from the past should be transformed, all prejudices should be abandoned, and harmony, unity, striving, and struggle adopted as goals. It is hoped that all of you, our elder brothers, will consider this together.

Lin Yuying
Zhou Enlai
Wang Jiaxiang
Lin Biao
Zhang Wentian
Bo Gu
Kai Feng
Xu Haidong
Mao Zedong
Deng Fa
Peng Dehuai
Cheng Zihua

Declaration to the People of Muslim Nationalities
by the Central Soviet Government

(May 25, 1936)

Dear Brothers of Muslim nationalities:

The Second World War, a war for imperialism to redistribute its colonies, will soon break out. Our Chinese people of five nationalities and large piece after large piece of our land have been trampled underfoot by the Japanese imperialists, and now they are advancing toward Suiyuan, Ningxia, Gansu, and Xinjiang. The grave disaster of the destruction of your roots and the extinction of your nationality is imminent. Are you willing to be destroyed, to be trampled underfoot, or will you stand up to wage a war of resistance, and strive for the independence and freedom of the Muslim people? The glorious national resurgence of the Turkish Muslim people will serve as a compass for all Muslim nationalities and all oppressed peoples. At this crucial moment of life and death, we hope that you will rise up at once!

For more than ten years, the Muslim peoples have repeatedly suffered the oppression and exploitation of the Chinese ruling class. In particular, the exorbitant taxes and levies under the rule of Chiang Kai-shek’s Nanjing Government plunge the lives of the Muslim people into the deepest misery so that they can barely survive. Moreover, they often stir up bad feelings between the Muslim and Han peoples, even to the point where they murder one another, leading ultimately to suppression by large military forces, which inevitably saps the vitality of both the Muslim and Han peoples. As a result they are able to maintain their ruthless and rapacious rule. In recent years the Guomindang warlords, headed by Traitor Chiang Kai-shek, have become frenzied in surrendering to Japanese imperialism and attempting to sell out all of China, against the interests of the nationalities. There is the loss of the four provinces in the Northeast, the existence in name only of the five provinces in North China, and the active nature of the self-rule movement in southern Fujian. Now they want to go further and designate four provinces in the Northwest as “anti-Communist” areas. The Nanjing army’s entry into Gansu is a major step toward destroying the Northwest and suppressing the independence movements of the Muslim, Mongolian, and Tibetan nationalities.

This document was first published in Douzheng, no. 105, July 12, 1936. We have translated it from Mao Zedong ji, Vol. 5, pp. 51–53.
Dear brothers of Muslim nationalities! Now is a time when small and weak nations are being trampled upon, and it is also a time when small and weak nations are rising up to struggle for survival and to strive toward complete liberation. You now find yourselves between the already liberated Soviet Union, Outer Mongolia, and Turkey on the one hand, and the Chinese Soviet Red Army on the other, which is seeking liberation. As long as you become awakened and struggle hard, victory is bound to be yours. We hereby issue this declaration.

Chairman of the Central Government of the Chinese People’s Soviet Republic Mao Zedong
To Yan Xishan

(May 25, 1936)

Mr. Baichuan:

Our humble army made its westward crossing [of the Yellow River] as a gesture toward the cessation of civil war and to promote an awakening on the part of your honorable forces and on Mr. Chiang’s part so as to reach the goal of jointly resisting Japan. Given the possibility that our May 5th Circular Telegram¹ may not have reached you, we have made a copy that we are entrusting to Regimental Commander Guo² to take back for your perusal, which we sincerely request that you receive.

The great cause of national salvation is not something that can possibly be achieved by only a handful of people. Our humble army has been blocked from fighting the Japanese, but this will of ours remains as before. No matter how many vicissitudes we encounter, we will never stop until we accomplish our goal, and we firmly believe that the day will surely come when you gentlemen finally wake up. We have heard indirectly that Mr. Chiang has been increasing his pressure on you, and has forced the Shanxi Army to enter Shaanxi for the second time while using his own Central Army to keep watch from behind. This Mr. Chiang has so far shown no sense of regret, and is unparalleled as a Chinese traitor selling out his country, so the soldiers and the people in Shanxi must share our indignation. If you, sir, can join as one with our humble side in resisting Japan and opposing Chiang, our comrades would be most willing to stand with the Shanxi Army on a shared front line and eliminate this common enemy of the Chinese people.

Regimental Commander Guo and the officers and soldiers of your honorable army have all been treated fairly. We are all compatriots, so one side’s winning over the other is nothing to boast about, and our side would certainly never put on airs. As for the weapons and ammunition [we captured from you], what was lost by a man of Chu is found by a man of Chu,³ so we trust that you, sir, and other leaders of your honorable army, will bear us no grudge. We are presently sending Regimental Commander Guo back to Shanxi to deliver this letter in person. If you have any advice for us, please do send Mr. Guo back again, so that we can set up contact with each other and achieve mutual understanding in order to deal with our common enemy. The xian magistrate of Jixian will remain here for the time being, and after a short while we will order him back to Shanxi as well. As the national calamity intensifies day by day, we trust that people of virtue in Shanxi will find it impossible to sit by idly and watch with indifference.

Writing specially to wish with respect that plentiful merit and fortune may all be yours!

Mao Zedong

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 34–35, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Translated above.
2. Guo Dengying, commander of the 392nd Regiment of Yan Xishan’s Sixty-sixth Division.
3. This is an allusion to a story recounted in the Shuo yuan of the Han dynasty writer Liu Xiang, about a king of Chu who lost a bow. His attendants looked everywhere for it, but the king said, “The bow of a man of Chu will be found by a man of Chu, so why bother looking for it?” This has become a commonly used expression meaning that such losses and gains are of no importance so long as both parties are on the same side.
The Current Situation and Our Strategic Orientation

(May 25, 1936)

To Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Liu [Bocheng], and to Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao], and to be transmitted to Comrades Ren [Bishi], He [Long], Xiao [Ke], Guan [Xiangying], and Xia [Xi]:

The current situation and our strategic orientation:

1. The domestic and international political situations are moving forward like a raging storm, and the Party's tactics of an anti-Japanese united front have achieved initial success. The specific task on the current agenda is to establish a Northwest national defense government and strive to wage war rapidly against Japan, so as to move toward the establishment of a nationwide national defense government and thoroughly defeat Japanese imperialism.

2. The situation in the Northwest is as follows: The Red Army has obtained close cooperation with the Northeastern Army, and it also has some contact with Yang Hucheng and Deng Baoshan.1 Hu Zongnan is moving from Shanxi to southern Shaanxi, Wang Jun is in Hanzhong, Mao Bingwen is in southern Gansu. After receiving heavy blows from the Red Army, Yan Xishan can now send only eight regiments to Shaanxi. Leading eighteen regiments (four divisions), Tang Enbo is getting ready to enter Shaanxi, but he is also wavering heavily. Leading two divisions, Yu Xuezhong is between Lanzhou and Tianshui. The main forces of the Northeastern Army are along the rivers Luoshui, Huanshui, and Jingshui. The Shaanxi Army2 is along the Hancheng and Yichuan line. The main forces of Ma Hongbin are in Ningxia. Ma Lin is in Qinghai, and one unit is to the west of Lanzhou. After crossing the river to the west, the Red Army is moving to Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia to assist the Fourth Front Army and the Second Front Army, vigorously expand the soviet areas, and gradually approach Outer Mongolia. Outer Mongolia and the Soviet Union have signed a treaty of mutual military assistance. The International is hoping that the Red Army will get closer to Outer Mongolia and Xinjiang.

3. The Fourth Front Army and the Second Front Army would do well to take advantage of this extremely favorable opportunity and the favorable climate to
devise rapidly a major plan, to go either to Gansu or to Qinghai. After you, our elder brothers, have decided on your major plan, the First Front Army will set out toward Tianshui and Lanzhou at an opportune time to assist you further so as to make it impossible for Chiang's troops to stop you. As far as the Northeastern Army is concerned, a secret agreement with them not to engage in obstruction has already been concluded.

4. We anxiously look forward to hearing soon about your situation, and about your plan.


Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 533-35, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Deng Baoshan was the commander of the newly established First Army of the Northwest Bandit-Suppression Headquarters.
2. Refers to the Guomindang’s Seventeenth Route Army, under Yang Hucheng.
Circular About Changes in the Current Military Situation, and Questions Such as Our Basic Tasks
(May 29, 1936)

To Peng [Dahuai], and for transmission to Liu Xiao, Zuo [Quan], Nie [Rongzhen], Zhu [Rui], and Deng [Xiaoping], as well as Xu [Haidong], Cheng [Zihua], and Wang [Shoudao]:

You are hereby notified of the following matters:

1. The Second Army Group and the Sixth Army Group can arrive at Ganzi by mid-June. The Fourth Front Army has accepted our orientation, and will move northward at the end of June, arriving at the Xia and Tao rivers at the end of July. The Second and Sixth army groups will follow. If nothing happens, they will be a new force in our plan for the Northwest.

2. As for relations with [Zhang] Guotao, it is agreed that for the time being they should take the form of negotiations. Moreover, Guotao should be told that there are no longer any political and strategic differences between us and them, that it is not necessary to bring up past differences again, and that cooperation and unity must be our objectives.

3. Estimations of the situation during the three months of June, July, and August: Li Shengda and Tang Enbo will advance to the Suide-Qingqian-Anding line, Wang Yizhe will advance to the Yan’an-Wayaobao line, Yang Hucheng will be on the Hancheng-Yanchang line, the main forces of the Northeastern Army will be on the Qingyang-Guyuan-Pingliang-Longde line, Hu Zongnan will be on the Hanzhong-Bikou line, Wang Jun and Mao Bingwen will be on the Xigu-Minzhou line, and it is possible that He Zhuguo’s cavalry force will enter Tianshui and western Gansu.

4. The three major basic tasks for the three months of June, July, and August are to establish new base areas in the west, persist in guerrilla warfare in the east, and win over the Northeastern Army in the south. Efforts are now being made in the east and south to arrange things, and the Field Army and the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Provincial Committee are concentrating all their forces to attend to the west.

We have translated this text from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 536–38, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Liu Xiao (1908–1988), a native of Hunan, was at this time the head of the Political Department of the Red Army’s Western Field Army.

5. The dispatch of the Twenty-eighth Army is to be temporarily postponed, and it is to be sent to southern Shaanxi and on through Hunan only when the Second Front Army and Fourth Front Army have started moving northward and Hu Zongnan has entered Hanzhong from the west. At present it is to be used in Dingbian, Anbian, and Jingbian. Xie Jingguang is to lead two regiments to be used in the direction of Huanxian and Qingbei. The Thirtieth Army is to the east of the Wuqing River and south of Songjiachuan.

6. The guerrilla warfare in the east is to be divided into several small military districts, each to be given independence. Political mobilization and the completion of the organizational arrangements are going on right now.

7. At the Red Army School (Departments One, Two, and Three, with 1,400 people), Lin Biao is president, Luo Ruiqing is provost, Zhou Kun is head of administration, and Yuan Guoping is head of the training department. Students will graduate in six months. Political education is to be emphasized at the beginning. School opens officially on June 1.

8. There is enough grain in Wayao for only one month, and 3,600 dan must be collected west of Wuqizhen to supply the rear.

About the Fourth Front Army’s northward march, our relationship with the Northeastern Army, the future operations of the Twenty-eighth Army, future changes in the enemy situation, and so on, lower-level leaders are not to be notified.

Mao

2. Xiao Jingguang (1903–1989) was a native of Changsha, who had spent a total of six or seven years studying in the Soviet Union, and was also a graduate of the Huangpu Academy. At this time, he was the commander of the Twenty-ninth Army of the Red Army.

3. The Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army School had been established at Wayao in November 1935 by combining several other cadre schools. By January 1936 its name had already been changed to the Northwest Anti-Japanese Red Army University, but in this text it is referred to by its earlier name. In June it was to be renamed again as the Chinese People’s Anti-Japanese Red Army University.

4. Luo Ruiqing (1906–1978), a native of Sichuan, joined the Youth League in 1926, and the Chinese Communist Party in 1928. He was a Red Army commander or political commissar from 1929 onward, participating in the resistance to the “Encirclement and Suppression” campaigns of the Jiangxi period. During the Long March, he was a staff officer in the First Front Army. In early 1936, he studied briefly at the Red Army University, of which he then became provost.
To Gao Guizī

(Summer 1936)

Your Excellency, Division Commander Peiwu:

On his return, Comrade Ma Zhiming has let us know that Your Excellency is in agreement with our proposal to form a national defense government and an anti-Japanese united army. We are exceedingly grateful. At this time the whole nation is about to be plunged into the tragic fate of subjugation, and for all those who dwell upon this land, truly nothing is more urgent than national salvation, and there is no work to do save resisting Japan. Our humble army has traveled hard north and south, finally reaching Shaanxi, its purpose being to save China, its goal being to resist Japan. We will unite with all individuals, organizations, parties, or armed forces who agree to this purpose, and attack all those who go against it. Those with whom we unite will raise the righteous banner of national revolution. Those we attack must be considered real Chinese traitors selling out their country, to be eliminated as demons for the benefit of our four hundred million compatriots. Leading thousands of valiant fighters, Your Excellency took part in the great revolutionary war in 1927, and again four years ago in the anti-Japanese war. This glorious history has the admiration of all our countrymen. It is understood that your being pitted against the Red Army as an enemy was the result of coercion by Chiang Kai-shek, chief of all the traitors who are selling out the country. If you come over to our side and fight the bandits, all past misdeeds will be forgotten. From now on the revolutionary united front against Japan and the traitors selling out the country will have it the broad popular masses and the Red Army as well as Your Excellency’s righteous army. Without a doubt, still more numerous righteous forces will continuously emerge from this land of the ancient emperors’ descendants. This is truly what is to be relied on to save China from the danger of extinction. In order to eliminate all suspicions whatsoever and establish solid mutual trust, based on what Your Excellency indicated to Comrade Mao as well as our humble opinions, we would like to list the following items for your perspicacious inspection:

1. The two armies are to maintain their respective original defensive positions, and are not to impinge on each other.

2. The grand plan for resisting Japan and putting down the traitors who are selling out the country is to be done from a long-term perspective and as comprehensively as possible. Its purpose is also to place your honorable army in a secure position. Should any traitor selling out the country endanger your troops, we are prepared to join in a counterattack against them with all our might.

3. While your honorable army has been unable to find an opportunity to take overt action, we are prepared to keep in strict secrecy all of our bilateral relations and communications and contacts.

4. While your honorable army has been unable to take overt action, should our humble side attack the forces of the traitors who are selling out the country (Jing Yuexiu, for example), we would expect you to adopt a passive attitude, that is to refrain from any action whatsoever to assist our enemy.

5. As for provisions and firewood for your honorable forces in Qingqian, since we are now allied armies, naturally we would do our best to lend assistance. We request, by the same token, that Your Excellency extend your assistance to the extent possible with the things we need (for example, western medicine, cloth, and so on).

6. Both sides should send representatives to formulate on a common basis an initial agreement for fighting Japan and the traitors who are selling out the country.

7. Establish bilaterally a top-secret communication network (exchange cipher codes).

8. Guarantee the safety of representatives and contact people from both sides.

Whether Your Excellency can agree to all or only some of the above-mentioned items, we wish to begin concrete negotiations with Your Excellency. At this crucial moment when our nation faces subjugation, we for our part will certainly not lose sight of the great catastrophe on account of trivial discrepancies. We trust that our humble earnestness in desiring to save the nation will be acutely perceived by gentlemen of virtue such as yourselves. Furthermore, in view of the situation today, resisting Japan and fighting the traitors cannot be accomplished without a broad united front. This is the case not only at home, but internationally as well. Not all armed forces stationed around the several northwestern provinces consist of Chinese traitors and collaborators. Among them there are many noble patriots. Once we warn them about the disaster of national doom and racial extinction, explain to them the strategy of uniting for national salvation, and expose to them the stupidity of the Chinese traitors and collaborators, and the threat posed by these traitors, surely some of them will be moved and rise to action. Will Your Excellency make every effort for this purpose? Internationally, to unite every country and nation that opposes Japan is indeed an important component of a program to resist Japan and fight the collaborators. To say nothing of distant places, close to us in the Northwest is the great and

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 30–33, where it is printed from a copy in the Central Archives, and is dated simply “1936.” We have placed it here because in Mao Zedong wenji, which reproduces the same text, it is dated “summer 1936.”

1. Gao Guizī (1891–1959), zi Peiwu, was a native of Shaanxi, and a graduate of the Shaanxi Military Academy. At this time he was deputy commander of the Guomindang Thirty-second Army.
powerful Soviet Union. This country pursues a common goal with us of opposing invasions, and has had a long history of supporting the Chinese anti-imperialist movement. To make friends with them does us no harm but actually serves us well, and all of us should make every effort to bring this about. Enclosed for your reference are several political resolutions and bulletins of our Party’s Central [Committee]. Birds call, seeking friendly voices; fighting an intruding tiger, the coward is roused to action. Who says there are no men in Shaanxi, and that the people will have to bear the humiliation of being slaves without a country? The bandits are pressing close and the situation is urgent. With sincerity we speak our minds, and only request that Your Excellency deeply ponder and evaluate all this.

Writing specially to wish you merit and good fortune.

Chinese Anti-Japanese Red Army,
Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission

Chairman Mao Zedong
Vice-Chairmen Zhou Enlai Peng Dehuai

Set Up a Rear Logistics Department for the Field Army, and Establish a Small Rear [Base]

(June 1, 1936, 12:00 noon)

To Peng [Dehuai], and to be transmitted to Yang [Zhicheng]; also for the information of Xiao [Jingguang], Li [Fuchun], Zuo [Quan] and Nie [Rongzhen], and Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua]:

1. In order to carry out successfully rear logistical work of the Field Army, it has been decided to organize a rear logistics department for the Field Army, with Yang Zhicheng serving concurrently as its head to exercise unified command over the Field Army’s military depots, supplies, and various medical units (no separate units will be established).

2. It has been decided to establish a small rear [base] near Wuqizhen, and select appropriate places in which to set up small-scale factories for munitions, bedding and clothing, and shoes and socks, with Ye Jizhuang1 in charge. After this has been organized it is to move toward Wuqizhen, and be managed by the rear logistics department (altogether thirty cave dwellings are needed, which are to be arranged by Jingguang and Zhicheng). The date and time for departure will be indicated in a separate telegram.

3. It is hoped that a large quantity of cowhide can be gathered in the area around Dingbian, Anbian, and Jingbian for the purpose of making shoes.

Mao [Zedong] Zhou [Enlai]

Our source for this order is Mao Zedong junshe wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 539–40, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Ye Jizhuang was head of the supplies department of the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission.

(June 1, 1936)

Over the four years since Japanese imperialism invaded China, our country has lost eight million square li of its territory. After the four provinces in the Northwest were lost, the five provinces of North China have also ceased to exist except in name. Now Japanese imperialism has set up espionage agencies in Ningxia and the Alashan Banner, and demanded that the Guomindang’s Nanjing government carry out Hirota’s Three Principles and give them the five provinces of Shaanxi, Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai, and Xinjiang. The bloody hands of Japanese imperialism have now extended their grip to our compatriots in the five northwest provinces!

The traitor chieftain, Chiang Kaishek, is utterly devoid of conscience and has entered into an alliance with Japan to destroy China. [For him,] patriotism is a crime and selling out the country is rewarded. [He] blocked the Red Army’s eastward advance to resist Japan and caused disruption in the Red Army’s anti-Japanese rear areas. [He] will stop at nothing short of handing over all of China to Japan.

The Red Army is the people’s army and the vanguard of resistance against Japan. At this time of serious national crisis when great disaster is at hand, it stands firmly with the people and, spilling its own warm blood, does battle against the foes of the people. The Central Government of the Chinese Soviet People’s Republic, the Revolutionary Military Commission of the Chinese People’s Red Army, and the Red Army under its command offer to all people, political parties, groups, and armed forces of all of China the following proposals for saving the nation and the people:

1. Workers, peasants, merchants, students, and soldiers all over the country unite to resist Japan and save the nation.

2. Stop the civil war and all resist Japan together, whether Red Army or White army.

3. All political parties, factions, and groups in the country form a people’s united front to resist Japan.

4. Convene a national congress to resist Japan and save the country, and establish a national defense government and a unified anti-Japanese army.

5. Form an alliance with Russia and the Communists, unite to resist Japan, attain the liberation and independence of the Chinese nation.

6. Release all political prisoners, and guarantee freedom of speech, publication, assembly, and association in the fight against Japan.

7. Strive toward rapidly engaging in war against Japan.

8. Concentrate the Red Army from the whole country and all other armies nationwide in Hebei to fight Japan.

9. Let the people of the whole country arm themselves and unite to fight Japan.

10. Overthrow the rule of the Chinese traitors who are selling out the country.

11. Abolish exorbitant taxes and levies.

12. Abolish usury.

13. Overthrow corrupt officials.

14. Overthrow local bullies and bad gentry.

15. Provide relief to disaster victims, refugees, and all unemployed people.

16. Protect the patriotic movement.

17. Protect all progressive elements in intellectual, scientific, and artistic circles.

18. Protect the interests of the workers and peasants.

19. Protect industry and commerce.

20. Help the people of Muslim and Mongolian nationalities.

People and armed forces nationwide, unite and support the proposals of the Soviet Red Army. Fight to defend the Northwest; fight to defend North China; fight to defend China; down with Japanese imperialism; down with the Chinese traitors who are selling out the country; long live the independence and liberation of the Chinese nation!

Chairman, Central Government of the Chinese People’s Soviet Republic
Mao Zedong

Chairman, Revolutionary Military Commission of the Chinese People’s Anti-Japanese Red Army
Zhu De
The Main Forces of the First Army Group Should Advance Rapidly to Huanxian

(June 2, 1936, 11:00 A.M.)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. The main forces of the First Army Group should advance rapidly to Huanxian.
2. One unit is to be on the Qingyang-Quzi line.
3. After occupying Huanxian the main forces are to prepare to take Hongde City.
4. One regiment plus a company of cavalry troops and a radio transmitter is to be sent to advance toward Sancha and prepare to take Sancha within three days.

Mao

Operational Dispositions in the Area Between Hengshan and Dingbian

(June 6, 1936, 12:00 noon)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. The work within the 50 li between Hengshan and Dingbian provides a protective screen to the north for the western base area, and serves as a strategic pivotal point through which to go north to Suiyuan and Ningxia and through to the Soviet Union. The full strength of the Eighty-first Division, the Twenty-eighth Army, and the cavalry regiment should be used to undertake it, and the initial stage of turning the area Red must be completed within a month and a half (by mid-July). Song Renqiong should first be given orders to lead one regiment to reach Ningtiaoliang by the 10th, and Song Shilun is to lead the main forces to follow behind. Please wait until Song Renqiong has arrived and the work has been arranged in person before proceeding to Hongde City.

2. The line between Qingyang and Hongdecheng and the areas to their east and west constitute the core of the western base area, and also that portion of the area north of Zhenyuan having relatively favorable population and economic conditions. This work should be undertaken with all their strength by one division of the First Army Group, half of the army group’s Political Department, and the main forces of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Red Army. Here too, the work of turning the area Red must be accomplished by mid-July.

3. Anbian and Dingbian are strategically key points, and there would be trouble in the future if they were to remain in enemy hands, as can be seen from the lessons of Qingjian and other towns. They cannot be seized in a short time, however, so a plan should be made to devise various ways to take them within two or three months. On your way to Hongdecheng, please go by way of the vicinity of these two towns and do some investigating, and make arrangements in person for the work of the Eighty-first Division. Attempts have been made to obtain explosive materials and rifle bullets from the outside. It is all right at present to retreat, strike their attacking and harassing troops, and proceed to attack the towns when the ammunition arrives.

Mao [Zedong]  Zhou [Enlai]

Our source for this order is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, p. 541, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

We have translated this order from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 542–43, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Talk on the Southwest Incident

(June 8, 1936)

Northern Shaanxi Radio: On account of the occurrence of the Southwest Incident, a reporter from Hongse zhonghua made a special trip on June 8 to visit Mao Zedong, chairman of the Soviet Government. Chairman Mao has kindly consented to have the conversation published as follows:

I heard over the radio the news from Guangdong that the military and political leaders of Guangdong and Guangxi had demanded that the Nanjing government declare war on Japan, and that an anti-Japanese national salvation government and an anti-Japanese national salvation army be established in Guangdong. The Nanjing government denied Guangdong’s request, and as a consequence the Guangdong and Guangxi anti-Japanese national salvation army has already advanced northward on a punitive expedition against the Chinese traitor Chiang Kaishek and is going north to protect the area of North China. It looks, then, as if war cannot be avoided.

According to our observations, because Chiang Kaishek has all along capitulated to Japan and given up [X][X][X][X][X] in the Northeast, the status of the Nanjing government is sinking lower day by day. At this time it is entirely possible as well as necessary that some leaders in the Guomindang who wish to resist Japan and save the country, along with some factions opposed to Nanjing, should split off from Nanjing. That [X][X][X][X][X] refuse to join Chiang Kaishek in becoming traitors selling out their nation and slaves without a country, and that they valiantly rose to resist Japan on their own and overthrow the humiliating diplomacy of the Nanjing government are heroic undertakings worth celebrating.

Some say that partial resistance to Japan is the road to defeat, but we have yet to find any evidence proving this sort of [X][X] to be the truth. The January 28th Shanghai Battle of Resistance and the Great Wall Battle of Resistance were not defeated because of partial resistance against Japan; rather, they suffered defeat because the leaders of the resistance were not resolved to carry the war of resistance through to the end and to apply every means possible to mobilize all anti-Japanese forces to participate [X][X][X][X] in a nationwide war of resistance. The wavering on the part of the leaders and their lack of resolve and confidence to carry the resistance war through to the end, along with sabotage by Chinese traitors and fierce Japanese offensives, are the main reasons that the January 28th and the Great Wall battles of resistance were defeated. One has

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1. The two missing characters may well be youji, making “guerrilla warfare.”
Basic Principles and Policies Regarding Work Amongst the Muslim Population

(June 8, 1936)

Peng [Dehuai], Liu [Bocheng], Zuo [Quan], Nie [Rongzhen], Zhu [De], Deng [Xiaoping], Xu [Xiangqian], Cheng [Zihu], and Wang [Jiaxiang]:

The Central Committee has decided that the basic principle regarding work amongst the Muslim population is that of self-determination; we should adopt a position of assistance so as to promote and push forward the Muslim people’s struggle.

1. As for the situation in terms of political power, in places where both Muslim and Han peoples live, joint governments are to be organized, and in Muslim areas Muslim governments are to be organized. All aristocratic imams who desire to work for the liberation of the Muslim people, and all Muslim people may participate.

2. Muslim local tyrants may be fought against only with the consent of the Muslim masses. The necessary capital must be donated by the Muslim people; the Red Army is not to fight the local tyrants on its own initiative.

3. The mass organizations are the Muslim Society, Liberation Society, and Anti-Japanese Society. New Muslim soldiers will establish separate mess units called the Muslim anti-Japanese army.

4. The most progressive elements within the Muslim population will organize their own Muslim party: the revolutionary party and the people’s party. We shall accept only a very few elements with the highest consciousness into our Party.

5. The three prohibitions with regard to the Muslim population are as follows: It is forbidden to station troops in mosques, to eat non-vegetarian foods, and to destroy sacred writings in Arabic. The relevant four points for attention are as follows: (a) Be scrupulous with regard to hygiene; (b) Respect the Muslim people’s culture and customs; (c) Do not use Muslim people’s things at will; (d) Pay attention to unity between the Han and Muslim peoples.

Mao Zedong   Zhou Enlai   Yang Shangkun

We have translated this document from Documents on the United Front, Vol. 2, p. 160.
Proclamation Regarding the Guangdong-Guangxi Northern March Against Japan

(June 12, 1936)

Recently Japanese imperialism has greatly increased its troop strength in Hebei and Chahar in order to occupy North China directly, organized smuggling on a nationwide scale so as to sabotage China’s customs system and her national economy, and instigated a movement for autonomy in Fujian as a means to invade South China. All these facts prove that Japanese imperialism’s predetermined plan to destroy all of China is moving ahead with unprecedented speed. Chiang Kai-shek’s Nanjing government not only shows no signs of resistance whatsoever, but actually everywhere serves as an accomplice to Japanese imperialism’s evil deeds in suppressing all anti-Japanese national salvation movements of the people throughout China, obstructing the Chinese People’s Red Army’s Anti-Japanese Vanguard Army in its eastern expedition against Japan, signing the “Sino-Japanese Anti-Communist Agreement,” leading the wolf into the house and getting rid of all dissenters in an attempt to establish a personal dictatorship, giving Japanese imperialism an inch so that it can take a mile and do exactly as it pleases. At this time when Japanese bandits and shameless Chinese traitors are running rampant all over China, each and every warm-blooded patriotic soldier and compatriot with a conscience is filled with righteous anger, and vows to fight to the end for the survival of the Chinese nation!

As Guangdong and Guangxi now raise high the righteous anti-Japanese banner and set out on their northern march, and also demand that the Nanjing government immediately send troops to resist the Japanese jointly, the broadcasting of this righteous call rouses all the people of the whole country. On behalf of the anti-Japanese people and the anti-Japanese Red Army of the whole soviet area, we express our respect and support for the patriotic soldiers and compatriots of Guangdong and Guangxi, and above all our desire to join with the Guangdong-Guangxi authorities in forming an anti-Japanese alliance and fighting together. We further call upon patriotic soldiers all over China to take the initiative courageously and send troops in response to the repeated efforts of patriotic compatriots throughout China, to expand the anti-Japanese movement to save the nation, and cooperate with the uprising in Guangdong and Guangxi. The present anti-Japanese military outbreak must be expanded so that the people of the whole country arm themselves and fight Japan in a sacred national revolutionary war. At the same time, we demand that the Nanjing government immediately wake up and change its stance altogether, agree to the Guangdong and Guangxi demands, and mobilize all of China’s navy, army, and air force to go north and fight against Japan. The Chinese People’s Red Army above all very much wants to concentrate all its forces in Hebei, shoulder the task of serving as an anti-Japanese vanguard army, and begin fighting Japanese imperialism directly.

Ever since the outbreak of the revolt in Guangdong and Guangxi, however, not only has Chiang Kai-shek’s Nanjing government failed to give any sincere indication whatsoever of accepting the requests from Guangdong and Guangxi, but it has temporized repeatedly, and brought false accusations in public against the Guangdong and Guangxi authorities of stirring up civil war and destroying unity. At the same time, it has surreptitiously moved large military forces in an attempt to block the northward march of the Guangdong and Guangxi armies against Japan, incited dissension, and stirred up civil war in order to disrupt the anti-Japanese battlefront. The people of the whole country will certainly not forgive such criminal behavior on Chiang Kai-shek’s part. All Chinese people who do not wish to become slaves without a country should demand that Chiang Kai-shek immediately put into effect the slogan that the people of the whole country should stop the civil war and join together to oppose Japan. At the same time they should demand of the many officers in Chiang Kai-shek’s forces who have a conscience and are warm-blooded patriots that they immediately break with Chiang Kai-shek’s policy of capitulation to Japan, and on their own initiative lead their contingents to join with Guangdong and Guangxi and with the Red Army in the northward march against Japan, and support them in doing so!

The situation is urgent! All of China’s patriotic soldiers, patriotic fellow countrymen, everyone join ranks closely right now and concentrate forces in a unified attack against Japanese imperialism! The Chinese people now demand, more urgently than ever before, a firm united battlefront against Japan. We must resolutely oppose any second plenum of the Guomindang Central Committee or servile National Assembly, which would capitulate to Japan and sell out the country, and which Chiang Kai-shek wants to convene. We propose that a national anti-Japanese representatives’ conference be convened immediately, and we call upon all political, social, and professional groups and armed forces throughout the nation that are anti-Japanese and oppose traitors selling out their country to elect their own representatives to participate in the conference, and immediately put into effect the following program:

1. Announce the severing of relations with and declaration of war on Japan, send a punitive expedition to Manchukuo, recover the lost territories of North China and the Northeast.
2. Abolish all unequal treaties between China and Japan and all loans that amount to selling out the country.
3. Punish Chinese traitors selling out their country who have given up sovereignty or territory and brought disaster upon the country and the people.

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong, Vol. 5, pp. 55-58, where it is reproduced from Doucheng, no. 104, July 3, 1936. The date has been corrected from June 11 to June 12 on the basis of Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 551-552. The correct date also appears on the text of this proclamation as reproduced in Documents on the United Front, Vol. 2, pp. 161-64.
4. Mobilize the navy, army, and air forces of all of China to wage war directly against Japan.
5. Confiscate all property belonging to Japanese imperialism and Chinese traitors selling out their country to be used to finance resistance against Japan.
6. Guarantee complete freedom of speech, publishing, assembly, and organizing to resist Japan and save the nation. Release all political prisoners.
7. Establish a national defense government and a unified anti-Japanese army.
8. Join together with countries and nations throughout the world who treat us as equals, and join together with all oppressed nationalities and oppressed popular masses inside Japan.

This is the anti-Japanese national salvation program demanded by the people of all China, and should also be the program of the Guangdong and Guangxi anti-Japanese campaign. We sincerely hope that the patriotic leaders in Guangdong and Guangxi will be able to arouse boldly and defend everywhere the anti-Japanese people’s patriotic movement, arm and organize the anti-Japanese people in large numbers, and join together with the people of the whole country to fight for the thorough implementation of this program. We believe that only when the anti-Japanese armed forces join as one with the anti-Japanese people, only when the anti-Japanese armed forces become the people’s anti-Japanese armed forces will the great enterprise of liberating the Chinese nation initiated by Guangdong and Guangxi be able to achieve final victory.

Defend the Guangdong and Guangxi northward march against Japan!

Patriotic soldiers throughout China, join with Guangdong and Guangxi to fight Japan!

Oppose Chiang Kaishek’s obstruction of the Guangdong and Guangxi northward march against Japan!

Stop the civil war and unite to resist Japan!

Oppose the civil war started by Chiang Kaishek to disrupt the resistance to Japan!

Convene a nationwide anti-Japanese national salvation representatives’ conference!

Oppose Chiang Kaishek’s servile second plenum of the Guomindang Central Committee and national assembly!

Oppose Japanese imperialist smuggling and confiscate all smuggled goods!

Down with Japanese imperialism!

Long live the anti-Japanese united front of the people of all China!

Chairman, Central Government of the Chinese Soviet People’s Republic  Mao Zedong
Chairman, Revolutionary Military Commission of the Chinese People’s Red Army  Zhu De

Our Army Has Decided to Leave Wayaobao and Prepare for Battle
(June 14, 1936, 11:00 P.M.)

To Yan [Hongyan]¹ and Cai [Shufan].²

1. The Northeastern Army³ is advancing toward Wayaobao in three separate columns, and may arrive at the Yongping-Panlong-Ansai line tomorrow (the 15th). There is a possibility that the enemy in Sui[de] and Qing[jian] may cooperate with them.

2. Our forces have decided to leave Wayaobao and prepare for battle.

3. After receiving this order the Thirtieth Army should proceed on a three-day journey to Yanshui City for concentration, to arrive by the 17th, and prepare to make flank attacks on the enemy troops advancing from Qingjiang or from Yongping toward Wayaobao. After arriving at Yanshui City, contact should also be made in secret with the Twenty-ninth Army so as to facilitate coordinated action.

4. The Thirtieth Army should leave the area south of the blockade line from Wubao to Suide⁴ before daybreak tomorrow, and its guerrilla missions in the direction of the Wubao-Suide blockade line should be handed over to the third Qingjiang-Suide combat district.

5. Xie Song and Gan Weiyan⁵ have been ordered to lead the Twenty-ninth Army beginning on the 17th from Lingzhen by way of Yudong to arrive between Yanshui and Fengjiaping and await orders. It is hoped that you will establish contact with them since they have no transceiver.

6. You are expected to inform us by telegram about your operations and about the combat district troops.

Mao [Zedong]  Zhou [Enlai]

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 544–45, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Yan Hongyan was commander of the Red Army’s Thirtieth Army at the time.
2. Cai Shufan was political commissar of the Red Army’s Thirtieth Army at the time.
3. This refers to Guomindang forces from Zhang Xueliang’s Northeastern Army sent under Chiang Kaishek’s orders to fight the Communists in the Northwest.
4. The reference is to the Guomindang blockade of the Communist areas in Northwest Shaanxi.
5. Xie Song was deputy commander of the Red Army’s Twenty-ninth Army, and Gan Weiyan its political commissar.
The Situation Regarding the Activity of the Northeastern Army, and the Dispositions for the Transfer of Central Committee Organs

(June 15, 1936, 2:30 A.M.)

To Peng [Dehuai], Zuo [Quan] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua], Song [Shilun] and Song [Renqiong], Yan [Hongyan] and Cai [Shuan], Li [Fuchun], Xiao [Jingguang], and for transmittal to [Yang] Zhicheng:

1. The Northeastern Army is now advancing toward Wayaobao in three separate columns. Yesterday its left and center columns had reached Ansei and Panlong, and the right column had reached Pingbute; today they may reach Yongping. It is also possible that the enemy in Qingjian and Suide may coordinate with them in their advance.

2. Figuring that Wayaobao is bound to fall sooner or later, our army has decided to evacuate the town of Wayaobao and prepare to do battle. The Central [Committee] and all organs of the Military Commission are getting ready to move to the Hongde City and Helianwan area; the supplies and gear will go first, and the area in the vicinity of Yangjiayuanzi and Wuqizhen shall be the site for transfer and resting.

3. It has been decided by the Military Commission that:
   a. Enlai is to remain on the eastern line to direct all the troops and the local forces in the east in resistance against the attacking enemy, and to make arrangements for the transfer of the Central Committee and the Military Commission.
   b. Dehuai is in charge of making arrangements for the organizations (including the Red Army School) in the area of Hongde City and Helianwan. It is hoped that this will be accomplished by the end of this month.
   c. Lin Biao is in charge of directing the organs and troops throughout the transfer, which is set to begin on the 16th.

4. In order to carry out the transfer smoothly, the following instructions apply:
   a. The two Songs are to undertake to cover the area north of the Yangjiayuanzi-Shaji line with two companies of soldiers, and eliminate the [landlord] militias and bandits in the area.
   b. Jingguang is to undertake to cover the line between Yangjiayuanzi and Shaji with one regiment of soldiers, and eliminate the militias and bandits near Bao’an.

5. In preparing this time for the moving of forces and for the war of resistance, the Central Committee does not intend to change its basic plan of speeding up the great unification in the Northwest by taking advantage of the current Southwest Incident. It should be explained among the cadres and the masses that the Central Committee is moving its capital in order to lead directly and consolidate a new and larger base area in the Northwest, facilitate the further development of guerrilla warfare in the east and west, win over the Northeastern Army more easily, and prepare a new counteroffensive.

Military Commission

Mao [Zedong]  Zhou [Enlai]
Peng [Dehuai]

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 546-48, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
It Would Be Appropriate That the Second and Fourth Front Armies Move Northward into Southern Gansu

(June 19, 1936)

To Comrades Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], and also to be transmitted to Comrade [Ren] Bishi:

1. The current political situation has already undergone enormous changes, which have brought the Chinese revolution to a new stage. The Party’s task is to cause the united front against Japan and Chiang [Kaishek] to progress and take a more concrete form, which means to establish a national defense government and organize a unified anti-Japanese army.

2. There is already the possibility and the necessity to organize rapidly a national defense government in the Northwest. We should coordinate the initiative in the Northwest with the initiative in Guangdong and Guangxi.

3. The timing and strategic deployment of the initiative in the Northwest must proceed from the principle of striving for victory, and on the basis of this principle, take into consideration the conditions with regard to the various aspects of the situation. As regards the deployment of the Second Front Army and the Fourth Front Army, we think it best for them to move to the southern part of Gansu, and not go toward the area of the Xia and Yao rivers. The reasons for this are as follows:

First, it would avoid triggering conflict between the Muslim and Han peoples and would be advantageous in winning over the three Mas in Qinghai. Hatred between the Muslim and Han peoples has run extremely deep in the past, so that if we wish to establish ourselves in the Northwest we must unite with the Muslims. Otherwise there will be major negative consequences. With movement toward the Xia and Yao rivers, the likelihood of stirring up conflict is great.

Second, the enemy is relatively weak in southern Gansu. Since Hu Zongnan’s...
Guiding Principles of the Central Committee Regarding Work with the Northeastern Army

(June 20, 1936, at Wayaobao)1

I. An Assessment of the Northeastern Army

Because of the peculiar political position in which the Northeastern Army finds itself at present (that of slaves without a country), and because of the Red Army's revolutionary influence on it, there is a very strong possibility that the Northeastern Army will turn into an anti-Japanese, revolutionary army.

The Northeastern Army is at present, however, still in a transitional period toward turning into an anti-Japanese, revolutionary army. At this time it is still on the whole an army under the command of Traitor Chieftain Chiang Kaishek. Chiang Kaishek's lackey, the fascist Political Instruction Section, occupies the legal supervisory and propagandist position there. On the other hand, the top leaders and some senior commanders of the Northeastern Army have already resolved in good faith to resist Japan. Anti-Japanese sentiment runs very high among middle and lower ranking officers, and this facilitates our propaganda and activities to resist Japan and save the country.

The speed at which transformation is taking place within the Northeastern Army is, however, uneven. Some sections are in the most advanced stage, others are being transformed at an extremely slow pace, and still others have not even begun to change and are under the direct influence of Chiang Kaishek's fascist Political Instruction Section. For this reason the degree of consciousness within the Northeastern Army is by no means uniform. Yet this kind of unevenness and lack of uniformity does not in fact invalidate our basic assessment that the entire Northeastern Army may very possibly turn into an anti-Japanese army. This sort of unevenness and lack of uniformity should, in fact, be the starting point for our work.

II. Winning Over the Northeastern Army to the Anti-Japanese Front Is Our Basic Policy

Transforming the Northeastern Army into an anti-Japanese army depends on our work in winning them over. Persuading the Northeastern Army to undertake resistance to Japan is our basic policy. Therefore, the goals in our work with the Northeastern Army are, first, not to dismantle or split the Northeastern Army, but rather to provide the Northeastern Army with a thorough program for fighting Japan, and have the Northeastern Army unite around this program and turn into a staunch armed force against Japan; second, not to turn the Northeastern Army into the Red Army either, nor to have them support the basic programs of the Communist Party, but rather to turn the Northeastern Army into an army friendly to the Red Army and have them adopt as their own programs those put forward by the Communist Party on fighting Japan and saving the nation. At present all words and actions that go beyond these limits are ruled out.

As for methods of winning over the Northeastern Army, we need mainly to rely on the political work of patient persuasion and explanation, winning them over to the anti-Japanese front by political means. If schemes and tricks are relied on instead of political means to win them over, there is no way to turn the Northeastern Army into a staunch anti-Japanese armed force that would fight to the end for the sacred cause of resisting Japan and saving the country. But this does not eliminate the necessity of taking military action against parts of the Northeastern Army. When parts of the Northeastern Army whose consciousness is not high enough and who are arrogant, acting under pressure and deception by Chiang Kaishek and the Political Instruction Section, take hostile actions against us in the form of active attack, our armed forces should strike back if there are advantageous conditions. This kind of action is on the one hand for the purpose of self-defense, and on the other hand also to teach those parts of the Northeastern Army a lesson and open up the possibility of smoothly carrying out political work from within at a later time. Therefore, the goal of this kind of military action is, likewise, also to win over by political means, and not to destroy the Northeastern Army.

III. The Keys at Present to Winning Over the Northeastern Army

To transform the Northeastern Army into an anti-Japanese army, the key points at present are to have it break away from the control and influence of the head traitor, Chiang Kaishek, openly rise up in opposition to all of Chiang Kaishek's shameless acts of giving up sovereignty and humiliating the nation, and refuse to carry out Chiang Kaishek's orders to attack the soviet areas and the Red Army. Chiang Kaishek's agent in the Northeastern Army is that fascist Political Instruction Section.

To all officers and soldiers of the Northeastern Army we should reveal every single instance of Chiang Kaishek's giving up sovereignty and humiliating the nation so as to expose the deceptions of Chiang Kaishek and his Political Instruction Section. We must give a timely and forceful response each time the Political Instruction Section uses a slogan against us. Our responses should be backed by irrefutable facts that nobody can deny. We must concentrate our fire on vehe-

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2. As usual, words set in bold here are emphasized in the original by the use of dots next to each character.
mently attacking Chiang Kaishek and his Political Instruction Section, and everywhere pit all officers and soldiers of the Northeastern Army against the fascist Political Instruction Section so as to render the Political Instruction Section thoroughly isolated and besieged on all sides. Only through this kind of struggle, indeed, can the few elements in the Northeastern Army who are most loyal to Chiang Kaishek be lowered to the status of running dogs of Chinese traitors selling out the country and to the status of traitors within the Northeastern Army, and as such be reviled by all officers and soldiers of the Northeastern Army. Only through this kind of struggle as well can the wavering and neutral elements be moved to the anti-Japanese front. And again, only through this kind of struggle can political unity within the Northeastern Army be further consolidated.

At the same time we shall not slacken our efforts to fragment the fascist Political Instruction Section from within, in the course of waging the antifascist struggle.

When part of the Northeastern Army’s partial struggle against Chiang and his fascist Political Instruction Section turns into the entire Northeastern Army openly rising up to oppose Chiang Kaishek and the fascist Political Instruction Section, then the time will have come for the whole Northeastern Army to rise up openly and call for resistance to Japan, and to carry out resistance to Japan.

IV. The United Front Within the Northeastern Army

Our goal is to win over the entire Northeastern Army, so that with regard to the united front within the Northeastern Army, we should promote it simultaneously both from above and from below, and this is all for the selfsame goal, which is to transform the Northeastern Army into an anti-Japanese army.

A united front from above with the Northeastern Army has particularly important significance, because many officers in the Northeastern Army are from the Northeast, and thus many of them have anti-Japanese sentiments and the will to resist Japan, which facilitate our establishing a united front with them to fight the Japanese and the traitors. Such a united front could take all sorts of written or unwritten forms (such as taking no hostile action against each other, sharing information with each other, negotiating with each other, and so on). What is particularly important in the united front is that we should strive to get close to them and wholeheartedly offer them our suggestions and methods for fighting Japan and saving the nation. We should answer each of the questions they raise with the utmost clarity, thoroughness, and sincerity. As for the difficulties and problems they encounter, we should take the stance of a friendly army and talk things over together so as to find appropriate solutions, and certainly not hamper the overall situation on account of certain insignificant clashes and misunderstandings. In the process of such cooperation, the orientation for resisting Japan and saving the nation should be gradually made more concrete, so as to lead toward prepared actions against the Japanese and the traitors.

Preparations should be accelerated so as to take advantage of favorable situations to initiate action. It is permissible at present for the leaders of the Northeastern Army to use diplomatic methods in dealing with the Nanjing government, Chiang Kaishek, and the Political Instruction Section. It is, in fact, necessary before initiating action. But these sorts of methods should not compromise, in the eyes of the Chinese people, the Northeastern Army’s political stance of resisting Japan to save the country. At the same time, whoever is of concern to the Soviet Red Army should be decided through consultation.

The united front from below with the Northeastern Army is for the purpose of uniting its lower-level officers and soldiers around the political goal of resisting Japan and saving the nation, thereby creating for the Northeastern Army a solid lower-level foundation and a driving force. In this way, the betrayal of a few high-ranking officers cannot affect the lower-ranking officers and soldiers; the lower-level officers and soldiers may use their anti-Japanese demands and sentiments to push their superior officers onto the road to resistance against Japan and firm up their superiors’ resolve to fight Japan. In turn, the anti-Japanese higher-level officers can secure solid, reliable backing.

The united front from below can also adopt all sorts of different forms, from not shooting at each other or firing into the air all the way to establishing communications with each other. Toward orders for the Northeastern Army to attack the soviet areas and the Red Army, the united front from below should manifest itself in passivity or going slow, or simply going through the motions (for instance, if their superiors order them to build fortifications they can fail to do it, or build faulty ones).

The united front from above and from below are to be developed simultaneously and in coordination with one another. This will certainly strengthen the Northeastern Army politically, and accelerate the process of its transformation into an anti-Japanese army.

V. Establish a Strong Leadership Core Within the Northeastern Army

With regard to the work in the Northeastern Army, at present our Party organizations at all levels mainly influence the Northeastern Army from without. We use our propaganda materials, broadcasting, discussions, festivities, gifts, plays, and all sorts of other methods to influence the Northeastern Army. This sort of method is necessary at the beginning, and we have to use such methods as the only way to enable those within the Northeastern Army to establish their own leadership core and carry on the work from within.

A tremendous weakness in the Northeastern Army is that there are only a few top officers as leaders, and no leadership core. In the process of carrying out our work with the Northeastern Army from without we ought to help the army discover, seek out, and educate their very own group of valiant, active elements and have them organize themselves into a strong core through which to promote
the work of resisting Japan and saving the nation throughout the entire Northeastern Army. At the same time, an organized struggle against the fascist Political Instruction Section and all hidden traitors can be carried out through this core. Such an organization should first be established in every army, division, and regiment. This organization could use such names as “Association of Anti-Japanese Northeastern Armymen,” “Northeast Anti-Japanese Society,” “Society for Revival of the East,” “Hope of the East Association,” and so on. Without such an organization of the Northeastern Army’s own in the leadership, work in the Northeastern Army could not be carried out smoothly step by step.

In doing our work with the Northeastern Army from without, we should not only locate individual sympathizers with and supporters of the anti-Japanese cause, but each of such elements we find should also be made into propagandists and organizers within the Northeastern Army for the cause of resisting Japan and saving the nation. We should not only inform these comrades of the reasoning behind fighting Japan and saving the nation, we should also instruct them as to methods and forms of action. We must understand that our role in the work with the Northeastern Army is as assistant and advisor, not to take over the whole job and do everything for the Northeastern Army itself. The work in the Northeastern Army should be done by the Northeastern Army’s own activists and cadres. Without innumerable such activists and cadres our work would be devoid of power and lack a foundation.

VI. There Should Be Communist Small Groups and Branches in the Northeastern Army

The most excellent elements within the Northeastern Army should be recruited into the Communist Party. Anyone in the Northeastern Army who wishes to join the Communist Party organizations should be able to do it in complete secrecy, and for the time being, there will be no horizontal contacts among the small groups. Communist Party members’ activities other than internal Party activities, however, should be completely open. This is because the main task of Communist Party members in the Northeastern Army is to organize and unite all activists in the anti-Japanese national salvation cause within the Northeastern Army, and transform the Northeastern Army into a staunchly anti-Japanese army. Within the Northeastern Army they are to present themselves as nothing but anti-Japanese activists. There should be small groups of highly capable Communists within the leadership core of the Northeastern Army so as to carry out all of the Communist Party’s strategies and decisions with regard to the Northeastern Army. The more powerful the Communist organizations are, the stronger the Northeastern Army will be. The idea that the development of the Communist Party would undermine the Northeastern Army must be refuted.

Wherever the conditions allow for it, we should send the best comrades into the Northeastern Army to carry out the work and develop Party organizations therein. With an eye toward future developments in the overall situation, we should act now to cultivate and train a group of cadres to be sent specifically into the Northeastern Army.

VII. Party Work Should Be Done Wherever the Northeastern Army Is Stationed

In areas where the Northeastern Army is stationed, the work of winning over the Northeastern Army becomes the central task of the Party there. The leaders of this work are the Party branch executive committees. But in addition to the branch executive committee’s taking overall responsibility, there should be one cadre from the committee specifically in charge of this work, who will plan, organize, and lead it. Through the Party branch, all local masses, women and children, guerrilla units, and Red Guards and Young Pioneers will be mobilized to carry out this work. District committees, xian committees, and provincial committees should all have specific personnel or committees (at the provincial and xian levels) in charge of carrying out the work.

In carrying out the work within the Northeastern Army, local Party organizations should not use inflexible methods that are everywhere the same. They must first make an assessment of the Northeastern Army in the particular location, the activities of the Political Instruction Section within it, and their relationship with the landlord militia, and then adopt a method suitable to the kind of specific conditions that prevail. If they make trouble, rob and grab people, then we should strike back through the means of “strengthening the walls and clearing the fields” and launching guerrilla warfare, thereby creating all kinds of hardships so as to hasten their awakening. At the same time, along with these actions we will continue our work of propaganda and agitation (such as handing out leaflets, writing slogans, broadcasting, and so on). As for soldiers captured by our guerrillas, after being disarmed they should be given very kind special treatment and then released (if there is propaganda material it is to be given to them, and where possible letters should be written to them), and frequent contact is to be established. As for those utterly evil petty fascist officers and landlord militia leaders, if captured they are to be shot, and their crimes made public. If the Northeastern Army stationed locally conducts itself well, then such means as gift-giving, having get-togethers, and so on may be used to win it over to the anti-Japanese front.

The Communist Party is the leader of the revolution in all of China. It is superior to the enemy, and its vision is far-reaching. No matter how the Northeastern Army behaves, the Party will certainly never abandon its efforts to win
over the Northeastern Army. But it is no fool, either. Always using one particular method to deal with the Northeastern Army no matter how it behaves would bring harm to itself. It will use all sorts of methods to deal with the Northeastern Army’s variety of behaviors.

VIII. Similarities and Differences Between Administrative Offices and Work Committees

Only in strategic locations where the Northeastern Army is stationed and in places where the Northeastern Army has reached an agreement with us do we establish an administrative office. The administrative office is an organ for the specific purpose of carrying out work in the Northeastern Army. Around the administrative office should be united many activist elements in the Northeastern Army. It has a very clear understanding of all actions and goings-on in the local Northeastern Army. The organizational structure of the administrative office ought to be simple and flexible, and its staff should be politically very solid. Being a local organization, the administrative office is under the direct leadership of the local Party organization. Any problems that cannot be solved and all information regarding the work in the Northeastern Army should be reported to the provincial or central committees on work in the Northeastern Army so as to receive frequent directives.

In addition to the administrative office, under the central or provincial committees on work in the Northeastern Army there should be many smaller mobile work committees (or special agents). These committees target a certain military unit, and when that unit moves, they move along with it, thus enabling all sorts of past relationships to be maintained over the long term and further developed. In places where there is an administrative office, if the work committee operates in the same place as the administrative office, the administrative office should be under its leadership.

The organizational structure of the work committee should be less cumbersome and simpler than that of the administrative office. To facilitate the work and avoid attacks by landlord militia bandits and fascists, methods such as going in disguise may be adopted. Work committee cadres should be especially solid politically.

IX. Explain to the Masses in the Soviet Areas Our Policy Toward the Northeastern Army and Fight to Protect the Interests of the Masses in the Soviet Areas

Many among the masses in the soviet areas do not understand the strategy we have adopted toward the Northeastern Army. This is not surprising, because this sort of method for winning people over is most complex and altogether new. In particular, the kinds of unsavory behavior in the Northeastern Army arouse even more suspicion among the masses.

We must keep making explanations to the masses in the soviet areas about this problem. At the same time we must point out that the degree of consciousness varies greatly within the Northeastern Army. The Northeastern Army is not the same kind of thing as the Red Army. Therefore, our methods for winning them over are also extremely diverse. Winning over the Northeastern Army and protecting the interests of the masses in the soviet areas do not conflict with each other; in fact they are in concert with each other. To sacrifice the interests of the masses in the soviet areas so as to win over the Northeastern Army is not only fundamentally wrong, but also makes it impossible to mobilize the masses in the soviet areas to carry out the work of winning over the Northeastern Army. Winning over the Northeastern Army is an important part of protecting the interests of the masses in the soviet areas. As for a certain area abandoning the work of winning over the Northeastern Army because of having been devastated by the Northeastern Army, and harboring the desire for vengeance, this is similarly a case of sacrificing the interests of the entire revolution for the interests of a smaller group, and is, naturally, also wrong.

The Party should be the leader of the actions of the masses under any and all circumstances. The Party should keep control over the local masses in its own hands. Under any and all circumstances it is necessary to organize the masses, arm the masses, and establish and expand the guerrilla units. In times of peace, these organizations and armed forces do peacetime work. In a wartime environment we carry out mobilization for battle. All mass organizations and armed forces should be prepared at all times to cope with any new occurrences. What absolutely must be avoided is that the sudden occurrence of some incident should cause panic, confusion, and the disintegration of the organization. This is the greatest danger.

Now is a time of war. The Party in the soviet areas and all of the masses in the soviet areas should be prepared for war. We must fight hard to safeguard our own interests and those of the revolution as a whole.

X. Struggle Against Erroneous Tendencies Within the Party Concerning the Question of the Northeastern Army

With regard to the question of the Northeastern Army there are currently two tendencies within our Party that oppose each other yet also complement each other.

One tendency is to think that since the Northeastern Army is cooperating with us and is a friendly army, there is no difference between the Northeastern Army and the Red Army. Naturally, this tendency is erroneous, because there are huge fundamental and qualitative differences between the Northeastern Army and the Red Army. The Red Army is a revolutionary army born and raised out of the Chinese revolution and the soviet revolution. The Northeastern Army, on the other hand, is a mercenary army of the ruling classes that may possibly turn into an anti-Japanese army (it is unnecessary to go into other differences).
The result of this tendency would necessarily be to have us abandon the fighting task of winning over the Northeastern Army, abandon the task of bringing the Northeastern Army as presently constituted up into the anti-Japanese front, and treat the Northeastern Army with the same attitude as that with which we treat the Red Army. These comrades, however, express pessimism and disappointment when the Northeastern Army conducts itself poorly (and this sort of poor behavior can be found everywhere), and they show suspicion and even opposition toward the Party’s strategy of winning over the Northeastern Army.

The other tendency is to doubt or even oppose from the start the Party’s strategy of winning over the Northeastern Army, because of seeing everywhere various sorts of bad behavior on the part of the Northeastern Army. [People of this tendency] consider all actions of the Northeastern Army that are coordinated with us to be fraudulent, and aimed at attacking the soviet areas so as to accomplish their goal of destroying them. Because of such propaganda on the part of certain evil people within the Northeastern Army, this tendency is made even more plausible. This tendency is also clearly erroneous, for it fundamentally denies the very strong possibility of the Northeastern Army’s turning into an anti-Japanese army, repudiates all facts about the cooperation between the Northeastern Army and the Red Army, and would also result in abandoning the work of winning over the Northeastern Army.

The main source of the mistakes in these two tendencies is that the erring comrades failed to see the essence of the matter but were, instead, misled by happenings of the moment. Seeing the good in this particular part of the Northeastern Army one day, they say that the Northeastern Army is the same as the Red Army, but seeing another part of the Northeastern Army behaving badly the next day, they say the Northeastern Army is fundamentally no good. This sort of blowing hot and cold in forming an assessment makes it impossible for us to decide on a definite policy toward the Northeastern Army.

In the struggle against these two tendencies, we shall carry out the consistent and firm policies adopted by the Party toward the Northeastern Army.

The Question of the Red Army’s Route and Timing in Approaching the Soviet Union

(June 29, 1936)

Comrade [Peng] Dehuai:

1. From an overall strategic perspective, whether from the standpoint of the Red Army, or from the standpoint of establishing a national defense government based on the union of the Red Army and other friendly armies, opening up a route to the Soviet Union and resolving technical problems is a task that must be completed this year, and this task must be shouldered by the First and Fifteenth army groups.

2. There are two routes by which the Red Army may approach the Soviet Union: one is the route from Ningxia and western Suiyuan, which is relatively short and has rather favorable conditions with regard to population and the economy. Its disadvantage is likely to be the difficulty of building a base area there. If it were possible, however, to strike a blow at Ma Hongkui’s main forces, then gaining a foothold for a period of time would be feasible. The second route is the one through the three prefectures of Gan[zhou], Liang[zhou], and Su[zhou],2 where it is possible to build a solid base area. The disadvantages are that the distance is longer, certain regions are sparsely populated, and there may be some obstacles to marching and billeting.

3. There are also two options with regard to the timing of the Red Army’s departure. One is during the summer or the fall. If boats can be found for fording the river, this would be the best time. The other is winter. If the summer or the fall does not work out, then the only thing to do is wait for the waters to freeze.

4. Whichever route or time is chosen, dealing a firm blow to Ma Hongkui is the decisive factor. Therefore, please consider the question of the First and Fifteenth army groups’ moving in the latter half of July toward the area between Jinchuan and Ning’an[bao] or between Ning’an[bao] and Zhongwei, and the question of seizing boats on the Yellow River.

5. If it is possible to take care of some of Ma Hongkui’s forces on the eastern

We have translated this text from Mao Zedong jushisi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 551–52, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Ma Hongkui was at the time commander under the Guomindang army’s Northwest “Bandit Suppression” Headquarters of the Fifteenth Route Army and of the newly organized Seventh Division.

2. These are the names of three former prefectures in Gansu Province, now called Zhangye, Wuwei, and Jiayuan.
6. Radio communication with a distant place\(^4\) has been established and the Center's report has been dispatched; there should soon be a reply. Concerning the question of fording the river westward, we will seek an opinion from the distant place today. I am hereby asking your opinion first, and at the same time informing four other comrades, Zuo [Quan], Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong], and Cheng [Zihua], hoping that they, too, will express their opinions on this question.

Mao Zedong

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3. I.e., from intelligence reports.
4. The editors of the *Junshe wenji* indicate that “a distant place” [*yuanchang*] refers here to the Soviet Union and the Comintern. See above, the Introduction, regarding the reestablishment of radio communications with Moscow in June 1936.
Front Army move northward there will surely be a change in the situation, and that could perhaps be the time to establish a northwest government. Our policy is to strive to achieve this. Yet even if we can do so, fighting through to the Soviet Union to obtain assistance remains an important move in the overall strategic guidelines. It is necessary to do this, both for the Red Army and for the Northeastern Army, but there will be more favorable conditions for conducting operations at that time.

5. In July our work should be centered on the three tasks of turning areas Red, expanding the Red Army, and training. As for the importance of adding new recruits, the situation is that we are getting ready to receive gifts from a distant place, so that a related issue is to achieve more uniform training among the troops. Another subsidiary question is that we should make sure to acquire a large number of mules and horses. The number of new recruits and mules and horses should be sufficient to carry ten thousand rifles and three million bullets. In addition, more clothing will be needed upon crossing the river westward to pass the winter. Each person will need to have cotton-padded clothes and windbreakers; care should be taken in winter.

6. In order to prepare for political and military initiatives in the Northeastern Army shortly after the Second Front Army and the Fourth Front Army move northward (it is extremely important to take action early for the purpose of supporting the Southwest through coordinated action), during the months of July and August great efforts must be put into the three levels of army, division, and regiment in said military forces. The division of labor at present is for you to take complete charge of things within the borders of Gansu, and for Zhou [Enlai] and me to be responsible for things within the borders of Shaanxi. The method: relatively capable people should be sent separately to meet with army, division, and regimental commanders and, according to their level of consciousness and receptivity, explain to them five or six basic, concrete questions such as “resisting Japan,” “opposing Chiang,” “unifying with Russia,” “unifying with the Communists,” “the question of the Northeastern Army itself,” and “organizational questions.” I ask that you now first recruit some cadres at the front (such as Deng Xiaoping, Huang Kecheng, and so on) and, after you have trained them and suitable leads have been found, send them out to travel back and forth between the other side and our side. After a few days we may send both [Li] Kenong and

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4. At this time, the Central Committee advocated a Northwest Government of National Defense. Later, the policy changed; the slogan of creating such regional governments was replaced by a call for the establishment of a democratic republic on a national scale.

5. As in the previous text, dated June 29, this refers to the Soviet Union and the Comintern. Mao expected to get arms from the Soviet Union, so the Red Army would need more soldiers to use them.

6. At this time, Deng was deputy head of the Political Department of the First Army Group of the First Front Army; Huang was political commissar of the Fourth Division of the First Army Group of the First Front Army.

7. Li was head of the political security section of the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission’s rear office, and Zhang was its chief of staff.

8. Bian Zhangwu was head of the Fifth Section of the Red Army First Front Army’s headquarters.

9. Wang was commander of the Sixth-seventh Army under the Guomindang army’s Northwest “Bandit Suppression” Headquarters, and Liu was commander of its 101st Division.
Operational Principles of the Western Expedition

(July 14, 1936, 5:00 P.M.)

Comrade [Peng] Dehuai:

1. When engaged in battle with enemy forces of two regiments or more, it may be better to gather even stronger forces, with a view to destroying them in one blow.

2. When conditions for doing battle are not yet met, it is just as well to retreat slightly and lure the enemy into a situation in which the conditions do exist for wiping him out in one blow. In this case more patience is required.

3. Expand and train the troops so as to build up the Red Army’s strength, thereby creating a principal condition for launching a large-scale strategic counterattack in the future.

4. As for the Northeastern Army “advancing to suppress [the bandits]” under the command of He Zhuguo, we had best decide to wipe out one of its units. To do this would not hinder the overall situation; rather, it would benefit the overall situation.

5. With regard to the command as a whole during the western expedition, I am in agreement. The above-mentioned points were, generally speaking, all included in your previous deployments and are raised here with the request that you give them special consideration.

[Mao] Zedong

Apology for the Central Soviet Government to the Gelaohui

(July 15, 1936)

Brothers of the Gelaohui!

Recently the barbaric acts of robbery in swallowing up China on the part of our Chinese nation’s mortal enemy, Japanese imperialism, have been increasing in ferocity and viciousness. Not only have they forcibly occupied our Four Northeastern Provinces, they have gone further and established de facto rule over the whole of North China. They have not merely made use of smuggling to ruin the whole of our country’s economic life, and increase all sorts of suffering such as bankruptcy and unemployment, but they have also made use of the colonial systems in Taiwan and Korea to increase by more than 50,000 the number of soldiers sent into North China. All of these political and economic measures are calculated to turn North China into a second “Manchukuo,” and to make of North China a base for attacking the whole of China. They are, moreover, engaged in ruthless invasion of China’s NorthWest, Central China, and South China in an attempt to swallow up all of China and turn it into their colony, and to make slaves and beasts of burden of our four hundred million compatriots. The grievous misfortune of the loss of our state and the extinction of our race is already singing our eyebrows; we find ourselves before an imminent crisis in which life and death, survival or ruin are at stake. Apart from a few traitors who are selling out their country, there is no one among all those Chinese who are in the slightest degree upright, among those Chinese who are unwilling to be slaves without a country, whose hair does not stand on end with anger, whose bosom is not filled with rage, and who does not want to wage a war of resistance to the death against Japan! Today the military leaders of the southwest, Li Zongren, Chen Jitang, and others, have raised the banner of resistance to Japan, and moved their armies northward. Moreover, they have demanded of the Nanjing government and Mr. Chiang Kaishek to go forth and do battle against Japan. The anti-Japanese national revolutionary war has already entered a new stage.

This document was first published in Douzheng, no. 105, July 12, 1936. We have translated it from Mao Zedong Ji, Vol. 5, pp. 59–61.

1. For a biography of Li Zongren, see below, the relevant note to Mao’s letter to him dated September 22, 1936. Chen Jitang (1890–1954), zt Bonan, a native of Guangdong, became chief commander in his native province in 1929, and remained dominant there until July 1936, when the failure of the Southwest expedition toward the north led to the collapse of his power and his flight to Hong Kong and thence to Europe.
Formerly, following its principles—"Restore the Han and exterminate the Qing. "Strike at the rich and aid the poor"—the Gelaohui participated actively in the anti-Manchu revolutionary movement of 1911. The revolution in northern Shaanxi has also benefited from considerable aid, support, and active participation of comrades from the Gelaohui. Comrades such as Xie Zichang or Liu Zhidan are not only leaders of the Red Army; they are also exemplary members of the Gelaohui. This revolutionary spirit, these glorious feats, must be manifested even more widely today, in the heroic struggle to save the country and save ourselves.

The Central Chinese People’s Soviet Government has many times in the past proclaimed its views about resisting Japan and saving the country, and called on all those who are unwilling to be slaves without a country to unite, without distinction of party or class, and go and fight together against our common enemies—the Japanese imperialists and the traitors who are selling out their country—in order to secure the independence and liberation of the Chinese nation. The Gelaohui has always been representative of the organizations of the resolute men of our nation, and of the broad masses of peasants and toilers. It has constantly been the victim of the oppression of the government, the militarists, and the bureaucrats; its members have been considered as “people of inferior status,” or calumniated as “bandits,” and it was unable to exist openly. In truth, the treatment inflicted on the Gelaohui by the ruling class is essentially the same as that inflicted on us! In the past you supported the restoration of the Han and the extermination of the Manchus; today, we support resistance to Japan and saving the country. You support striking at the rich and helping the poor; we support striking at the local bullies and dividing up the land. You despise wealth and defend justice, and you gather together all the heroes and brave fellows in the world; we do not spare ourselves to save China and the world, we unite the oppressed and exploited peoples and social strata of the whole world. Our respective views and positions are therefore not very different, and there is even more complete correspondence as regards our enemies and the road toward salvation. Consequently, we once more make a special and very sincere appeal to all our brothers of the Gelaohui throughout the whole country. Regardless of our past subjects of discord or mutual grievances, we must now forget them in order to unite under the slogan of resisting Japan and saving the country. Let us constitute a close and intimate alliance of brothers, let us together defend righteousness and come to the aid of our country in its need. This is your sacred duty, and the sacred duty of the whole Chinese people!

The Soviet Government is the government of the oppressed people of all China. We have the responsibility to receive and to protect all those who are persecuted and threatened with arrest by the Guomindang Government. Consequently, the Gelaohui can exist legally under the Chinese Soviet Government. Moreover, we have instituted a reception bureau for the Gelaohui for receiving all the heroes, brave fellows, and courageous fighters for upright causes who are unable to maintain themselves in the White areas. We hope and request that the lodge masters and grand masters of the various lodges in all parts of the country, and our brothers among the brave fellows on every hand, will send representatives or come themselves to discuss with us plans for saving the country. We await them with enthusiasm, and will give them a hearty welcome! We proclaim loudly:

Show the revolutionary spirit that characterized the Gelaohui in the past!
Let the Gelaohui and the whole of the Chinese people unite to strike at Japan and restore China!
Long live the liberation of the Chinese nation!

Chairman of the
Central Government
of the Chinese People’s
Soviet Republic

Mao Zedong
Personally Signed and Sealed Letter of Introduction for Wang Feng ¹ and Other Representatives of the Chinese Communist Party

(July 15, 1936)

For your inspection, honorable sirs:

As our country is in an extremely precarious position, under attack by Japanese bandits, it is incumbent upon us to arise in unison, forming a solid anti-Japanese front, and fight for the general policy of defending Beiping and Tianjin, defending Hebei and Chahar, Shanxi and Suiyuan, and Shandong, and battling our enemies to the last drop of blood. As we, your younger brothers, hold in utmost esteem [X] your honorable resolve to resist Japan, these comrades have traveled to Hebei to pay you our respects. Please be so kind as to receive them for an exchange of ideas and opinions, and to favor us with your instructions, in the hope of driving out our powerful enemies and together saving the country from the peril of ruin. What I write fails to convey the depth of my concern and agitation. I hereby respectfully extend to you

Salutations of the National War of Resistance against Japan.

Mao Zedong

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Interview with Edgar Snow on Foreign Affairs

(July 15, 1936)

Snow: What is the Soviet government’s general policy toward capitalist countries?

Mao: In discussing questions of policy I must ask you to bear in mind always that the fundamental issue before the Chinese people today is the struggle against Japanese imperialism. Our Soviet foreign policy is decisively conditioned by this struggle. Japan’s warlords hope to subjugate the whole of China and make of the Chinese people their colonial slaves. The fight against the Japanese invasion, the fight against Japanese economic and military conquest—these are the main tasks that must be remembered in analyzing Soviet policies.

Japanese aggression is menacing not only China but also world peace, especially the peace of the Pacific. Japanese imperialism is not only the enemy of

This is one of five interviews which Edgar Snow conducted with Mao Zedong in July and September 1936, during his pioneering visit to Bao’an. Our source is a typewritten manuscript preserved in the Edgar Snow Papers in the University Archives of the University of Missouri, Kansas City, which Snow’s widow, Lois Wheeler Snow, has kindly authorized us to reproduce and incorporate into this edition. We are extremely grateful to Mrs. Snow for allowing us to use these materials, and to David Boutros, the Associate Director of the University Archives in Kansas City, and Marilyn Burlingame, Senior Manuscript Specialist, for locating and reproducing them for us. To the best of our knowledge, this first interview has never been published previously in English in its entirety, nor have the third and fourth interviews. The second and fifth interviews were published in The China Weekly Review on November 14 and 21, 1936. Edgar Snow included passages from the interviews in Red Star over China, and added further extracts in the revised edition of that work, published in 1968. A complete Chinese version of all five interviews appeared as an appendix to a succinct account of Snow’s visit to Bao’an, entitled Zhongguo de xin xibeı (China’s New Northwest) (Shanghai: Pingfan shubian, 1937), pp. 31–87. No information is given there about the source, but the text is characterized on p. 87 as a translation completed in Shanghai on March 11, 1937, presumably from some version of Snow’s manuscript. It has been authoritatively stated in Beijing that no independent Chinese-language record of the interviews exists. (See Wenzian he yanjiu, 1986, pp. 1–2 of the annual volume.) Snow’s English version must therefore be treated as the original. There are several drafts of these interviews in the Snow Papers. We have followed the latest, most polished, and most complete of these, which can be dated December 1936 or January 1937, because of several references in Snow’s own footnotes to the Xi’an Incident as an event which had just taken place. (For the context, see above, the Introduction.) Snow’s text is reproduced here as it appears in his manuscript, with a very limited number of editorial changes. Snow’s questions and Mao’s answers are introduced by their names in bold, rather than by Q. and A. as in the manuscript, and a few modifications have been made in the punctuation, to bring it into harmony with the usage in our edition. The spelling of proper names has also been converted to pinyin. Some further details are given below in the source notes to the remaining four interviews, which appear under the dates of July 16, July 18–19, July 23, and September 23.

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¹ Wang Feng (1910– ) was a native of Shaanxi. He joined the revolution in 1926, and had occupied a number of Party posts in North and Northwest China, in particular that of special representative of the Party Central Committee to the Northwest armies.
China, but also of all people of the world who desire peace. Especially it is the enemy of those peoples with interests on the Pacific Ocean, namely: the American, British, French, and Soviet Russian nations. The Japanese continental policy, as well as naval policy, are directed not only against China but also against those countries. Thus, the problem of Japanese aggression is not only a Chinese problem but one which should be solved by all nations fronting the Pacific. Hence the Chinese Soviets and the Chinese people want to unite with all nations, people, parties, and mass organizations, to form a united front with them against Japanese imperialism.

What do we expect from the foreign powers? We expect at least that friendly nations will not help Japanese imperialism and will adopt a neutral position. We hope that they will actively help China to resist invasion and conquest.

Snow: How does the Soviet government distinguish between friendly powers and imperialist powers?

Mao: Concerning the question of imperialism in general we observe that among the great powers some express the unwillingness to engage in a new world war, some are not ready to see Japan occupy China: countries such as America, Great Britain, France, Holland, and Belgium. Then there are countries permanently under the menace of the aggressive powers, and minor nations, dominions, colonies, semi-colonies, etc., such as Siam, the Philippines, Central American countries, Canada, India, Australia, the Dutch Indies, etc.—all more or less under the threat of Japan. We consider them our friends and invite their cooperation. As for the Soviet Union, which adopts a policy of peace, and does not want to subjugate or exploit any nation, such a country naturally must be our good friend.

So except for Japan and those countries which help Japanese imperialism, the categories mentioned above (anti-war, colonial and semi-colonial, and socialist) can be organized into anti-aggression, anti-war, anti-Fascist world alliances.

Any of the above types of nations, who wish to join this common front, will be welcomed by us as a friendly power, regardless of the degree of service it can render in making that common front an effective weapon against aggressors.

In the past Nanjing had received much help from America, England, and other countries. Most of these funds and supplies have been used in civil war. This war has been conducted not only against the Red Army, but against the whole Chinese people. For every Red soldier killed, Nanjing has slain many peasants and workers. According to a recent article by the banker, Zhang Naqi, it has cost the Chinese people about 80,000 for every Red soldier killed by Nanjing. Such “help,” therefore, does not seem to us to have been rendered to the Chinese people.

Only when Nanjing determines to fight against Japanese imperialism, and unite with the people’s revolution to organize a democratic national defense government, only then can such help be of real benefit to the Chinese nation.

Assistance then could materialize in two ways: (1) by furnishing credits and loans, and by the sale of munitions and airplanes, to the anti-Japanese forces in China; or (2) by establishing a blockade against Japan, when the actual struggle of resistance begins. Should such help be forthcoming from America and Great Britain, the strongest bonds of sympathy and friendship would be established between the Chinese and the American and British peoples.

Snow: Will the Soviet government recognize foreign treaties made by the Beijing and Nanjing governments? Which treaties, if any, will it recognize?

Mao: The Japanese are in fact already destroying these treaties. By their military occupation of Manchuria, by smuggling in North China, by various illegal actions, these treaties are de facto being gradually destroyed. We can especially observe in Manchuria the collapse of the foreign powers’ treaty position. Ordinary commerce and foreign trade are being undermined by Japan. So if other countries wish to continue peaceful business relationships with China they must halt Japan, for such trading rights as now remain to them are primarily menaced by Japan.

Governments of other countries may ask of us, “What attitude will you take toward our treaties with former Chinese governments?” To this question our answer is clear. Which is more urgent, revision of treaties, or salvation of the nation? Obviously, it is more important for us to resist Japan, and the Soviet government and the Chinese people will therefore concentrate their main forces on this task.

The question may arise, “Suppose the Soviet government succeeds in defeating Japan, recovering China’s lost provinces, and reestablishing Chinese sovereignty? What attitude will it then take toward such questions as extraterritoriality?”

To this we may respond that when that time comes, if there is a Chinese people’s government and the Soviets are a part of it we will urge toward foreign powers a policy based on the conduct of such powers during the war. Those powers that have helped or not opposed China in her war of independence and liberation should be invited to enjoy close friendly relations with China, and mutual advantages. Those powers which have actively assisted Japan should naturally not be given the same treatment: for example, Germany, which has already established special relations with Manchukuo (and has recently formed an alliance with Japan)—E.S.) cannot be regarded as a power friendly to the interests of the Chinese people.

When China really wins her independence, then legitimate foreign trading interests in China will enjoy more opportunities than ever before. The power of production and consumption of 450,000,000 people is not a matter that can remain the exclusive interest of the Chinese, but one that can engage the many nations. Our millions of people, once really emancipated, with their great latent
productive possibilities freed for creative activity in every field, can help to improve the economy as well as raise the cultural level of the whole world. But the productive power of the Chinese people has in the past scarcely been touched; on the contrary, it has been suppressed—both by native militarists and foreign, especially Japanese, imperialism.

When we have won our independence, China will negotiate with friendly powers treaties of mutual help, mutual advantage, and mutual agreement. Against Japan, we now have left but one method, the method of armed resistance. But with other powers China is prepared to maintain cooperation on a much broader scale than at present, and to establish such relationships for the first time on a basis of mutual respect and mutual dignity. So far as Japan is concerned, China must by the act of a war of liberation cancel all unequal treaties, confiscate all Japanese imperialist holdings, and annul all Japan’s special privileges, concessions, and political influence in this country. This includes such “treaties” as the He-Umezu Agreement, the Shanghai Truce, the Tanggu Agreement, any anti-Communist pact, etc., which are opposed by the entire Chinese people.

Concerning our relations with other powers, we Communists do not advocate any measure that may place at disadvantage the world position of China in her struggle against Japanese imperialism.

Snow: Will your government recognize foreign property rights in China; i.e., will it recognize present foreign investments? If not all of them, what categories of foreign investments will be recognized, and under what circumstances can foreign merchants operate in China?

Mao: The Soviet government welcomes foreign capital investment. In the past, China has not been able to utilize foreign capital for the real benefit of the Chinese people. Foreign capital has brought little benefit, or no benefit at all, to the masses. Only when China achieves real independence and democracy will it become possible to employ outside capital in great amounts, for the development of productive enterprise on a vast scale. And only a free China, also, due to extensive developments in productive economy, will be able to return the principal and interest on such foreign investments.

Legitimate foreign loans will be recognized. We will consider legitimate all loans made for, and used for, constructive purposes. We will not recognize any “political loans,” nor loans utilized for civil wars, for fighting the Red Army, or for purposes not in the interests of the Chinese people as a whole. We will recognize loans used for building railways, telegraphs, radios, airways, for industrial or agricultural development, for famine relief, etc.

Snow: How, fundamentally, does the Soviet policy differ from Guomindang policy with regard to (a) foreign political rights, and (b) foreign investments?
Mao: Our attitude is much the same toward the British people as toward the American people. Among the British people there are societies similar to the Friends of the Chinese People. We respect and we welcome such friends in England who genuinely sympathize with the masses of China.

One faction of British statesmen, quite clearly, in the past adopted a mistaken policy. The occupation of Chinese territory by Japan was, in effect, made possible, if not actually encouraged, by the policy pursued by the British government. The British government seems to desire to adopt new tactics, but seems insufficiently courageous to carry out its convictions in this part of the world. If Great Britain continues to waver, and to pursue a static policy such as in the past, if it continues to beg Japanese “cooperation,” there will be no benefit for Great Britain whatsoever. The face of Japanese imperialism is clear to all. For England it is not a friendly face, but the image of destruction.

Snow: In the Soviet government’s foreign policy, what provision is made for autonomy and self-government by such national minorities as the Mongols, Mohammedans, Turks, Tibetans, Miao, Lolo, Man, Lisu, and other aborigines?

Mao: Our policy in this respect is just the opposite of that followed by the Guomindang. Nanjing’s principle is “Pan-Hanism.” Our policy is unequivocally national self-determination. Minorities can of their own will unite with the Han (i.e., Chinese—E.S.) to oppose Japanese imperialism, but force will never be used against them. We are unalterably opposed to “Pan-Hanism,” just as we are unalterably opposed to “Pan-Japanism,” which masquerades under the symbol “Pan-Asianism.” This is true whether we are dealing with Moslems, Turks, Tibetans, Lolas, Mias, Mongols, Lisus, or other tribal minorities of China.

In Gansu and Ningxia the Moslems are already organizing their own autonomous governments. The Soviet government not only does not interfere with their legitimate national aspirations, but on the contrary deeply encourages them. This is just opposite to the policy pursued by Nanjing, which wants to subjugate all these minor peoples and bring them under its own dictatorship.

We agree with the policy toward national minorities which was pronounced by Dr. Sun Yat-sen, and which has been successfully established in the Soviet Union. We oppose the policy used by Japan toward Koreans, Manchus, Formosans, Chinese, and Mongols, and the policy followed by the Guomindang toward Mongols, Tibetans, Mohammedans, and other minorities. There is no difference between the Japanese imperialist and the Guomindang policies as regards the question of national minorities.

Under Soviet government these national minorities enjoy their independent culture, economic, political, and social development, and will be given every opportunity to realize a productive and useful life. They will suffer no oppression from the Chinese Red Army.

Snow: Many people, due to Fascist propaganda, believe that if China should become Sovietized, Soviet China would be dominated by the U.S.S.R., and its foreign policy as well as its domestic policy be placed under “Moscow’s control.” Many apparently intelligent people believe in this contention, which is disseminated from Germany, Italy, Japan, and Nanjing. Such people seem to believe that the Chinese Red Army has been fighting for ten years only in order to turn over China to the Soviet Union, as a colony of “Red imperialism.”

Mao: The amount of truth contained in Fascist propaganda, as well known, is so small that it is scarcely perceptible to the naked eye. When Mussolini wished to conquer Abyssinia he announced that he was engaged in freeing the slaves of Africa. When Hitler began his campaign of aggression in Europe he told the German people that glory was better than bread, and he told the people of Europe that he was a lover of peace. The Japanese militarists likewise revealed, when they were conquering Manchuria, that they were liberating the Chinese people and creating a paradise for them. While the Spanish fascists hire African, Italian, and German fascist-mercenaries to massacre their own people, destroy their cities, and wreck their own popularly-elected governments, they put a sign over the thousands of new corpses—“killed for patriotism.”

And now, as you say, the fascists are screaming of “control of China by Moscow.” If all these things are true, then it is also possible to build a railway to Mars and buy a ticket from Mr. H. G. Wells.

Notwithstanding the stupidity of Fascist propaganda, a few people are deceived by it. It is therefore necessary to point out its basic falsehoods. Now, because China seeks a pact with the Soviet Union, the Fascists claim that Russia is trying to “buy” China. If that is so, then it must follow also that France is already a mere colony of Moscow—as well as several other European countries that have made pacts with the U.S.S.R.

The Fascists cannot answer one question, “Where is Moscow’s Moscow?” In their propaganda it is asserted that every country which seems likely to have a successful revolution is under the “control of Moscow.” But under whose “control” is the Russian revolution? Whose Moscow is Moscow’s? The Russian people has ruled itself since the revolution. Why cannot the Chinese? If Fascist “logic” is correct, then history must be mistaken. Every country that has had a successful revolution must be found to have its “Moscow.”

The fact is that in this “logic” the Fascists express their own desire to build up world empires—such as the action of Japan in Manchuria and North China, of Italy in Abyssinia, etc. They cannot imagine any other basis of contact between peoples except that one is trying to devour the other. Of Hitler’s action in certain parts of Europe, of Japan’s action in East Asia, of Italy’s action in Africa and Spain, of all these it is possible to say that each is not only the threat but the certainty of “Fascist control,” but in none of them, nor anywhere else in the world, can we see any sign of “Moscow control.”
But after all, history will develop quite otherwise. With the victory of the Chinese revolution, the Chinese people will be able to greet the Russian people as true brothers, just as they can greet the free peoples of other countries as their true equals. Not only with the Soviet Union, but with all peoples who will treat us as equals, the Chinese People’s government wants to share friendly relations, and to unite to oppose the Fascist powers who hope to stop the advance of history.

The Japanese now shout and shriek that all those who oppose Japanese imperialism are Communists. But all the Chinese people, with the exception of a few traitors, are irrevocably opposed to Japanese imperialism. Therefore, in the opinion of the Chinese people, if Communism means anti-Japanese resistance, if Communism means struggle for national liberation, then the majority of the Chinese people are not afraid of such Communism, and the so-called “Red menace” exists only in the nightmares of traitors. On the contrary, this kind of Communism is urgently needed by the whole nation, as rice is needed by starving men.

If you think that Communism is a “menace” to the Chinese people, just ask a Japanese general for his opinion. He will tell you that Communism in China means the national liberation movement, liberty and freedom, and national sovereignty, and that is precisely why he demands a pact with Nanjing against it. But if Communism means that, then we Chinese people want just that. The Chinese people do not fear such a movement, for this is precisely what they demand. They will shout, long live the liberated Chinese people, long live a free, united, sovereign, and complete China!

Stalin said in an interview with an American newspaperman, “Revolution cannot be exported.” It is also true that Revolution cannot be imported. It is natural that the Chinese people should want to use the best method of opposing Japan in order to survive.

We cannot find in any of the Comintern’s decisions, or in the Constitution of the Soviet Union, any arrangement for the ruling of Soviet China by the U.S.S.R. Such a thing has, of course, never been discussed in the whole history of Communism. But we do not have to look very far, only to our neighbor Fascist Japan, to find very concrete plans for the Fascist rule of China.

We know from historical facts that the Soviet Union helps all oppressed nations and peoples in a spirit of complete equality and sincerity. We know that it does not attempt to take one inch of territory, nor one man, from any other country.

Snow: The Chinese People’s Soviet Government advocates the formation of anti-imperialist, anti-Fascist alliances with foreign countries. Is it possible for China to make such alliances with democratic capitalist powers?

Mao: Anti-Fascist alliances are in the nature of peace alliance[s], and for mutual defense against the war-making nations. If China makes a pact with the Soviet Union, it must be because Fascist Japan is the enemy of the Soviet Union as well as of China. “Mutual defense of peace” is the fundamental basis of the existing Franco-Soviet pact. It could become the basis for similar anti-Japanese pacts among countries of the Pacific.

A Chinese anti-Fascist pact with capitalist democracies is perfectly possible, and desirable. It is to the interest of such countries to join the anti-Fascist front in self-defense.

A question before all foreign powers is whether China is to become completely colonized, or to resist the invader and become a sovereign country. In the latter case the opportunities for foreign cooperation in China would become very great, for China would be free, and the Chinese an independent people, with an independent economy, culture, and political organization. Such a China could be a great force for good in the world, and an ally on the side of justice and the development of world culture, a China whose influence no nation might lightly spurn.

But if China becomes completely colonized, then the future of the Pacific will be dark indeed. It would mean not only the destruction of Chinese independence, but the threat of destruction to all peoples and cultures bordering the Pacific, and the beginning of a long series of terrible and senseless wars.

A choice must be made. For itself, the Chinese people will take the road of struggle against its oppressors, and we hope also that the statesmen and people of foreign nations will march with us on this road, and not follow the dark paths laid down by the bloody history of imperialism.

So, on this basis, you hear our people of Soviet China shout, “People of all countries, unite! Resist Japanese fascism, aggression, and oppression!”

And we believe this union may in fact be realized, for we see no good reason why it should not appeal to all civilized men who sincerely demand peace and mutual good will in the Pacific!
Interview with Edgar Snow on Japanese Imperialism
(July 16, 1936)

Snow: If Japanese militarism is defeated and driven from China, do you think the major problem of foreign imperialism will in general have been solved here?

Mao: Yes. If other imperialist countries do not act as Japan, and if China defeats Japan, it will mean that the Chinese masses have awakened, have mobilized, and have established their independence. Therefore the main problem of imperialism will have been solved.

Snow: The Chinese Soviet government has issued many appeals and proclamations calling for a United Front of the parties, armies, etc. to fight to the death against Japanese imperialism and to drive Japan’s armies from China. Does it believe that China is now capable of defeating Japan alone—i.e., without the help of any foreign power?

Mao: Let me first remind you that neither China nor Japan is an isolated country; the problem of peace or war in the Orient is a world problem. Japan has her potential allies—Germany and Italy, for example—and to oppose Japan successfully China also must seek assistance from other powers. This does not mean, however, that China is incapable of fighting Japan without foreign help. It does not mean that we must wait for foreign alliances before we begin to resist Japan.

China is a vast reservoir of unutilized power which in a period of great struggle can be canalized through organization into mighty lines of resistance. In the long period of internal conflict begun by the counterrevolutionaries in 1927 the Chinese people has already learned much about this power, and has found a good means of directing it, through the struggle of the Communist Party. In their long political experience the Chinese masses have mastered the use of very effective weapons to oppose their enemies.

Now, especially since September 18, 1931, the traitors’ demagogy has been bankrupted and few people today are deceived by it. The masses increasingly recognize those who lead in their real interest. Even some of the Guomindang members have participated, or want to participate, in the anti-Japanese movement.

We are confident that the Chinese people will not submit to Japanese imperialism. We are confident that they will mobilize their great reserves of power to resist Japan on the field of battle, and with their utmost vigor meet the challenge of the invader. In this struggle ultimate victory will certainly be China’s. If she fights alone the sacrifice will be comparatively great and the duration of the war will be comparatively long, for Japan is a strong, well-equipped power and will have, besides, her own allies. In order to achieve victory over Japanese imperialism within the shortest time possible, and with the smallest waste, China must first of all realize a United Front within her own borders, and secondly must seek to extend it to all those powers whose interests are the interests of peace in the Pacific.

Snow: Under what conditions can the Chinese people defeat and exhaust the forces of Japan?

Mao: Three conditions will guarantee our success: first, the achievement of the National United Front against Japanese imperialism in China; second, the formation of a World Anti-Japanese United Front; third, revolutionary action by the oppressed peoples at present suffering under Japanese imperialism. Of these, the central necessity is the union of the Chinese people themselves.

Snow: How long do you think such a war would last?

Mao: That depends on the strength of the Chinese People’s Front, many conditioning factors in China and Japan, and the degree of international help given to China, as well as the rate of revolutionary development in Japan. If the Chinese People’s Front is powerfully homogeneous, if it is effectively organized horizontally and vertically, if the international aid to China is considerable from those governments which recognize the menace of Japanese imperialism to their own interests, if revolution comes quickly in Japan, the war will be short and victory speedily won. If these conditions are not realized, however, the war will be very long, but in the end just the same Japan will be defeated, only the sacrifices will be extensive and it will be a painful period for the whole world. The Chinese Communist Party, the Soviet government, the Red Army, and the Chinese people
are ready to unite with any power to shorten the duration of this war, but if none joins us we are determined to carry on alone.\textsuperscript{3}

\textbf{Snow:} What is your opinion of the probable course of development of such a war, politically and militarily?

\textbf{Mao:} Two questions are involved here—the policy of the foreign powers, and the strategy of China’s armies.

Now, the Japanese continental policy is already fixed and it is well known. Those who imagine that by further sacrifices of Chinese sovereignty, by making economic, political, or territorial compromises and concessions, they can halt the advance of Japan, are only indulging in utopian fancy. Nanjing has in the past adopted erroneous policies based on this strategy, and we have only to look at the map of East Asia to see the results of it.

But we know well enough that not only North China but the lower Yangzi Valley and our southern seaports are already included in the Japanese continental program. Moreover, it is just as clear that the Japanese navy aspires to blockade the China seas and to seize the Philippines, Siam, Indo-China, Malaya, and the Dutch East Indies. In the event of war Japan will try to make them her strategic bases, cutting off Great Britain, France, and America from China, and monopolizing the seas of the southern Pacific. These moves are included in Japan’s plans of naval strategy, copies of which we have seen. And such naval strategy will be coordinated with the land strategy of Japan.

China will, of course, be in an extremely difficult position at such a time. But the majority of the Chinese people believes it can overcome these difficulties. Only the rich men in China’s seaports are defeatist. They are afraid they will lose their property.

So as China considers questions of economy, of sources of supplies of war materials, etc., these questions of the Japanese naval blockade, of the cessation of commerce, etc. must inevitably come up for answer by the foreign powers. If Japan is to be allowed to isolate China as easily as she did Manchuria, if the powers are to do nothing more than they did there, then naturally Japan’s task will tend to be minimized.

Ideally, of course, our military strategy should be the strategy of the “inner front.” That is, if the foreign nations, if Great Britain, America, France, and the U.S.S.R. resist the Japanese blockade, they will arrange themselves in the strategy of the “outer front.” China would then fight in the milieu of Japanese imperialism, while the other countries opposed Japan on the periphery. In such a situation the possible encirclement and crushing of Japan’s imperial war machine in a brief period would be manifest.

\textsuperscript{3} Here Snow added a note pointing out that Soviet China had officially declared war on Japan in 1932. For the text of that declaration, see Volume IV, pp. 206-8.

Many people think it would be impossible for China to continue her fight against Japan, once the latter had seized certain strategic points on the coast, and enforced a blockade. This is nonsense. To refute it we have only to refer to the history of the Red Army. In certain periods our forces have been exceeded numerically some ten or twenty times by the Guomindang troops, which were also superior to us in equipment. Their economic resources many times surpassed ours, and they received material assistance from the outside. Why, then, has the Red Army scored success after success against the White troops, and not only survived but increased its power till today?

The explanation is that the Red Army and the Soviet Government had created among all people within their areas a rocklike solidarity, because everyone in the Soviet was ready to fight for their government against its oppressors, because every person was voluntarily and consciously fighting for his own interests and what he believed to be right. Secondly, in the struggle of the Soviets the people were led by men of ability, strength, and determination, equipped with deep understanding of the strategic political, economic, and military needs of their position. The Red Army won its many victories—beginning with only a few dozen rifles in the hands of determined revolutionaries—because its solid base in the people attracted friends even among the White troops, among the civilian populace as well as among the troops. The enemy was infinitely our superior militar[ily], but politically it was immobilized.

In the anti-Japanese war the Chinese people would have on their side greater advantages than those the Red Army has utilized in its struggle with the Guomindang. China is a very big nation, and it cannot be said to be conquered until every inch of it is under the sword of the invader. If Japan should succeed in occupying even a large section of China, getting possession of an area with as many as 100 or even 200 million population, we will still be far from defeated. We shall still have left a great force to fight against Japan’s warlords, who will also have to fight a heavy and constant rear-guard action throughout the entire war.

As for munitions, the Japanese cannot seize our arsenals in the interior, which are sufficient to equip Chinese armies for many years, nor can they prevent us from capturing great amounts of arms and ammunition from their own hands. By the latter method the Red Army has equipped its present forces from the Guomindang; for nine years they have been our “ammunition-carriers.” What infinitely greater possibilities would open up for the utilization of such tactics as were our arms for us if the whole Chinese people were united against Japan?

Economically, of course, China is not unified. But the uneven development of China’s economy also presents advantages in a war against the highly centralized and highly concentrated economy of Japan. For example, to sever Shanghai from the rest of China is not as disastrous to the country as would be, for instance, the severance of New York from the rest of America. Moreover, it is impossible for Japan to isolate all of China; China’s northwest, southwest, and west cannot be blockaded by Japan, who is continentally still a sea power.
Thus, once more the central point of the problem becomes the mobilization and unification of the entire Chinese people and the building up of a People’s United Front, such as has been advocated by the Communist Party ever since 1932.

**Snow:** In the event of a Sino-Japanese war do you think there will be a revolution in Japan?

**Mao:** The Japanese revolution is not only a possibility, but a certainty. It is inevitable and will begin to occur promptly after the first severe defeats suffered by the Japanese Army.

**Snow:** Do you think Soviet Russia and Outer Mongolia would become involved in this war, and would come to the assistance of China? Under what circumstances is that likely?

**Mao:** Of course the Soviet Union is also not an isolated country. It cannot ignore events in the Far East. It cannot remain passive. Will it complacentely watch Japan conquer all China and make of it a strategic base from which to attack the U.S.S.R.? Or will it help the Chinese people to oppose their Japanese oppressors, win their independence, and establish friendly relations with the Russian people? We think Russia will choose the latter course.

We believe that once the Chinese people have their own government and begin the war of resistance and want to establish friendly alliances with the U.S.S.R., as well as other friendly powers, the Soviet Union will be in the vanguard to shake hands with us. The struggle against Japanese imperialism is a world task and the Soviet Union, as part of that world, can no more remain neutral than can England or America.

**Snow:** Is it the immediate task of the Chinese people to regain all the territories lost to Japan, or only to drive Japan from North China, and all Chinese territory above the Great Wall?

**Mao:** It is the immediate task of China to regain all our lost territories, not merely to defend our sovereignty below the Great Wall. This means that Manchuria must be regained. We do not, however, include Korea, formerly a Chinese colony, but when we have reestablished the independence of the lost territories of China, and if the Koreans wish to break away from the chains of Japanese imperialism, we will extend them our enthusiastic help in their struggle for independence. The same thing applies for Formosa. As for Inner Mongolia, which is populated by both Chinese and Mongolians, we will struggle to drive Japan from there and help Inner Mongolia to establish an autonomous state.5

**Snow:** In case the Sino-Japanese war extends over a very long period and Japan is not completely defeated, would the Communist government agree to make a peace recognizing Japanese control over Manchuria?

**Mao:** Impossible! The Chinese Communists, like the Chinese people, will not permit Japan to retain one inch of Chinese territory!

**Snow:** In actual practice, how could the Soviet government and the Red Army cooperate with the Guomindang armies in a war against Japan? I.e., in a foreign war it would be necessary for all Chinese armies to be placed under a centralized command. Would the Red Army agree, if allowed representation on a supreme war council, to submit to its decisions both militarily and politically?

**Mao:** Yes. Our government will wholeheartedly submit to the decisions of such a council provided it really resists Japan.

**Snow:** Would the Red Army agree not to move its troops into or against any areas occupied by Guomindang armies, except with the consent or at the order of the supreme war council?

**Mao:** Yes. Certainly we will not move our troops into any areas occupied by anti-Japanese armies—nor have we done so for some time past. The Red Army would not utilize any wartime situation in an opportunistic way.

**Snow:** What demands would the Communist Party make in return for such cooperation?

**Mao:** It would insist upon waging war, decisively and finally, against Japanese aggression. In addition it would request the observance of the points advanced in the calls for a democratic republic and the establishment of a national defense government.6

**Snow:** How large a base does the Red Army need, and how much support from the outside, to engage in anti-Japanese war?

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4. The manuscript refers here to territory “above the Great Wall,” but in the light of Mao’s reply this should obviously read “below the Great Wall”; this error is corrected in the text as published in the China Weekly Review for November 14, 1936.

5. Here Snow inserted a footnote referring to the discussion of this question in his interview of July 23, 1936, of which the full text appears below.

6. As indicated in a note by Snow here, the reference is to the proclamation of June 1, 1936, translated above, and other similar documents.
Mao: The Red Army can fight from a small base or a large base, but the greater it is, naturally the greater and stronger will be the force it can mobilize for fighting the Japanese. If we have three or four provinces we can summon to war a greater and more effective anti-Japanese force than Nanjing’s entire army. As for help, we need much, the more the better, but still we can get along very well without any outside assistance. We have already been fighting without anybody’s help in a ten-year revolutionary struggle. We are always prepared for war. We were prepared for it when we went into Shanxi, toward the Japanese positions in North China. At the time we did not get any help from outside, but on the contrary we were opposed by the combined forces of Yan Xishan and Chiang Kai-shek, the Generalissimo alone concentrating his ten best divisions in our path. This movement presented a big obstacle to our advance against the Japanese.

At that time, in order to avoid more futile fratricidal warfare, and further weaken[ing] of the potential power of Chinese resistance, we did not engage those troops, but voluntarily withdrew to our base in Shanxi, to try to negotiate a truce and realize the United Front. Since then we have intensified our anti-Japanese preparations. We are ready. The sooner the war begins, we believe, the better are the chances for success for China. Meanwhile, we are prepared to fight Japan whenever our forces have a front against Japan’s troops in China.

Snow: How can the people best be armed, organized, and trained to participate in such a war?

Mao: The people must be given the right to organize and to arm themselves. This is a freedom which Chiang Kai-shek has in the past denied to them. The suppression has not, however, been entirely successful—as, for example, in the case of the Red Army.8 Also, despite severe repression in Beiping, in Shanghai, and other places, the students have begun to organize themselves and have already prepared themselves politically. But still the students and the revolutionary anti-Japanese masses have not yet got their freedom, cannot be mobilized, cannot be trained and armed. When the contrary is true, when the masses are given economic, social, and political freedom, their strength will be intensified hundreds of times, and the true strength of the nation will be revealed.

The Red Army through its own struggle has won its freedom from the militarists to become an unconquerable power. The Anti-Japanese Volunteers have won their freedom of action from the Japanese oppressors and have armed themselves in a similar way. If the Chinese people are trained, armed, and organized, they can likewise become an invincible force.9

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Snow: What, in your opinion, should be the main strategy to be followed in this “war of liberation”?

Mao: The strategy should be that of a war of maneuver, over an extended, shifting, and indefinite front: a strategy depending for success on a high degree of mobility in difficult terrain, and featured by swift attack and withdrawal, swift concentration and dispersal. It will be a large-scale war of maneuver rather than the simple positional war of extensive trenchwork, deep-massed lines, and heavy fortifications. Our strategy and tactics must be conditioned by the theater in which the war will take place, and this dictates a war of maneuver.

This does not mean the abandonment of vital strategic points, which can be defended in positional warfare as long as profitable. But the pivotal strategy must be a war of maneuver, and important reliance must be placed on guerrilla and partisan tactics. Fortified warfare must be utilized, but it will be of auxiliary and ultimately of secondary strategic importance.

Geographically the theater of the war is so vast that it is possible for us to pursue mobile warfare with the utmost efficiency and with a telling effect on a slow-moving war machine like Japan’s cautiously feeling its way in front of fierce rearguard actions. Deep-line concentration and the exhausting defense of a vital position or two on a narrow front would be to throw away all the tactical advantages of our geography and economic organization, and to repeat the mistake of the Abyssinians. Our strategy and tactics must aim to avoid great decisive battles in the early stages of the war, and gradually to break the morale, the fighting spirit, and the military efficiency of the living forces of the enemy.

The mistake of the Abyssinians, quite aside from the internal political weakness of their position, was that they attempted to hold a deep front, enabling the Fascists to bombard, gas, and strike with their technically stronger military machines at heavy immobile concentrations, exposing themselves to vital organic injury.

Besides the regular Chinese troops we should create, direct, and politically and militarily equip great numbers of partisan and guerrilla detachments among the peasantry. What has been accomplished by the anti-Japanese volunteer units of this type in Manchuria is only a very minor demonstration of the latent power of resistance that can be mobilized from the peasantry of all China. Properly led and organized, such units can keep the Japanese busy 24 hours a day and worry them to death.

It must be remembered that the war will be fought in China. This means that the Japanese will be entirely surrounded by a hostile Chinese people. The Japanese will be forced to move in all their provisions and guard them, maintaining...
troops along all lines of communications, and heavily garrisoning their bases in Manchuria and Japan as well.

The process of the war will present to China the possibility of capturing many Japanese prisoners, arms, ammunition, war machines, etc. A point will be reached where it will become more and more possible to engage Japan’s armies on a basis of positional warfare, using fortifications, deep entrenchment, etc., for as the war progresses the technical equipment of the anti-Japanese forces will greatly improve, and will be reinforced by important foreign help. Japan’s economy will crack under the strain of a long expensive occupation of China, and the morale of her forces will break under the trial of a war of innumerable but indecisive battles. The great reservoirs of human material in the Chinese people will still be pouring men ready to fight for their freedom into our front lines long after the tidal flood of Japanese imperialism has wracked itself on the hidden reefs of Chinese resistance.

All these and other factors will condition the war and will enable us to make the final and decisive attacks on Japan’s fortifications and strategic bases and to drive Japan’s army of occupation from China.

Japanese officers and soldiers captured and disarmed by us will be welcomed and will be well treated. They will not be killed. They will be treated in a brotherly way. Every method will be adopted to make the Japanese proletarian soldiers, with whom we have no quarrel, stand up and oppose their own Fascist oppressors. Our slogan will be, “Unite and oppose the common oppressors, the Fascist leaders.” Anti-Fascist Japanese troops are our friends, and there is no conflict in our aims.

Interview with Edgar Snow on Internal Affairs
(July 18–19, 1936)

Snow: What is the immediate policy of the Soviet government with regard to (a) native small capitalists, petty bourgeoisie, etc., (b) big bourgeoisie, landlords and compradors, and (c) intellectuals or professional workers—doctors, engineers, editors, architects, etc.?

Mao: Under present conditions, when people of the whole of China face the imminent danger of becoming Japanese slaves, our policies in many respects have been modified in order to unite all patriotic elements into a national Anti-Japanese Front.

Not only today, but from the beginning of the Soviet movement, we have always welcomed the participation of the intelligentsia. All professional people are given the rights of Soviet citizenship. The petty-bourgeoisie, small merchants, etc., are also given political rights. Those men whose families are capitalists or landlords, but who themselves participate in the revolution, are offered the full rights of Soviet citizenship, and can be elected to office.

We not only welcome intellectuals, we urge them to come to join us, and we guarantee to help them find a useful and happy life in the Soviet districts. We can offer them immediate employment, and adequate livelihood.

In this period of preparation for the anti-Japanese war we urge the full protection of all industries which have a service to perform in the national liberation movement. The Red Army everywhere will protect the patriotic activities of the people, as well as of industry and commerce. Proof of this is to be seen in our own proclamations and decrees posted on the walls of towns and cities of Shaanxi.

In this period land of the rich peasants is not confiscated. Landlords’ land must be redistributed, for failure to carry out the agrarian revolution would hinder the strengthening of the base for the anti-Japanese war, but landlords who are confiscated are given their portion of land to cultivate. Property of small landlords is not subject to confiscation. Landlords who participate in the anti-Japanese movement are given special consideration. White officers who participate in the anti-Japanese war are entitled to land and their families are protected.

Our source for this third interview is Edgar Snow’s typewritten manuscript. For details, see the source note to the first interview of July 15, 1936. The Niampa, Vol. 1, p. 559, confirms that this interview extended over the two days July 18 and July 19; it contains a summary touching on the main points discussed below.
In Soviet law there is a special clause which provides for the protection of interests of overseas Chinese. Such Chinese are patriotic, they are also under oppression in many lands; we will, therefore, do everything possible to defend their dignity and their rights.

The object of our policies now is to hasten the union of all people against Japanese imperialism, and to win our national liberation through war against the Japanese invaders.

We have abolished all taxes imposed by the Guomindang. In Shaanxi and Gansu we at present collect no land taxes, and in the future we will collect only a very low progressive tax.

Snow: Aren’t some of these modifications likely to give the impression that you are abandoning Communism as your goal?

Mao: No, I think not. The victory of the Chinese national liberation movement will be part of the victory of world communism, because to defeat imperialism in China means the destruction of one of its most powerful bases. If China wins its independence the world revolution will progress very rapidly.

If our country is subjugated by the enemy we shall lose everything. For a people being deprived of its national freedom the revolutionary task is not immediate socialism, but the struggle for independence. We cannot even discuss communism if we are robbed of a country in which to practice it.

The war against Japanese imperialism cannot be confined to the participation of any one class, nor conducted on a single front. To deny this is to deny the fact that many rich people have participated in the anti-Japanese movement, because Japanese imperialism is ruining the rich with the poor. Some capitalists, a few bankers, even some landlords, and many officers in the Guomindang armies, have shown their readiness to fight for national liberation. We cannot deny them a function in the struggle. Even if Chiang Kaishan one day decides to join the Anti-Japanese offensive we will welcome his participation. As you know, we have written many letters and sent messages to him proving our sincerity in this respect, and offering to put our forces at his disposal the day he is willing to resist Japan.

Snow: Have any replies been received to these proposals?

Mao: Thus far the Generalissimo has not responded. But the offer remains, and we are still hopeful that he will accept it. Nanjing’s troops are now advancing and attacking us. On the one hand we must reply to these attacks; we are obliged to wage defensive war against those who wish to destroy us. At the same time we continue to urge Nanjing to cooperate. Our slogan is “Cease civil war, unite to oppose Japan!”

The movement against continuance of civil war is increasing throughout the whole country, and more and more Guomindang officers will join the United Front, until Chiang is forced to change his tactics. After all, some of our ablest Red leaders were once Guomindang officers and officials—for example, Zhu De, Luo Binghui, He Long, Peng Dehuai, Lin Biao, Chen Geng, Ye Jianying, Xu Xiangqian, to mention only a few, were all once Guomindang commanders. Lin Boqu was once treasurer of the Guomindang and a member of the Central Executive Committee. Many others such as these have joined and in the future will join the Red Army as the struggle against Japanese imperialism intensifies.\footnote{2}

Snow: Much has appeared in the press, both in China and abroad, concerning the “savagery” and “brutality” of the Red Army. Probably these attacks have been written by gentlemen in Nanjing, Shanghai, and other cities who have never seen a Red warrior, but still some people believe their stories, just as many people in America believe the tales of Hearst and McFadden concerning alleged “famines,” “baby-butcher,” “communized wives,” etc. in the U.S.S.R. In actual practice what persons are, in the eyes of Soviet law, guilty of crimes deserving of punishment by death?

Mao: Formerly Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang spread many fanciful stories about the alleged killing, raping, and burning in the Soviet areas, by the Red Army. Recently there has not been so much of this propaganda, probably be—

\footnote{1} In keeping with our aim of modifying the style and atmosphere of these interviews as little as possible, we have not replaced the term “Generalissimo,” commonly applied to Chiang Kaishen in the 1930s, with the more literal translation of Chiang weiyuanzheng, “Chairman Chiang [of the Guomindang Military Affairs Commission]” employed elsewhere in this edition.

\footnote{2} Here the following note appears in the manuscript which constitutes our source:

The outstanding demonstration of this, of course, were the recent events at Sianfu [Xi'an], when the Manchurian troops in Northwest China, under Zhang Xueliang, detained Chiang Kaishen and submitted eight demands to him. These demands correspond almost exactly to the program for a United Front and “national defense government” outlined in this interview.—E.S.

Judging from the way the Xi'an Incident is presented here, it seems likely that Snow revised this version of the interviews sometime in late December 1936, before Chiang’s release, when the outcome was still hanging in the balance.

\footnote{3} For Edgar Snow’s own account of Chen Geng’s career and his relationship with Chiang Kaishen, see Snow, Random Notes, pp. 90–99.

\footnote{4} Lin Boqu was elected an alternate member of the Guomindang Central Executive Committee in 1924, and a full member in 1926. In 1927, he served not as treasurer, but as minister of finance in the short-lived Left Guomindang government in Wuhan.

\footnote{5} Here the indication "Bao'an, July 19, 1936," appears in the manuscript, confirming that the interview continued on the next day.
cause few people today can be deceived by these crude lies. We invite you to look around for yourself and see whether anyone is occupied in killing and burning as pastimes. Our people get their sport in other ways—by running, jumping, playing tennis and basketball, and helping the farmers till their fields. You will not hear of a single case of rape by a Red soldier, either. Such a crime is punished by death in the Red Army.

Most people by now know that Chiang Kaishek’s tactics have consistently involved the destruction of whole districts and the burning of villages taken back from the Reds. Chiang himself has said that “it is impossible to tell a good citizen from a Red-bandit” in the Red districts. It is a fact that only by murdering the masses of the people in a Sovietized district—for the masses are the only real “base” the Red army has—can the Guomindang “reclaim” such areas for its own rule.

The Red Army does not burn any houses nor kill any innocent people. Common sense should tell people that the Red Army has been able to survive for many years only because it has had the complete sympathy and support of the masses in the Soviet districts, and common sense ought to tell people also that you cannot win the sympathy and support of the masses by burning down their houses and killing them.

We have not yet abolished the death sentence; this we cannot claim. But only toward those persons who endanger national security, or endanger the revolution, only the worst of criminals such as traitor-henchmen of Japan or active leaders of counterrevolution are subject to severe punishment. Even among them the Soviets make a distinction, and their offenses are punished by sentences varying from corrective education, public labor, detention and imprisonment, up to death. So far as petty criminals are concerned, they are released after a brief questioning, discussion, and educative detention. The basis of Soviet criminal law is the interest of society as a whole.

Four months ago the Red Army captured a brigade commander and 1,500 men of the army under Ma Hongkui. After disarming them, the Red Army gave them their freedom, and those who wanted to return to the White areas were given traveling expenses. During the Shansi expedition we captured many white officers and men belonging to Yan Xishan’s army, and they were treated in the same way. Most of the men stayed with us, and one former major of Yan’s army is now working in our education department. During our wars with Chiang Kaishek in the past we have captured a total of no less than 300,000 of his troops. With the exception of three or four of his highest officers (for example, General Zhang Huizhang [Zhang Huizan]), who were fiercely hated by the people for their oppression and brutality, we did not execute any of them. They were given the choice of joining us, and submitting to Soviet law, or returning to the White regions. This is now a widely known fact among the Guomindang troopers, despite all the lies which the White press is forced to publish.

Some propaganda says that the Reds kill the intellectuals. This is an especially foolish lie. The intellectuals we must have, and we try in every way to win them to the revolution. Our mission is to liberate the intellectuals, not to destroy them. Just look around in the Soviet districts at the schoolteachers, the technicians, the engineers, and the writers, and ask them whether it is true that the Reds kill the intellectuals.

It is also said that we kill the landlords. You can witness yourself how many landlords we kill. It is not the Soviet policy to take the life of any landlord who does not engage in counterrevolution. Big or small landlords who obey Soviet laws, do peaceful labor, and do not engage in active counterrevolution, can easily live in the Soviet districts without oppression from the Soviets.

The discipline of Soviet law is to modify the conduct of criminals, to educate and reform them, and not to destroy them. This is just the opposite of the Guomindang’s treatment of criminals.

There are two kinds of courts provided for in the provisional laws of the Soviet republic. One is a juridical system, with judge and jury elected by the local Soviet. The prisoner can make his own appeal to the judge and jury, and he can discuss with the judge the sentence passed upon him. He can appeal for a hearing from village soviet to xian soviet, from xian soviet to provincial soviet, and so to the Soviet Supreme Court. He can also appeal to the Red Army, to his trade union, or to the mass organization of which he is a member for intervention by petition on his behalf.

Another kind of trial is held before a Comrades’ Court. Here the accused appears before his own fellows, for criticism or advice. These courts “try” only very minor offenders, and they cannot impose anything except a disciplinary sentence, with acceptance by the accused. Comrades’ courts are found in all government organs, and in all mass organizations.

Present Soviet law takes cognizance of the fact that there are some other parties in China besides the Communist Party which wish to follow an anti-imperialist policy. Such parties cannot exist freely in Guomindang territory. We offer them asylum. We give all freedom to the people, granting freedom of speech, press, assembly, and organization. We deny these privileges only to counterrevolutionaries, national traitors, and oppressors of the people.

The government of the Chinese People’s Soviet Republic permits no official corruption in its ranks. Severe punishment, including the death sentence in serious cases, is provided for anyone guilty of embezzlement or theft of public property. Communists guilty of such offenses are much more harshly condemned than non-Communists.

Snow: What industries will the Soviet government place under state ownership or control at once? Which will be allowed to remain temporarily under private control?

Mao: Generally speaking, it is not our present policy to take over private industry, nor place it under State ownership. Naturally, however, all Japanese-owned industries and enterprises must be confiscated immediately and operated for the benefit of the people.
cause few people today can be deceived by these crude lies. We invite you to look around for yourself and see whether anyone is occupied in killing and burning as pastimes. Our people get their sport in other ways—by running, jumping, playing tennis and basketball, and helping the farmers till their fields. You will not hear of a single case of rape by a Red soldier, either. Such a crime is punished by death in the Red Army.

Most people by now know that Chiang Kaishek’s tactics have consistently involved the destruction of whole districts and the burning of villages taken back from the Reds. Chiang himself has said that “it is impossible to tell a good citizen from a Red-bandit” in the Red districts. It is a fact that only by murdering the masses of the people in a Sovietized district—for the masses are the only real “base” the Red army has—can the Guomindang “reclaim” such areas for its own rule.

The Red Army does not burn any houses nor kill any innocent people. Common sense should tell people that the Red Army has been able to survive for many years only because it has had the complete sympathy and support of the masses in the Soviet districts, and common sense ought to tell people also that you cannot win the sympathy and support of the masses by burning down their houses and killing them.

We have not yet abolished the death sentence; this we cannot claim. But only toward those persons who endanger national security, or endanger the revolution, only the worst of criminals such as traitor-henchmen of Japan or active leaders of counterrevolution are subject to severe punishment. Even among them the Soviets make a distinction, and their offenses are punished by sentences varying from corrective education, public labor, detention and imprisonment, up to death. So far as petty criminals are concerned, they are released after a brief questioning, discussion, and educative detention. The basis of Soviet criminal law is the interest of society as a whole.

Four months ago the Red Army captured a brigade commander and 1,500 men of the army under Ma Hongkui. After disarming them, the Red Army gave them their freedom, and those who wanted to return to the White areas were given traveling expenses. During the Shanshi expedition we captured many White officers and men belonging to Yan Xishan’s army, and they were treated in the same way. Most of the men stayed with us, and one former major of Yan’s army is now working in our education department. During our wars with Chiang Kaishek in the past we have captured a total of no less than 300,000 of his troops. With the exception of three or four of his highest officers (for example, General Zhang Huizhang [Zhang Huizhan]), who were fiercely hated by the people for their oppression and brutality, we did not execute any of them. They were given the choice of joining us, and submitting to Soviet law, or returning to the White regions. This is now a widely known fact among the Guomindang troops, despite all the lies which the White press is forced to publish.

Some propaganda says that the Reds kill the intelligentsia. This is an especially foolish lie. The intelligentsia we must have, and we try in every way to win them to the revolution. Our mission is to liberate the intelligentsia, not to destroy them. Just look around in the Soviet districts at the schoolteachers, the technicians, the engineers, and the writers, and ask them whether it is true that the Reds kill the intelligentsia.

It is also said that we kill the landlords. You can witness yourself how many landlords we kill. It is not the Soviet policy to take the life of any landlord who does not engage in counterrevolution. Big or small landlords who obey Soviet laws, do peaceful labor, and do not engage in active counterrevolution, can easily live in the Soviet districts without oppression from the Soviets.

The discipline of Soviet law is to modify the conduct of criminals, to educate and reform them, and not to destroy them. This is just the opposite of the Guomindang’s treatment of criminals.

There are two kinds of courts provided for in the provisional laws of the Soviet republic. One is a judicial system, with judge and jury elected by the local Soviet. The prisoner can make his own appeal to the judge and jury, and he can discuss with the judge the sentence passed upon him. He can appeal for a hearing from village soviet to xian soviet, from xian soviet to provincial soviet, and so to the Soviet Supreme Court. He can also appeal to the Red Army, to his trade union, or to the mass organization of which he is a member for intervention by petition on his behalf.

Another kind of trial is held before a Comrades’ Court. Here the accused appears before his own fellows, for criticism or advice. These courts “try” only very minor offenders, and they cannot impose anything except a disciplinary sentence, with acceptance by the accused. Comrades’ courts are found in all government organs, and in all mass organizations.

Present Soviet law takes cognizance of the fact that there are some other parties in China besides the Communist Party which wish to follow an anti-imperialist policy. Such parties cannot exist freely in Guomindang territory. We offer them asylum. We give all freedom to the people, granting freedom of speech, press, assembly, and organization. We deny these privileges only to counterrevolutionaries, national traitors, and oppressors of the people.

The government of the Chinese People’s Soviet Republic permits no official corruption in its ranks. Severe punishment, including the death sentence in serious cases, is provided for anyone guilty of embezzlement or theft of public property. Communists guilty of such offenses are much more harshly condemned than non-Communists.

Snow: What industries will the Soviet government place under state ownership or control at once? Which will be allowed to remain temporarily under private control?

Mao: Generally speaking, it is not our present policy to take over private industry, nor place it under State ownership. Naturally, however, all Japanese-owned industries and enterprises must be confiscated immediately and operated for the benefit of the people.
Snow: Do you think the development of socialism in China, once power had been seized, would take place at the same rate of speed and along the same lines of progress, as in the U.S.S.R.?

Mao: As I have emphasized, our most urgent problem is national liberation. At present our objective cannot be communism, nor even socialism; what we demand and hope for is the establishment of a national people’s democratic republic, which is the essential framework in which a struggle for independence must be conducted. The setting up of Soviet power throughout China and the realization of socialism remains, of course, a goal in the future. The construction of socialism, if the Soviets are given power in the democratic republic, must be a thing of common consent and the demand of the majority of the people.

Even if we succeed in realizing the creation of a democratic republic throughout China, we cannot insist upon the immediate commencement of socialism, which must remain a distant perspective. Realization of socialism in China probably will not occur so quickly as in the Soviet Union, because China has a longer and more difficult road to follow, as a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country. Certainly our main task demands the struggle for national independence, combined with the continued struggle for democracy—for which the Red Army has been fighting ever since 1927.

Snow: Does the Red Army welcome to its ranks all those who want to fight for the revolution, and against imperialism, regardless of their class origins?

Mao: Yes, the only condition we make is that they be willing to fight for national liberation.

Snow: What correctives does the Soviet government offer for the chronic problems of China? Could you give me a brief statement of policy concerning problems such as (1) land poverty—redistribution or collectivization? (2) famines and floods, (3) unemployment, (4) opium and narcotics, (5) usury, (6) official corruption, (7) illiteracy, (8) child slavery, (9) prostitution, (10) militarism, (11) lack of communications? Were theses reforms realized in Jiangxi? How are they being carried out in Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia? Is it possible, in this stage of the revolution, which is chiefly military preparation for the anti-imperialist struggle, to carry out such reforms in Soviet areas?

Mao: I will answer these points one by one. First, concerning the land problem. The immediate question is not one of collectivization but of redistribution. The revolution gives land to the landless peasants not only so that they can utilize it to increase productivity, but so that they can own it.

Collectivization must be a thing of the future and can only be realized if the whole national economy is in Soviet power.

Some people ask, why don’t we make a commune, and hold land in common? Our answer is that the demand of the peasants just now is for land ownership, and not for a commune, and we are therefore meeting their mass demand. The peasants and the whole agrarian economy advances very much by the redistribution of land. Peasants own land and they have not owned land before, and this is already a great victory for them. They are not ready for collectivization, a step for which the road can be created only by an economy planned on a national scale, and by educational efforts that can be realized only when a democratic people’s government has been achieved in China as a whole.

Snow: Other things in the Soviet program having been postponed in the interest of the United Front, is it not possible to delay land redistribution also?

Mao: Without confiscating the estates of the landlords, without meeting the main democratic demand of the peasantry, it is impossible to lay the broad mass basis for a successful revolutionary struggle for national liberation. In order to win the support of the peasants for the national cause it is necessary to satisfy their demand for land. This is not true only in China. The French revolution built its success on the broad basis of the peasantry. Economically, also, it is stupid to keep the peasants in their present oppressed condition. The peasantry is too heavily exploited, cannot increase land productivity, and cannot develop the necessary purchasing power for an expanding market of industry and commerce.

As regards “famines and floods,” these have long been considered “Acts of God.” In reality they are mostly caused by men and can be prevented by men. The Soviet government makes every effort to combat these evils. Freed by the Soviets, the peasants have ample resources with which to fight both flood and famine. In Jiangxi we not only built dykes wherever necessary, so that our Soviet districts did not suffer from a single important flood, but we also harvested bumper crops and in no single year was there any famine. There we lacked only salt, which was not produced in the Soviet districts, and which, due to Nanjing’s blockade, could not enter. There is now no shortage of salt in the Soviet districts, however. We have some of the finest salt reserves of China, especially in and around the Yanchi district, where the lakes produce the purest crystal salt. In our present position we have no fear of the Guomindang blockade against us, due to an ample supply of good salt. Everything else we need we can produce in our own Soviet areas.

There is no unemployment problem in the Soviet districts. Just look around for yourself and see whether there are any beggars or unemployed here. We have

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6. Yanchi means simply “salt pond.” Snow’s footnote reads:

The salt of Yanchi, which is near the Great Wall at the borders of Ningxia, Shaanxi, and Gansu, is famous in Chinese history. The Reds have divided the salt reserves with the Mongol tribes of the region.—E.S.
work for everyone to do. There were no beggars in Soviet Jiangxi and there are now no beggars in the Soviet Northwest. Everyone can find work and we see that everyone does work. There is land for all, and work to be done. In January, in Wayao, the biggest city in North Shaanxi, we entertained a captured chief-of-staff of a Dongbei division, at a New Year’s feast. Many other Dongbei officers were also present.

We had given this chief-of-staff freedom of movement and he could walk anywhere, being on his honor not to attempt escape. At the feast he expressed his astonishment that all day he had seen no beggars in the city. In the White districts, he said, he could not pass down a street without being besieged by beggars on New Year’s Day.

In Jiangxi only those workers in enterprises which supplied the outside world were thrown out of work because of the Guomindang blockade which closed the market. They did not become unemployed, however, but were given jobs in other branches of industry to which they were transferred.

What is our policy toward the cultivation and consumption of opium. Just ask any peasant you meet the answer to this question. We prohibit the cultivation of the poppy, and the purchase, sale, or use of opium except for medicinal purposes, through Red Army hospitals. We prohibit the production and sale of narcotics of all kinds. In the Jiangxi Soviet areas there had formerly been many areas famous for their production of opium. In two years we completely eradicated the drug from all Soviet districts. How did we achieve this? Not by force alone. We educated the farmers, and gradually persuaded them to give it up, for the good of their fellow countrymen, and for the good of their own land. The same thing is true in Shaanxi and in the older Soviet regions in Gansu. Now you cannot find opium sold or grown anywhere in the old Soviet districts of Shaanxi or Gansu. Our suppression is not like the so-called opium suppression in the Guomindang districts, where the Guomindang opium monopoly merely prevents others from marketing opium and uses the death penalty for those who do not observe the Guomindang monopoly. It is accomplished only after the peasants understand the necessity for their own welfare of opium prohibition.

**Snow:** It must be a very powerful sort of education. How does it work out in practice?

**Mao:** Of course opium smoking is closely connected with opium cultivation. Without strict prohibition of opium cultivation, the eradication of opium smokin

7. Snow’s footnote to Dongbei (Tungbei in the Wade-Giles transcription) reads as follows:

The “Northeastern” army of Marshal Zhang Xueliang, composed of former Manchurian troops. It was the Dongbei Army which recently seized Generalissimo Chiang Kaishek at Xi’an to demand an end to 10 years of “anti-Red” civil war, and a united front against Japan.—E.S.
of the Commissioner of Education, had astonishing successes. It built up in every village groups led by young students, Young Communists, and Young Vanguards, to teach people how to read and write. These mass educational schools, hundreds of them, were created by the organized peasantry themselves, and instructed by the enthusiastic Red youths, who freely gave their time and energy to this task, without pay. After three or four years the majority of the peasants in our Soviet districts in Jiangxi knew several hundred Chinese characters and could read simple texts, lectures, and our newspapers and other publications.

Our statistics were lost during the Long March, but my report before the Second All-Soviet Congress contained a full account of the progress made in education, both through the people's mass education movement, and through the regular school system maintained by the Soviets. By that time, in the older Soviet districts, illiteracy had been completely wiped out in the section of the population between the ages of 10 and 30, and much progress was being made with older people.

In Shaanxi and Gansu there has also been established a Society for the Liquidation of Illiteracy. The cultural level here was formerly much lower than in Jiangxi, and great tasks of education still face us today. But as you have seen we have already made a beginning among the peasantry of North Shaanxi, where formerly only about 3 or 4 percent of the population could read or write. Schools have been established in villages where no teacher was ever seen before; newspapers have been published here for the first time, and books and magazines. Now when you go through the countryside you can quite often find a little Soviet book or a magazine in the home of the poor peasants, and you can see them studying in little village groups at noon or in the evenings.

In order to hasten the liquidation of illiteracy here we have begun experimenting with Xinwenzi—Latinized Chinese. It is now used in our Party School, in the Red Academy, in the Red Army, and in a special section of the Red China Daily News. We believe Latinization is a good instrument with which to overcome illiteracy. Chinese characters are so difficult to learn that even the best system of rudimentary characters, or simplified teaching, does not equip the people with a really efficient and rich vocabulary. Sooner or later, we believe, we will have to abandon the Chinese character altogether if we are to create a new social culture in which the masses fully participate. We are now widely using Latinization, and if we stay here for three years the problem of illiteracy will have been largely overcome.

Child slavery is completely abolished in the Soviet districts, and will be in the future wherever the Red banner is carried. Child slaves are immediately freed and returned to their homes. If they have no homes they are given work to do in the Soviet factories, or in some productive enterprise. But many child slaves are carried off by the landlords, along with their goods and money, when the Red Army enters a new territory.

The Commissioner of the Interior looks after their welfare. They are given a portion of land to cultivate, if they are old enough and able-bodied; if not, they are entitled to a share of the products of certain lands held communally.

Prostitution, like child slavery, is a product of the economic bankruptcy of the poor. Those who have no other means of livelihood are compelled to market their bodies for necessities. In the Jiangxi Soviets prostitution was entirely eliminated in the villages and towns, and only in one or two large cities, like Dingzhou and Changzhou, did it remain even a small problem. A few women continued to practice prostitution in secret, but most of the women of this profession were absorbed into useful work. Some of them married and settled down on land given to poor farmers, some took work in the factories, and two or three became school teachers. They mostly became good citizens, and as there was no discrimination against them most people soon forgot that they had been prostitutes.

The problem of militarism is also largely a product of rural bankruptcy. Professional and mercenary soldiers can easily be reabsorbed into the population, if they are given land and work to do. We use intensive educative and propagandist methods to correct the anti-social habits of former mercenary soldiers, and in the south these were very effective. Bandits, oppressed by poverty, can also be eliminated if given a chance to earn an honest livelihood, and a little teaching to correct their former habits.

In western Fujian, for example, there had for years been many small predatory bands of armed robbers. After the Soviets were established in those districts where banditry had been worst, many of those bands changed into good farmers, workers, and warriors in the people's army. The Soviets provided them with land or work to do in the factories. Western Fujian and Soviet Jiangxi after a couple of years became entirely freed of bandits and robbers and people no longer looked their doors.

Now that the Red Army has left those places, however, and the Guomindang and the landlords have returned, you see that banditry has risen up again. Especially along the Fujian border thousands of mercenary troops are employed to keep the bandits in check and to prevent many poor peasants from turning bandit to attack their exploiters and seize the goods and money which the landlords and the militarists are again stealing from them.

As for communications, it is now well known and it appears even in the reports of the League of Nations' experts, that the Soviets in Jiangxi built many people's roads and improved communication. We did not build motor highways, which are useless to the farmers, although they must pay for them, but we built many good solid cart-roads and barrow-roads.

For the Soviets, this kind of construction was simple to achieve and inexpensive. Our road-building plans were not devised by a few returned students who

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8. Here a note by Snow gives the date of this congress, January 1934, and refers to a translation of Mao's report published in London in 1934. For the text of the report, see Volume IV of our edition, pp. 656–713; the section on education appears on pp. 694–97.
had learned engineering in America, and wanted to get hold of big sums for impractical projects, but they were plans drawn up by the soviet peasants themselves, who knew what they needed. Thus when a plan was made and accepted, it was the peasants who carried it out. It was quite simple for the soviets thus to mobilize thousands of volunteers to build these roads because they were the people’s roads which they knew would be of practical use to them, and not the returned-students’ roads for the use of the motor cars of militarists and their concubines, but which a peasant cannot use.

In Shaanxi we have done less road-building because the soviets have not been here long. But our soviets are already propagandizing and educating the masses to awaken them to the need for cart roads and improved caravan roads.

Would an anti-Japanese war halt such construction projects and reforms as we have mentioned above? We do not think so. In an anti-Japanese war it will not only be possible, but absolutely necessary, to realize all these things on a national scale as quickly as possible. The people cannot be mobilized for national defense without demonstrating its benefits to them. A war of independence is in fact necessary to improve the people’s condition.

Why do we demand a war? Because on the one hand it is absolutely necessary to preserve the life of the nation that we resist Japanese imperialism, destroy all traitors, and achieve national independence, and on the other to raise the economic and cultural level of the great mass of the people.

Even as the Red Army fights its revolutionary warfare in China it is able to bring great benefits immediately to the people. A single month after the Red Army occupies a district it has already begun to be transformed with many improvements. Not only the political workers in the Red Army lead the tasks of reconstruction, but every commander and every Red warrior participates in awakening and leading the peasantry.

Every Red soldier assists in carrying out the land policy and the measures of people’s economy, the creation of people’s mass organizations, etc. In Shaanxi the Red Army has already realized most of the reforms indicated above. In the Gansu and Ningxia soviets they have begun.

As you may perhaps have noticed, every person in the Red Army is extremely busy, whether in military action or not; in time of peace the Red Army assists the people in many ways. People bring their problems to the Red Army and ask for help. They trust it and believe in its justice. They gather in groups to welcome us. Many join us; many voluntarily give everything they have to help us. Many voluntarily help provision the Red Army. Many collect news for us, and help guard against espionage. Peasants volunteer to help the Red Army in its battles—as guides, sappers, cooks, bearers of all kinds. This intimacy between the masses and the Red Army, this inseparability of the people and the Red Army, is one of the fundamental reasons for our victories against the Whites, despite the latter’s present overwhelming superiority in numbers and material resources.

When the Red Army takes a xian it proceeds at once to begin to realize the reforms mentioned already. When this work is successfully launched, soviets created, and peasant workers trained to lead in carrying out the program, the Red Army is freed for activity in new fields.

But the whole struggle of the Red Army is basically an anti-imperialist struggle, and this is why its enlargement now into the necessary war of liberation, the anti-Japanese war, is a progressive war, and necessary in order to hasten the regeneration and revolutionizing of the masses.

**Snow:** What would be the Soviet government’s immediate industrial program?

**Mao:** War industries would be placed under Soviet control. By “war industries” is meant all those industries directly concerned with the conduct of the war. Other branches of industry would remain under private control—with the exception, of course, of Japanese imperialist industries, which would be confiscated forthwith by the state.

But besides state enterprises there would be built up people’s cooperative enterprises of various sorts, and this program offers very far-reaching perspectives.

It must be remembered that there are fundamental differences between the condition of China today and that of Russia before the revolution. Our revolution is primarily democratic and bourgeois in character, because China is still a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society.

**Snow:** What about control of profits in time of war?

**Mao:** The question of a profit tax must, of course, be considered when war begins.

At present the customs tariff enforced by the Soviet government is the only one in China free from manipulation and control by the imperialist powers. Our idea is that tariffs during the war should be adjusted independently to suit the needs of the war against the invaders, and to satisfy the needs and demands of the whole Chinese people. Only luxuries such as wines, tobacco, etc. should be heavily taxed. Tariffs on imports of such essentials as gasoline, kerosene, etc. should be very light, since China does not produce these things in quantities sufficient for the national demand.

**Snow:** What is your opinion of the foreign policy of Nanjing?

**Mao:** As everybody knows very well, the policy of Nanjing under the leadership of Chiang Kaishek has been a policy of compromise with imperialism and retreat before the foreign invader. The dissatisfaction of the people with the Nanjing government has therefore been widespread.

Under the pressure of Japanese imperialism the Chinese people, through
 Directive on Land Policies  
(July 22, 1936)

In order to make the Soviet the true center around which the people of the whole country rally, it is necessary to make sure that all current policies of the Soviet have a clear-cut people's nature and a profoundly national character. Land policy has occupied the most important position among the various Soviet policies up until now. The significance of bringing about a land revolution is not only to rid the peasant masses, who constitute 80 percent of the people of the whole country, of feudal exploitation, but also to incite this 80 percent of the people into actively taking part in national liberation, and to strengthen the forces of national revolution. Since the Central Politburo conference last December, the Soviet has made many important changes with regard to land policy (such as policies on rich peasants and small landlords, analysis of class [status], decisions on some special questions, and so on). This kind of change has received the support of the broad masses of people and its practical effects have been felt in the Soviet areas. For the carrying out of the land policy to achieve the effects of settling accounts with feudal remnants and, to the extent possible, establishing a broad people's united front against Japan, however, it is necessary to examine further the existing land policies and make necessary modifications.

Therefore, the Central Committee has made the following decisions on this issue:

1. Confiscate all land and other property of every single Chinese traitor selling out the country.
2. Confiscate all land, grain, housing, and property of the landlord class. After confiscation has been carried out they are still to be given some land to cultivate, and the necessary tools and materials for production. The amount and quality of land given to landlords for cultivation is to be determined by the majority opinion of the local peasant masses.
3. Land belonging to the following kinds of small proprietors should not be confiscated:
   a. land owned by the self-employed, technicians, teachers, doctors, students, small merchants, handicraftsmen, and other small proprietors;
   b. land belonging to workers, bought with savings accumulated from earnings from their own labor;

We have translated this directive from Mao Zedong ji, Vol. 5, pp. 63–65, where it is reproduced from a collection published in China on May 1, 1937. Although this directive does not bear Mao's signature, he participated actively in the Politburo meeting which drafted it. (See Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 560.)

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9. Chen Cheng (1897–1965), a native of Zhejiang, had served under Chiang Kaishek as an artillery instructor at the Huangpu Academy in 1924. He had been closely associated with Chiang ever since, in particular in the campaigns of "Encirclement and Suppression" against the Communists during the period of the Jiangxi Soviet Republic.
10. For biographical information on Hu Zongnan, see the relevant note to the text of June 16, 1935.
11. Tang Enbo (1899–1954) was a native of Zhejiang. At this time, he commanded the Guomindang Thirteenth Army. He was a graduate of the Japanese Military Academy (Shikan Gakkō); no doubt for this reason Mao stressed that even Tang was in favor of resistance to Japan.
small landlords whose living conditions are very poor;

d. those who originally were not landlords but were forced to rent out their land because they had lost the capacity to work.

e. those who rent out their land yet hire themselves out to work for others.

Any small proprietors in the foregoing categories who are Chinese traitors selling out the country will be dealt with as such.

4. The land of all anti-Japanese soldiers and those who dedicate themselves to the anti-Japanese cause is not to be confiscated.

5. None of the land of rich peasants or their extra tools of production (farm implements, livestock, etc.) are to be confiscated. When equal distribution of all land is carried out, according to the demands of the basic level of peasants, rich peasants and landlords should have their land redistributed as well. Rich peasants, however, should receive land according to the regular conditions for equal distribution (that is, they are to receive land of the same class as ordinary peasants).

6. As for land belonging to owners of large farms and enterprises (mainly proprietors who do not rely for a living on exploitation by renting out land, but rather on hiring large numbers of farm laborers to engage in working the land or raising livestock), because their mode of production has certain progressive characteristics, it should be handled according to the policy for treatment of rich peasants. If a majority of the peasants call for equal redistribution of the land, farm animals, grain, etc. belonging to the owners of large farms and enterprises, it should be handed over and redistributed equally.

7. In the case of a merchant who is also a big landlord, his land is to be handled like that of an ordinary landlord, but there is to be no encroachment upon the mercantile portion of his assets.

8. It should be proclaimed that usury is abolished. The Soviet People’s Government is to promulgate a new set of regulations on loans, which will limit the interest rate on loans for the people of the soviet areas. Commercial loans and loans between working people themselves, however, are not to be abolished.

9. It is permitted to rent out land within the soviet areas, but no matter what sort of proprietor is renting out his land, he must without fail abolish the cruel and enslaving rental methods of the past, and follow to the letter the regulations on rentals promulgated by the Soviet Government. There will be no exceptions.

10. Living conditions of rural workers should be improved. The Soviet Government will draw up and enforce specific regulations on hiring farm laborers.

The above decisions should all be carried out immediately in the newly established soviet areas. In older soviet areas where land has already been redistributed, old measures are to remain in force and not be changed. As for various specific regulations and fine points of carrying out these decisions, they will be drawn up separately and promulgated by the Central Soviet Government.

Central Committee

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**Telegram to Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi] on the Second and Fourth Front Armies’ Rapid Advance to Southern Gansu**

(July 22, 1936)

Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi]:

1. At present in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia [Base Area] we are under attack by a total force of more than 150 regiments under Tang Enbo, Yang Hucheng, Gao Guizi, Gao Shuangcheng, Zhang Xueliang, He Zhuguo, Yu Xuezhong, and Ma Hongkui, all of them under pressure from Chiang Kai shek’s orders. All of Mao Bingwen’s forces and part of Ma Bufang’s have also been lured by us to the vicinity of northern Gansu, and they are attempting to rout us first and then block your northward advance.

2. We are now mobilizing the entire Red Army forces and the people of the Soviet areas to smash the enemy’s attack and greet your northward advance.

3. It would be advantageous for the second and fourth Front Armies to advance rapidly toward southern Gansu. When you have advanced to a suitable place in southern Gansu, then the First Front Army will be ordered to cooperate with you in a north-south pincer attack to wipe out the forces of He Zhuguo, Mao Bingwen, and the others. This will accomplish a complete joining of the three Front Armies, and open up a glorious situation in the Northwest.

4. Communications with the radio station of the International have been established as of the sixth. It is hoped that Elder Brother Guotao will report by telegram the situation and opinions of the Fourth Front Army, so that they may transmitted to the International.


Our source for this telegram is the 1986 annual compendium of Wenzian he yanjiu, p. 103.
c. small landlords whose living conditions are very poor;
d. those who originally were not landlords but were forced to rent out their
land because they had lost the capacity to work.
e. those who rent out their land yet hire themselves out to work for others.
Any small proprietors in the foregoing categories who are Chinese traitors
selling out the country will be dealt with as such.
4. The land of all anti-Japanese soldiers and those who dedicate themselves
to the anti-Japanese cause is not to be confiscated.
5. None of the land of rich peasants or their extra tools of production (farm
implements, livestock, etc.) are to be confiscated. When equal distribution of all
land is carried out, according to the demands of the basic level of peasants, rich
peasants and landlords should have their land redistributed as well. Rich peasants,
however, should receive land according to the regular conditions for equal distrib-
ution (that is, they are to receive land of the same class as ordinary peasants).
6. As for land belonging to owners of large farms and enterprises (mainly
proprietors who do not rely for a living on exploitation by renting out land, but
rather on hiring large numbers of farm laborers to engage in working the land or
raising livestock), because their mode of production has certain progressive char-
acteristics, it should be handled according to the policy for treatment of rich
peasants. If a majority of the peasants call for equal redistribution of the land,
farm animals, grain, etc. belonging to the owners of large farms and enterprises,
it should be handed over and redistributed equally.
7. In the case of a merchant who is also a big landlord, his land is to be
handled like that of an ordinary landlord, but there is to be no encroachment
upon the mercantile portion of his assets.
8. It should be proclaimed that usury is abolished. The Soviet People’s
Government is to promulgate a new set of regulations on loans, which will limit
the interest rate on loans for the people of the soviet areas. Commercial loans and
loans between working people themselves, however, are not to be abolished.
9. It is permitted to rent out land within the soviet areas, but no matter what
sort of proprietor is renting out his land, he must without fail abolish the cruel
and enslaving rental methods of the past, and follow to the letter the regulations
on rentals promulgated by the Soviet Government. There will be no exceptions.
10. Living conditions of rural workers should be improved. The Soviet Gov-
ernment will draw up and enforce specific regulations on hiring farm laborers.
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Central Committee

Telegram to Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi] on the Second and
Fourth Front Armies’ Rapid Advance to Southern Gansu
(July 22, 1936)

Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi]:

1. At present in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia [Base Area] we are under
attack by a total force of more than 150 regiments under Tang Enbo, Yang
Hucheng, Gao Guizi, Gao Shuangcheng, Zhang Xueliang, He Zhuguo, Yu
Xuezhong, and Ma Hongkui, all of them under pressure from Chiang Kai-shek’s
orders. All of Mao Bingwen’s forces and part of Ma Bufang’s have also been lured
by us to the vicinity of northern Gansu, and they are attempting to rout us
first and then block your northward advance.
2. We are now mobilizing the entire Red Army forces and the people of the
soviet areas to smash the enemy’s attack and greet your northward advance.
3. It would be advantageous for the second and fourth Front Armies to
advance rapidly toward southern Gansu. When you have advanced to a suitable
place in southern Gansu, then the First Front Army will be ordered to cooperate
with you in a north-south pincer attack to wipe out the forces of He Zhuguo,
Mao Bingwen, and the others. This will accomplish a complete joining of the
three Front Armies, and open up a glorious situation in the Northwest.
4. Communications with the radio station of the International have been
established as of the sixth. It is hoped that Elder Brother Guotao will report by
telegram the situation and opinions of the Fourth Front Army, so that they may
transmitted to the International.


Our source for this telegram is the 1986 annual compendium of Wenxian he yanjiu, p. 103.
The Principles of Concurrent Concentration and Dispersal of Local Armed Forces

(July 23, 1936, 3:00 A.M.)

Peng [Dehuai]:

Regarding the question of the concurrent concentration and dispersal of local armed forces:

1. As for the principles of concurrent concentration and dispersal of local armed forces, dispersal is to stop at the level of the squad, and concentration should stop at the level of the independent division. In between are the various configurations of platoon, company, and regiment, which are to be appropriately deployed according to the enemy’s situation and the degree to which the Soviet area is consolidated. When the enemy’s presence is serious and the Soviet area is not yet consolidated, deployment should be weighted toward dispersal.

2. In the Central Soviet Area in the past and in the Northern Shaanxi Soviet Area during the spring of this year, deployment was overconcentrated. This caused the xian, districts, and townships to lose the military power for self-defense and the Party and government at the xian, district, and township levels to lose the ability to command guerrilla warfare. Thus when the enemy attacked, it became disadvantageous for us.

3. As for the new Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia Soviet areas, faced as they are with the tasks of wiping out the landlord militias and other bandits, defense against activities of external enemies, and establishing and consolidating the political power of the masses, generally speaking within one or two xian, or in special cases within one or two districts, self-defense forces of at least a company, a platoon, or a squad must be deployed. For example, in the two xian of Dingbian and Anbian, there are seven to eight bandit gangs, and because there are no armed forces in these localities, it has been impossible to establish political power to this day, and more than ten staff people were killed by the bandits.

4. Please consider the questions of dispersed deployment of independent divisions and avoiding overconcentration of other local armed forces.

Zedong

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 558–59, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

Interview with Edgar Snow on Special Questions

(July 23, 1936)

Snow: In actual practice, if the Chinese revolution were victorious, would the economic and political relationship between Soviet China and Soviet Russia be maintained within the Third International or a similar organization, or would there probably be some kind of actual merger of governments? Would the Chinese Soviet government be comparable in its relation to Moscow to the present government of Outer Mongolia?

Mao: I assume this is a purely hypothetical question. As I have told you, the Red Army is not now seeking the hegemony of power, but a united China against Japanese imperialism.

The Third International is an organization in which the vanguard of the world proletariat brings together its collective experience for the benefit of all revolutionary peoples throughout the world. It is not an administrative organization, nor has it any political power beyond that of an advisory capacity. Structurally it is not very different from the Second International, though in content it is vastly different. But just as no one would say that in a country where the Cabinet is organized by the social-democrats the Second International is dictator, so it is ridiculous to say that the Third International is dictator in countries where there are Communist parties.

In the U.S.S.R. the Communist Party is in power, yet even there the Third International does not rule, nor does it have any direct political power over the people at all. Similarly, it can be said that although the Communist Party of China is a member of the Comintern, still in no sense means that Soviet China is ruled by Moscow or by the Comintern. We are certainly not fighting for an emancipated China in order to turn the country over to Moscow!

The Chinese Communist Party is only one party in China, and in its victory it will have to speak for the whole nation. It cannot speak for the Russian people or rule for the Third International, but only in the interests of the Chinese masses. Only where the interests of the Chinese masses coincide with the interests of the Russian masses can it be said to be "obeying the will" of Moscow. But of course

Our source for this text is once again Edgar Snow's typescript. (For details, see above, the source note to the interview of July 15.) Substantial extracts from this interview appeared in Stuart Schram, The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung (New York, Praeger, 1963).

1. "Special Questions" refers here to miscellaneous questions not dealt with in Snow's interviews of July 15 on foreign affairs, July 16 on Japanese imperialism, and July 18–19 on internal affairs.
this basis of common benefit will be tremendously broadened, once the masses of China are in democratic power and socially and economically emancipated, like their brothers in Russia.

When Soviet governments have been established in many countries the problem of an international union of soviets may arise, and it will be interesting to see how it will be solved. But today I cannot suggest the formula; it is a problem which has not been and cannot be solved in advance. In the world of today, with increasingly close economic and cultural intimacies between different states and peoples, such a union would seem to be highly desirable, if achieved on a voluntary basis.

Clearly, however, the last point is of utmost importance; such a world union could be successful only if every nation had the right to enter or leave the union according to the will of its people, and with its sovereignty intact, and certainly never at the “command” of Moscow. No Communist ever thought otherwise, and the myth of “world domination from Moscow” is an invention of the Fascists and counterrevolutionaries.

The relationship between Outer Mongolia and the Soviet Union, now and in the past, has always been based on the principle of complete equality. When the people’s revolution has been victorious in China the Outer Mongolian republic will automatically become a part of the Chinese federation, at its own will. The Mohammedan and Tibetan peoples, likewise, will form autonomous republics attached to the China federation. The unequal treatment of national minorities, as practiced by the Guomindang, can have no part in the Soviet program, nor can it be a part of the program of a democratic republic.

Snow: Please explain why it is that such help as the U.S.S.R. might render to a victorious Soviet China would differ fundamentally from imperialist activity in China in the past. Why are the charges of “Red Imperialism” in this connection in your opinion absurd?

Mao: Some people say that the Fascists have no creative ability whatever. With this, I don’t altogether agree. Because really they have created this epithet “Red Imperialism” as their own product and it is a perfect example of the creative level of Fascist cerebration. Behind this epithet the Japanese and Chinese Fascists hope to subjugate China. But we do not have to go beyond the pages of Guomindang history itself to see whether or not this kind of propaganda makes any sense.

If there is such a thing as “Red Imperialism,” the Nanjing government itself owes its life to it. When Dr. Sun Yatsen led the Guomindang revolution, as everyone knows, Borodin and General Galin were assisting the Guomindang and the Communist Party was cooperating, and Communists led many of the best cadres of the Nationalist movement. At that time no Guomindang member talked about “Red Imperialism.” But after the Guomindang became counterrevolutionary, betrayed Dr. Sun’s principles, began to oppress the peasants and workers, and compromised with Imperialism, its worst elements then created the epithet “Red Imperialism,” which became in the reactionary press a cloak behind which they could hide their treachery from the Chinese people.

What are the facts? Even Chiang Kaishek cannot deny that when the Guomindang cooperated with the Soviet Union and the Communist Party the revolution reached a high level, imperialism shook to its foundations, and the prospect of national liberation was very bright. With Sun Yatsen’s death the worst members of his party began to betray his principles and policies, the national movement suddenly began to decline, the Guomindang lost all its revolutionary content, compromised with imperialism, gave the best parts of China to Japan without resistance, and accepted imperialist help to carry on a long civil war against the people’s revolution.

Only after ten years of imperialist aggression, and the rapid enslavement of great masses of the Chinese people, is Nanjing now beginning to realize that in the Soviet Union China has a true friend, and that the Guomindang can resist imperialism only by reuniting with the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party.

Today the struggle has sharpened to a war between two camps: the first, led by Japan, is composed of traitors and reactionaries, who form the so-called anti-Red front jointly with Japanese imperialism; the second is composed of the great majority of the Chinese people, and of those countries which sympathize with the Chinese revolution, and this is the front against Japanese imperialism. The anti-Red front is based on cooperation with Japanese imperialism. The anti-Japanese front is based on cooperation with the U.S.S.R. and those countries which sympathize with China’s struggle for independence. The anti-Red front means national enslavement. The anti-Japanese front means national liberation. The Chinese people must gradually form themselves on one front or the other; the two are irreconcilable.

It is true that many members of the Guomindang are now forced by circumstance, and in order to maintain their self-preservation, to reconsider their policy. In the past there have been such patriots as Song Qingling, He Xiangning, Chen Mingshu, Cai Tingkai, Li Jishen, and Jiang Guangnai, and these men understood the fundamental mistake of the Guomindang in trying to “annihilate the Reds.” Today, Li Zongren, Feng Yuxiang, Sun Fo, Song Ziwen, Zhang Xueliang, and others are changing their point of view and appear to be willing to revive their cooperation with the Soviet Union.

2. Regarding Song Qingling and He Xiangning, see below, the relevant notes to Mao’s letters of September 18, 1936, to Song Qingling, and June 25, 1937, to He Xiangning.
3. Here Snow’s manuscript has the Cantonese rendering of this name, Li Chai-sum. For biographical information about Li, see below, the relevant note to Mao’s letter to him dated September 22, 1936.
4. For biographical information about Cai Tingkai, Jiang Guangnai, and Chen Mingshu, see below, the relevant notes to Mao’s letter of September 22, 1936, to Jiang and Cai.
We stand resolutely for close cooperation with the U.S.S.R. to fight Japan. We welcome cooperation with any groups which want to end the civil war in China, establish a united democratic people's anti-Japanese government, and safeguard the interests of the nation and its peoples.

Snow: How do you explain the repeated victories of the Red Army, under the greatest odds? What is the secret of its invincibility?

Mao: There are three reasons. First, the Red Army is the people's army, and they support it in every way. It cannot be destroyed without first destroying the people who love and support it, and when the White troops fight against the Red districts they are not merely fighting the Red Army but the entire populace of those Soviet districts.

Secondly, our survival is due to the correct strategic and tactical leadership of the Communist Party.

Thirdly, the command of the Red Army is capable, correct, intelligent, loyal, and sincere. Every Red commander could at any time make a fortune and retire by accepting the bribes and rewards offered by Nanjing, yet after nine years of warfare we can still count on one hand the number of commanders who have betrayed to the Guomindang.

Snow: With the achievement of victory of a Red movement in China, do you think that revolution would occur quickly in other Asiatic colonial or semicolonial countries, such as Korea, Indo-China, the Philippines, and India? Is China at present the "key" to the world revolution?

Mao: The Chinese revolution is a key factor in the world situation, and its victory is heartily anticipated by the people of every country, and especially by the toiling masses of the colonial countries. When the Chinese revolution comes into full power the masses of many colonial countries will follow the example of China and win a similar victory of their own. But I must emphasize again that the "seizure of power" is not our aim. We want to stop civil war, create a people's democratic government with the Guomindang and other parties, and fight for our independence against Japan.

Snow: Do you have any opinion as to the probable time it will take to achieve the ultimate victory of the Chinese revolution over the whole of China?

Mao: The victory of the Chinese revolution naturally will be determined by the objective circumstances which develop out of the revolutionary struggles, and those circumstances are too complex to be predicted now. But we can say that this victory is not very far away, and that it will correspond with the victory of the Chinese people against Japanese aggression.

The Chinese people themselves will adopt the system of government best suited to them, and this we believe to be the form of a democratic republic, with the full power in the hands of the enfranchised masses. Structurally, we believe, the Soviet system, representative from the central power down to the smallest village, is best suited to the realization of democratic political institutions, and can best serve the interests of the Chinese masses.

Snow: What is the foremost internal task of the revolution, after the struggle against Japanese imperialism?

Mao: The Chinese revolution, being of bourgeois-democratic character, has as its primary task the readjustment of the land problem—the realization of agrarian reform.

Some idea of the urgency of rural reform may be secured by referring to figures on the distribution of land in China today. During the Nationalist Revolution I was secretary of the Peasants' Committee of the Guomindang, and had charge of collecting statistics for areas throughout twenty-one provinces.

Our investigation showed astonishing inequalities. About 70 percent of the whole rural population was made up of poor peasants, tenants or part-tenants, and of agricultural workers. About 20 percent was made up of middle peasants tilling their own land. Usurers and landlords were about 10 percent of the population. Included in the 10 percent also were rich peasants, exploiters like the militarists, tax-collectors, etc.

The 10 percent of the rich peasants, landlords, and usurers together owned about 70 percent of the cultivated land. From 12 to 15 percent was in the hands of middle peasants. The 70 percent of the poor peasants, tenants and part-tenants, and agricultural workers, owned only from 10 to 15 percent of the total cultivated land.

There is of course a great variation of statistics in different parts of the country, and a variation sometimes quite marked even as between neighboring xian. The figures I quote are the average for the whole of China, which we investigated at that time, when there were workers in the Peasant Committee compiling figures for twenty-one different provinces. These statistics were of course suppressed after the counterrevolution, and now, ten years later, it is still impossible to get any statement from Nanjing on land distribution in China.

But such facts explain a good deal about the success of the Red Army. The revolution is caused chiefly by two oppressions—the imperialists and that 10 percent of landlords and Chinese exploiters. So we may say that in our new demands for democracy, land reform, and war against imperialism we are opposed by less than 10 percent of the population. And really not 10 percent, but probably only about 5 percent, for not more than that many Chinese will turn traitor to join with Japan in subjugating their own people under the device of the joint “Anti-Red Pact.”

Our Armies Should Continue to Carry Out the Three Major Strategic Tasks
(July 27, 1936)

To Comrade [Peng] Dehuai, and to be transmitted to Zuo [Quan], Nie [Rongzhen], and Zhu [Rui]; Xu [Haidong], Cheng [Zihua], and Wang [Shoudao]; Song [Shilun] and Song [Renqiong]; Xiao [Jingguang], Li [Fuchun], and Liu Xiao:

With regard to the question of tasks for the field army.

1. Over the past two months, the Western Field Army has completed the task of creating base areas in the west by means of firm and flexible command and heroic sacrifices in battle. Guerrilla warfare is being fought resolutely and persistently in the east, and the united front has been developed in the south. The requirements of the first phase of the three major battle tasks set by the Central Committee and the Military Affairs Commission have been fulfilled.

2. What is happening at present is that Chiang Kaishek is putting pressure on the various armies in the Northwest, and in order to obstruct the development of our field armies, prevent the joining of the First, Second, and Fourth front armies, and destroy the soviet areas, he has directed He Zhuguo, Ma Hongkui, Yang Huchen, and others in attacking our field armies and the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia and northern Shaanxi [base areas], and deployed Wang Jun and Mao Bingwen in obstructing the Second and Fourth front armies.

3. Our task is to continue to carry out the three major tasks and strive for victory in the second phase of the three tasks. In the west it is to break the attacks by Ma and He and make great efforts to expand the Red Army and consolidate the base areas. It is [also] to engage in united front work among the three blocs of Shen Ke, He Zhuguo, and Ma Hongkui, and to raise the status of united front work to a level higher than that of other tasks in terms of political priority, even though breaking the attacks is at present the central task of the field armies. In the east, the primary task is likewise to strive to bring Tang [Enbo], Chen [Cheng], and the two Gaos [Gao Guizi and Gao Shuangcheng] into the united front, and at the same time to persist in guerrilla warfare so as to preserve the older soviet areas. In the south it is mainly to develop the united front among the various units under Yang [Hucheng], Wang [Yizhe], and Liu [Duquan]. Com-

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 560–62, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
bining these various tasks, and accomplishing them in the second phase will put us in a more powerful position to receive the northward advance of the Second and Fourth front armies and their complete joining, give us more strength to create a great northwestern alliance and break through to the Soviet Union, provide us with all favorable conditions for preparing to smash Chiang Kai-shek’s possible plot to increase his troop strength in the Northwest after the Guangdong and Guangxi problem has been resolved, and striving to wage war rapidly on Japan.

4. During the period of concentration [of forces], the field armies should pay attention to the following six points:
   a. Assess the achievements in united front [work].
   b. Assess the achievements in expanding and training the Red Army.
   c. Assess the achievements in educating cadres.
   d. Assess the achievements in creating base areas.
   e. Engage in active training.
   f. Complete all preparations to do battle against Ma and He.

(To be transmitted to the regimental level)

Mao [Zedong]  Zhou [Enlai]
Peng [Dehuai]  Yang [Shangkun]

At Present the Western Field Army Should Give Priority to Rest and Recuperation

(August 1, 1936, 10:30 A.M.)

Comrade [Peng] Dehuai:

Under present circumstances it seems that the field armies should give priority to rest and recuperation, and if fully advantageous conditions for battle do not exist, it may be best to use the whole month of August as a training period. You must carry out a planned educational program on the various aspects of political, military, and Party affairs, and make sure to achieve a certain level of progress. At the same time, personnel should be sent out to work on expanding the Red [Army] throughout Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia provinces, and to carry out improvement of medical treatment in hospitals in the rear, so as to increase the number of soldiers in August. There should be a special education plan for high-ranking cadres above the regimental level; looking to the future, education for high-ranking cadres occupies an especially important position. The content of higher level education is mainly political study. If you agree with these ideas, then please call together a meeting of cadres above the regimental level to announce them and carry them out. If we are able to achieve results in rest and recuperation during the month of August, then in September the battle to seize the Shaanxi-Gansu road through a North-South pincer attack in coordination with the Second and Fourth front armies will be carried out with greater force. I very much look forward to your reply.

Zedong

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We have translated this text from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 563–64, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Here we have followed the emendation of two characters by the editors of the Junshi wenji, since the characters as printed in the text make no sense.
Soliciting Contributions to
Notes on the Long March

(August 5, 1936)

I

A great opportunity now exists throughout the country and in foreign countries to engage in propaganda to expand the influence of the Red Army. Raising funds to fight Japan requires the publication of records on the Long March. A collective work has been initiated especially for this purpose. It is our hope that all senior officers will undertake themselves, and mobilize and organize cadres at the divisional and regimental levels to undertake as well, the task of writing down a variety of episodes they personally experienced in the Long March concerning battles fought, public sentiment and local customs, and colorful anecdotes, and submit them by September 5 to the General Political Department. This is an extremely important matter and should by no means be neglected.

II

Presently, for the purposes of engaging in propaganda internationally and carrying out a large-scale fund-raising movement both inside the country and abroad, it is necessary to publish Notes on the Long March. Therefore, a collective work of creative writing has been specially initiated in which each person is to write up various episodes based on his own experiences fighting battles, marching, and doing local and military work. The writing should be clear and comprehensible, not necessarily profound or scholarly. Each piece written will serve as fund-raising propaganda for the Red Army and will broaden the Red Army's international impact. Please send written contributions to the General Political Department by September 5. Modest remuneration will be offered as a token of our appreciation.

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong xinwen gongzuo wenxuan, pp. 37–38, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The editors of the Xinwen gongzuo wenxuan indicate that this was a letter from Mao and Yang Shangkun that was sent to all those who were on the Long March and sent in the form of a telegram to all Red Army units, and that the collection, Notes on the Long March, was later published in Yan'an.

A Letter to Zhang Naiqi, Tao Xingzhi, Zou Taofen, Shen Junru, and All Members of the National Salvation Association

(August 10, 1936)

Messrs. Naiqi, Xingzhi, Taofen, Junru, and all members of the National Salvation Association:

Recently, we read in the paper the basic conditions and minimum demands for unity against foreign humiliation proclaimed by Messrs. Zhang, Tao, Zou, and Shen; and the declaration and program of the National Salvation Association. These documents inspire in us the greatest sympathy and satisfaction. We consider that they represent the opinions and demands of the majority of Chinese people who are unwilling to be slaves without a country. On behalf of our Party, the Soviet Government, and the Red Army, I express our sincere respects. Moreover, I proclaim to you and to the people of the whole country that we agree with your declarations, program, and demands, and sincerely wish to cooperate with you, and with any organizations or individuals who are willing to participate in this struggle, in order, as proposed in your platform and demands, to carry out together the struggle to fight the Japanese and save the nation. You say:

“We hope that the Communist Party, by taking real actions, will demonstrate its sincerity in uniting all parties and factions in fighting the Japanese and saving the nation. Therefore the Red Army should stop immediately their attacks on the Central Army, in order to create an atmosphere of negotiation. In the regions occupied by the Red Army, rich peasants, landlords, and merchants should be treated leniently. In all the big cities, clashes between labor and capital which may lead to the weakening of the anti-Japanese forces should be avoided. Only thus can we make sure that the development of the united front to save the nation will not be impeded.”

Yes, we should do these things, and we have done no less. In our own actions,

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 4, pp. 297–306, where it is reproduced from the text published in Jinguo shibao, October 30, 1936. A note to that version indicates that, not having access to the Chinese original, the newspaper had retranslated it from an English text published in the United Kingdom.

1. Zhang Naiqi (1897–1977), a native of Zhejiang, Tao Xingzhi (1891–1946), a native of Anhui, Shen Junru (1895–1963), a native of Zhejiang, and Zou Taofen (1895–1944), a native of Jiangxi, were the principal organizers of the National Salvation Association, established on May 30, 1936. The declaration referred to by Mao was published on July 15, 1936.
we are always true to our own proposals and political line. Immediately after the September 18 Incident, we were the first to suggest to all parties in the nation that we are willing to coordinate our efforts in fighting the Japanese. Some people claimed that our suggestions were no more than propaganda, that we were unwilling to practice these suggestions, but facts over the past few years have proven that those claims are mere calumny. We cooperated with the Nineteenth Route Army and the Fujian government. Recently, when the leaders of the Southwestern faction sent out a public telegraph saying that they are willing to fight the Japanese, we declared that we agree with them on their anti-Japanese sentiments. At the same time, we made our proposals of uniting to fight the Japanese to the political and military leaders of the Southwestern faction, and to all parties and social organizations. We solemnly declared that we sincerely hope for close unity, not only in words, but in actions as well. We should unite in our struggle to save the life of our country. For over a year we have fought long and hard to reach our goal of resisting Japan in the North. Although we are in the North now, we have not yet been able to achieve our goal of concentrating our forces in Hebei in order to engage in direct conflict with the Japanese. After we crossed the Yellow River last spring, we could, no doubt, have realized our hope had it not been for the blockade by more than a hundred thousand troops of the Central Army stationed in the region of Tongpu. We could have broken the blockade if we had concentrated our troops, but that would have caused great casualties on both sides. In order to avoid the losses caused by meaningless civil strife, we crossed back over the [Yellow] River and temporarily returned to Shanxi. Despite the “encirclement and suppression” directed against us, we again expressed to the Nanjing Government, General Yan Xishan in Taiyuan, and General Song Zheyuan in Hebei, our willingness to concentrate our forces in Hebei to fight the Japanese. Although they have not yet given a satisfactory answer to our requests, we are not going to give up the goal of fighting the Japanese and saving the country to which we have resolutely adhered from beginning to end. At a time when the survival of the Chinese people is at stake, we do not want to continue any civil wars to kill our brethren. If they do not attack us, if they do not hamper the Chinese armies in fighting the Japanese, we will not attack the Nanjing Central Army or any other army. If the Nanjing Central Army and other armies wage the anti-Japanese war, if they do not suppress the patriotic movements of the masses, we are ready to help them with all our efforts. We are willing to cooperate with any army, any political party, and any faction, as long as they approve of total freedom to fight the Japanese and the traitors who are selling out the country, and freedom to engage in patriotic movements.

Some people doubt that the Red Army can wage an anti-Japanese war all by itself. Others say that the prerequisite for fighting the Japanese is national unity and harmony. Still others say that a partial war of resistance is harmful. But we disagree with these opinions. Our Northeastern Anti-Japanese Volunteer Army is able to continue the heroic struggle against the Japanese. The enemy newspapers all recognize that the Northeastern Volunteer Army has cost them “over 100,000 lives and hundreds of millions of dollars,” that the Northeastern Volunteer Army has prevented the Japanese imperialists from moving quickly into the heartland of China. Although they have not yet won the total victory, they have contributed greatly to our nation and our people. Now no one can say that the Northeastern Volunteer Army is incapable of fighting the Japanese by itself. The Red Army is in every way superior to the Northeastern Volunteer Army, and the patriotic fervor of the North Chinese people is no weaker than that of the people in the Northeast. Anyone who does not want to confuse public opinion has no reason to say that the Red Army is incapable of fighting the Japanese alone. The failures of the anti-Japanese campaigns in Shanghai and at the Great Wall resulted from the wavering attitude of the leaders, from their inability to employ dynamic tactics, and from their lack of sufficient cooperation with the people. But the Chinese Red Army is not plagued with all these weaknesses. Therefore, we consider the Red Army capable of fighting the Japanese all by itself. The Red Army cannot be easily defeated, it is capable of long-term resistance. Although the Red Army does not expect to achieve final victory over the Japanese with its present strength, it is nonetheless capable of fighting the Japanese by itself. In its continual process of fighting the Japanese, the Red Army will undoubtedly unite all Chinese and all the armed forces willing to fight the Japanese, and win final victory.

If it be said that national unity is essential to win final victory in the anti-Japanese war, that is correct. But if it be said that unity should first be achieved before fighting the Japanese, that is not correct. We must remember that some forces have already started their resistance. The enemy would never let us concentrate our strength where there is no resistance movement. The enemy has put the Nanjing Central Government and the local governments under close surveillance, and has occupied one province after another. Under such circumstances, a general mobilization on the national scale is possible only when the resistance movement has been set in motion. Resistance and general mobilization should start at the same time. It is almost impossible to call for a national general mobilization in “peaceful” situations.

You ask for the freedom to engage in all patriotic movements, but the enemy will certainly use force to suppress the patriotic movements. Obviously, war is inevitable. The situation is becoming increasingly perilous. If we do not start the anti-Japanese war immediately, unity in national defense and general mobilization will be more difficult. If we let the opportunity pass, we may even lose the possibility of having a united self-defense and general mobilization at all. Even now, a national general mobilization will have to exclude the Northeast and parts of the northern regions. If we let this situation continue, the enemy can set up more armies of Chinese traitors, occupy more Chinese territory, and seize all

2. Communist collaboration with the Fujian rebels in 1933–34 was, in fact, extremely limited. See the Introduction to Volume IV, pp. lxxix–lxxxiv.
MAO’S ROAD TO POWER

major cities and traffic routes. If that happens, our general mobilization can be called for only in a very small portion of the territory, located in the countryside. Do we still want to use excuses like the lack of unity and insufficient preparation to delay our resistance to the Japanese?

We are not against real preparations, but we are against using preparations as an excuse to avoid resistance. No resistance can impede preparation and general mobilization. Resistance of any kind is good mobilization in itself. This has been eloquently proven by our experience of fighting the Japanese in Shanghai and at the Great Wall.

What we can achieve by years of secret preparation under the enemy’s surveillance may be achieved within weeks after the resistance war starts. Moreover, the strengths we cultivate in secret preparation will never compensate for the time we lose, nor will this kind of strength balance that amassed by the enemy in the same duration of time.

Some people claim that our independent resistance upsets their overall plan for resisting Japan. We have no way of knowing what that so-called “overall plan for resisting Japan” is. We are merely asking those people who are now lagging behind to catch up with us quickly, and the military and political leaders and political parties who are yet unprepared to fight a resistance war to join us immediately in the anti-Japanese war. There are no valid reasons to ask us to stop carrying out our anti-Japanese policies, to stop taking anti-Japanese actions in order to suit the program and actions of those “critics.”

A resistance war against Japan will be cruel and long. The final victory cannot be won without many hard battles. In this long and hard war we can certainly mobilize and rally all the forces in the country. We should never delay fighting the Japanese till we have mobilized and rallied all forces.

Therefore, we demand that the war against Japan be started immediately. First of all, let the Red Army concentrate its troops in Hebei, so that it can start fighting the Japanese. We oppose anybody using any excuses to delay or avoid confrontation with Japan. We sincerely hope that you will help us with our demands.

In order to concentrate our national strength to fight the resistance war against Japan, we have improved Soviet work and Soviet laws in all areas. Besides changing the worker-peasant government and worker-peasant Red Army into the People’s Soviet Government and People’s Red Army, we amended the Soviet election laws by giving the right to vote and be elected to all petty bourgeois office workers, members of the professions, experts, small merchants, and small business owners. We proclaimed that in the Soviet Areas, all political parties, social organizations, and mass organizations have civil rights. We welcome representatives of all parties and social organizations who are willing to fight the Japanese with us to join the Soviet Government and share responsibilities. We have passed resolutions not to confiscate the rich peasants’ land. If they want to fight the Japanese with us, we will not refuse to join forces with them. We will not confiscate the property and factories of big or small capitalists. We will protect their enterprises and help them grow. This would increase the material supply needed by the anti-Japanese movement in the Soviet Areas. We will not confiscate the property and land of officers and landlords who participate actively in the anti-Japanese war. We invite all unemployed officers, soldiers, clerks, and experts to the Soviet Areas. We will provide appropriate jobs to enable them to use their talents fully. We drew up special plans to give favorable treatment to captured officers and soldiers. If they want to go home, we provide travel expenses. If they want to stay in the Soviet Areas to fight the Japanese with us, we offer jobs. All miscellaneous taxes have been abolished. There is only a light progressive tax.

Such is the political program we have adopted, and which is being carried out in the Soviet Areas. We are definitely not hostile to any class among the Chinese people which is anti-Japanese. In the future, when the Red Army enters the territories of friendly anti-Japanese armies, the Red Army agrees to obey the laws and regulations of the friendly armies, and will not interfere with local administration, provided that the friendly armies honor our mutual agreements. As regards labor-capital relations, we have decided to improve the basic living conditions of the workers. Labor-capital agreements should be made in consideration of the reality in every business enterprise. Both labor and capital should honor the agreements, and try to avoid unnecessary strikes and goldbricking. Laws on supervising production by workers have been abolished. We advise the workers not to demand what is impossible from their businesses. In non-soviet regions, we hold that the living conditions of the workers must be improved, but on condition that there be no deepening of struggles against capitalism. We are persuaded that fighting for customs autonomy and opposing imperialist invasion are beneficial both to the workers and to the capitalists. On the other hand, neither the workers nor the capitalists can expect improvements in their own conditions while the imperialists continue their aggression. The common interests of the workers and the capitalists are based on opposing the imperialist invasion.

Our guerrillas in Hebei, Hunan, Jiangxi, Fujian, Zhejiang, and some other regions have not yet been able to carry out our recently passed laws. The reason is that they have not received our directives because of the numerous barriers. Moreover, the bloody massacres carried out in the course of “Encirclement and Suppression” may trigger some retaliatory measures, which we consider to be wrong. We strongly hope that it will be possible to correct these errors of the guerrilla units immediately. Most unfortunately, we cannot carry out these con-

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3. At this point, the available Chinese text contains the following remarks: “Here we have omitted two sentences in the English translation we are working on. The meaning of the two English sentences is unclear. We will put them back in as soon as we find the Chinese original.”
ditions immediately, because we do not have decisive force in our hands. We consider the Red Army as the army of the Chinese people. It respects and responds unconditionally to criticisms of the people. In regard to the various issues of the Chinese people, we are willing to obey the people's democratic decision that we do not want to be slaves without a country. Of course, our Party members should participate in all local organizations and in all movements to save the country. We are willing to sacrifice everything to support these movements and organizations, so as to struggle together with all political parties and people who do not want to be slaves without a country, to rescue the Chinese people from extinction. Our Party members obey unconditionally the regulations, platforms, and decisions made by the majority of these organizations. In practice, we conform unconditionally to the majority opinion, even when we do not agree in principle. Our party members will not organize opposition factions in or compete with these organizations in order to win over the masses or seize power. On the contrary, we are willing to support any leaders of any parties who are thoroughly anti-Japanese, so that they can give full play to their abilities in dealing with the masses. Our Party members are willing to work under their leadership. In order to defeat the powerful enemy, we need development and victory not only for ourselves, but for all the united forces. The slogan of our united front is, “All political parties, all classes, unite under the banner of resisting Japan and saving the country.” For these reasons, we consider it wrong to advocate a slogan of overthrowing a certain class or a certain political party in the United Front. In our opinion, there must be many leaders, party members, and officials in the Guomindang and the Guomindang government who are capable of resisting Japan. We are more than willing to unite with them. Therefore, it is inappropriate to be generally opposed to the Guomindang and its local governments. We not only do not approve of but oppose factionalism, monopolizing of power, manipulation, and actual forcing of the masses into the national salvation movement by some young people.

Lastly, we consider it essential that all parties understand our tasks of resisting Japan and saving the country, and change their hostile attitudes toward us. Opinions on all other issues are trivial. Some people, however, pay undue attention to many opinions on other issues. This is the source of conflicts and confrontations. We are willing to correct these shortcomings. If our Party members make such mistakes in the national salvation movement, we hope that leaders and young people in other parties, animated by patriotic fervor, will admonish them. We believe that a national united front can be victoriously organized if, responding to the needs of resisting Japan and saving the country, all of us set aside our mutual hostility, tolerate and respect each other, and that such a front will guarantee a bright future. The growing strength of the United Front will enable us not only to defeat the Japanese imperialists and traitors who are selling out the country, but, after passing through a certain stage, to rid the Chinese nation of all the bonds of imperialism, and to achieve a truly democratic and united China. Therefore, we do not consider the United Front a short-lived phenomenon. In its various developmental stages, individuals may waver, flee, or betray, but these things should in no way be interpreted as the disintegration of the United Front.

The United Front has a clearer premise and a better foundation now than in 1927. The reason is that the national crisis is a hundred times more serious than that in 1927. The major goal of the 1927 United Front was to fight enemies within the country (the Beiyang warlords), while the goal now is fighting foreign enemies. In 1927, those who were not in the United Front could organize semi-independent governments. But now, no one who leaves the United Front or is not participating in it can ever organize a semi-independent government. He cannot find any support from any classes of the Chinese people, either. What is more, the 1927 experience cannot be reused mechanically by any classes, because the international and domestic situations have undergone drastic changes since 1927. The changes have been favorable to the national United Front. We are very optimistic about the future of the United Front. There is no reason for pessimism. We put the cause of the United Front above anything. We are not afraid of being used by other parties, because we have a carefully thought-out platform of staunchly resisting the Japanese. We are willing to cooperate to the end with every political faction and organization which is resisting Japan and putting down the Chinese traitors.

The current most dangerous tendency is that some people dream of unity through the use of force. Obviously, unity through force spells continuous civil war. If we recall how Yuan Shikai and other warlords failed in their plans to unify China by using force, we can foresee what a dark future is awaiting those people. A policy of using force at the present time could be far more detrimental to the Chinese nation in all respects under the current situation. It is unfortunate that some people still take the attitude of spectators. Some others attempt to use another “concentrated front” to oppose and sabotage the United Front of the Chinese people. This is one of the main reasons why the United Front has not been developing smoothly.

You mentioned that past disputes focused on the methods of fighting the Japanese and on the priority of “internal pacification” and “resistance to foreign aggression.” We feel that this is rather superficial. In fact, some people are wavering between being national traitors and being national heroes, trying to choose between resistance and capitulation. We have no faith in those who advocate “internal pacification before resisting foreign aggression.” We have not seen any results from the policy of “internal pacification.” Then why are they still insisting upon “internal pacification before resisting foreign aggression?” We do not oppose unity. What we oppose are civil wars and national traitors. We hold that there is only one way out for today’s China: all political parties unite on an equal basis, resist the Japanese, and obey the democratic politics of the Chinese people. If this is abandoned in favor of an attempt to use
military force to unite China, then the unity of the Chinese people will never be realized. China will be even more divided and weakened. This factor alone is sufficient for us to oppose such an attempt. On the premise of equality, we support national unity through joint efforts against Japan and through democracy. We are willing to obey the resolutions of any national congress which really represents the people of China, and propose to raise all issues at such a congress for its arbitration. We also agree to leave it to the Chinese people to seek a democratic solution to the problem whether it is suitable to establish a Soviet system in China.

We must, however, declare that we consider totally anti-democratic the draft Constitution and the organizational and election principles of the National Assembly issued by the Nanjing Government on May 5 this year. We do not recognize that the National Assembly elected under these laws represents the will of the Chinese people. We will not participate in such elections. Neither the Chinese people nor we should obey the resolutions passed by such a "National Assembly." We consider the mere existence of this "National Assembly" harmful. Nevertheless, we agree to participate in any representative organizations of the people which are established on genuine democratic principles.

Lastly, we hope that you and all national salvation organizations in China will send representatives to participate in our Soviet Government. We hope that you will introduce representatives of other political parties to negotiate with us on how to cooperate. Any representatives who are willing to talk with us may come directly to the soviet regions. We guarantee their absolute safety. If the safety of our representatives is also guaranteed outside of the soviet regions, we are willing to send our representatives to other regions to negotiate.

We are sincerely willing to add our signature to the program of the United National Salvation Association.

Please accept my national revolutionary salute!

Mao Zedong

4. The reference is to the National Assembly which the Guomingdang, at its Fifth Congress in November 1935, had finally decided to convene. The electoral law promulgated on May 4, 1936, provided for an assembly of approximately 1,800 members, one-third of them appointed or servicing ex officio, and the remaining two-thirds elected. The 1,200 elected members were to be chosen by a complicated system under which 665 were elected by areas of residence, 384 by vocational bodies, and 155 by a special procedure for citizens of the Japanese-occupied areas and for members of the armed forces. The voting was by secret ballot, but the candidates were all selected by the government or by various other authorities. By the time Mao wrote this letter, voting was already under way, but it had not yet been completed when the war with Japan broke out on July 7, 1937, and this National Assembly was never convened.

Carry Out Extensive Propaganda Regarding the Victory of the Northward Advance of the Second and Fourth Front Armies

(August 11, 1936)

To Peng [Dehuai], Lin [Biao], Ye [Jianying], Zuo [Quan] and Nie [Rongzhen], Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihu], Song [Shilun] and Song [Renqiong], Yan [Hongyan] and Cai [Shufan], Xiao [Jingguang], Li [Fuke], Xie [Song] and Liu [You'an], Dai [Jiyi], Guo [Baoshan], and Zhong [Chibing].

The vanguard of our Second and Fourth front armies has already reached the vicinity of Hadapu and Xigu [xian], and we have cut the Xi[gui] - Min[xian] road. Mao Bingwen, Wang Jun, and Lu Dachang were thrown into a tremendous panic, and our three front armies were able to join forces. This unprecedented great victory will inspire the broad masses of people throughout the soviet areas and the whole country as well as the armed forces sympathetic to us, and it will shock our enemies. It is hoped that you will immediately propagate this news on a broad scale separately among the troops and the local masses, in accordance with the last telegraphic order from the Military Affairs Commission and the General Political Department. You should also mobilize for the celebration of victory by means of key slogans such as “Expand the troops,” “Train the troops,” “Foster cadres,” “Strive for victory,” “Consolidate the soviet areas,” “Win over the White army troops,” “Unite with the Soviet Union and Mongolia,” “Jointly resist

We have translated this text from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 565–66, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Li Fuke was at this time chief of staff of the First Operational District.

2. Xie Song and Liu You'an were, respectively, deputy commander and head of the Political Department of the Twenty-ninth Army.

3. Dai Jiyi was the head of the mobilization and military equipment department of the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission.

4. Guo Baoshan was at this time commander-in-chief of the Third Operational District.

5. Zhong Chibing was concurrently head of the military department of the North Shaanxi Provincial Military Department and head of the Sixth Operational District.

6. This refers to a telegram dated August 3, 1936, to the Red Army's First Front Army and the Northern Shaanxi Red Army, from the Northwest Revolutionary Military Commission and the General Political Department. It contained information about the northward march of the Second and Fourth front armies, and called on the entire Red Army to support the development of the resistance to Japan in the Northwest.
Japan," "Defend the Northwest," "Celebrate the victory of the northward advance of the Red Army's Second and Fourth front armies," "Celebrate the three front armies' joining forces," and so on.

Mao

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**Telegram to Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi] on the Future Strategic Orientation**

(August 12, 1936)

Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi]:

We have the following suggestions with regard to the future strategic orientation:

1. The first, second, and fourth Front Armies all have the tasks of coordinating their actions with Army A to fight through to the Soviet Union, consolidating the internal ranks, sending troops to fight in Suiyuan, and establishing a Northwest national defense government. By carrying out these tasks we can coordinate and push forward the united front of all factions nationwide, in order to attain the goal of a large-scale war of resistance against Japan.

2. Given the situation that the first, second, and fourth Front Armies have joined forces, that Army A is allied with us, that Japan has directed its Mongolian puppet troops to attack Suiyuan and Inner Mongolia in an attempt to break relations between China and the Soviet Union, and that Chiang Kaishek is paying attention to the Southwest and so is temporarily unable to look after the Northwest, and so on, the tasks set forth above may and in fact must be accomplished within a relatively short period of time.

3. Fighting through to the Soviet Union is an important step towards bringing about a nationwide war of resistance against Japan, and first of all towards bringing about a new situation in the Northwest, and waging a partial war of resistance against Japan. The practical steps are as follows:

a. The second and fourth Front Armies should do their utmost to capture Minzhou or its environs as a temporary base area, and control a section on both sides of the Tao River near Minzhou. After the troops have been appropriately reorganized, a strong force should be sent to western Gansu to attack Mao Bingwen and seek an opportunity to destroy him, with the aim of threatening Lanzhou so that three divisions of Army A's forces under Li Zhong can all concentrate in Lanzhou as a strategic pivot. Another strong force should be sent to Xiahe to attack Ma Bufang's native village of Hezhou with two aims. One aim is to threaten Qinghai and lure [Ma] Bufang's forces on the Western Route in Ganzhou, Liangzhou, and

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We have translated this telegram from the 1986 annual compendium of *Wenxian he yanjia*, pp. 104–7.

1. This is a coded reference to the Northeastern Army.
2. The reference is to Yu Xuezong.
Xiaozhou to go eastward to lend assistance so that Army A can send troops out for defense purposes, and place the three towns of Gan[zhou], Liang[zhou], and Xiao[zhou] on the Western Route in the hands of Army A. The other aim is to wipe out the forces of Ma [Bufang] of Qinghai, thereby forcing him to negotiate a peace with us. Li Yi now has representatives where Ma of Qinghai is, and the plan above is one we worked out in consultation with Li Yi. In addition, another smaller force should be sent to block Wang Jun’s line [of action] in Xili, and personnel should be sent to engage in diplomacy with Wang. At the same time, diplomacy should be carried out with regard to Mao Bingwen. All of them are in a state of extreme apprehension, so there is a great possibility of diplomatic success. The plan outlined above should be carried out within approximately a month and a half. During this time, the second and fourth Front Armies should make efforts to solve the two problems of personnel reinforcements and bedding and clothing supplements, so as to prevent various difficulties from arising once the rather poor areas of northern Gansu are entered.

b. After the tasks set forth above are accomplished, carry out the joining of the three Front Armies in northern Gansu, expand the soviet area in northern Gansu, and prepare to attack Ningxia. This step should be accomplished around October and November.

c. Beginning in December, one of the three front armies should be in charge of defending the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Soviet Area, and in coordination with Army A, deal with Chiang Kaishek’s attack. The other two Front Armies should take advantage of the river’s freezing to cross it and wipe out Ma Hongkui, occupy Ningxia, and complete the task of fighting through to the Soviet Union.

4. The plan for consolidating the internal ranks is as follows:

a. The consolidation of new and old soviet areas in northern Shaanxi, northern Gansu, and Ningxia, and the expansion and consolidation of the three Front Armies, making them into a powerful leading fulcrum in the overall Northwest situation.

b. Political reform of Army A, and placing it militarily in an invincible position.

c. Completion of the united front amongst all units in the three provinces of Shaanxi, Gansu, and Qinghai, purging of all reactionary elements in the three provinces, and initial realization of democratic principles in the three provinces.

d. Carrying out the above steps will place the overall situation in the Northwest politically and militarily on solid ground. On the one hand, it will suffice to prevent Chiang Kaishek from possibly turning towards the Northwest to attack after the Southwestern problem is solved, and to prevent Japan from attacking Ningxia, and smash its plot to drive a wedge in relations between China and the Soviet Union. On the other hand, it will constitute a further stage of development in preparing to send troops to Suiyuan, and in preparing to have the four provinces of Shaanxi, Gansu, Ningxia, and Qinghai move in the direction of revolution and anti-Japanese resistance.

5. The two armies, A and B, will each make up part of a joint vanguard army of the unified anti-Japanese army, set out for Suiyuan, and launch an attack against the Mongolian puppet troops of Prince De and Li Shouxin. This action will be used as a call to the nationwide movement to resist Japan, which will push it towards a higher stage.

6. All of the steps set out above are for the purposes of forming and consolidating a Northwest national defense government, using this national defense government to push forward a nationwide united front, and laying the foundation for a national defense government of the whole country.

7. As for tactics with regard to Nanjing for armies A and B, the Soviet Government, and the national defense government, it is appropriate to use the general principles of the united front:

a. Recognizing Nanjing as a necessary and primary counterpart in carrying out a united front, negotiations should be undertaken simultaneously and separately with Nanjing and the various Guomindang factions outside of Nanjing. On the basis of our previous negotiations with Nanjing, and on condition that they make genuine preparations to resist Japan, carry out democracy within the country, stop their “encirclement and suppression” [campaigns], and so on, agree to negotiate with them about the question of uniting with the soviet and the Red Army.

b. Continue calling for a halt to the war, negotiating a peace, and asking Chiang to resist Japan. At the present stage, carry out [the policy of] not striking unless he attacks, and not leaving Henan for the time being. If he attacks, then we fight resolutely, and at the same time request peace negotiations.

c. When our troops are advancing to resist Japan, on encountering Chiang Kaishek’s troops or other military forces, we should carry out the policy of trying courteous means before resorting to force.

d. When on the defensive, use slogans opposing the traitors who sabotage the anti-Japanese rear areas, and when on the offensive, use slogans opposing traitors who block the way to resistance against Japan. But at all times adopt a policy of fighting on the one hand, and negotiating for peace on the other.

e. In carrying out united front [work] with regard to the White army, place emphasis on their high-ranking officers.

3. I.e., the Northeastern Army and the Red Army.
4. See above, the relevant note to the text of February 18, 1936.
f. All united front negotiations are to be undertaken with an attitude of good faith.
g. All tactics towards Nanjing mentioned above are for the purposes of causing splits in Nanjing, exposing its deceptions, isolating its leaders, winning over the rank-and-file, rejecting its Chinese traitor elements and promoting its patriotic elements, causing it to take the road of truly resisting Japan and saving the nation from extinction. At the same time the various factions outside of Nanjing will be influenced, and this will be advantageous in our carrying out negotiations for a united front; it will benefit the activities of our Party nationwide, facilitate the further development of the people's patriotic movement, and aid the creation of a favorable situation in the Northwest.
h. Never forget revolutionary vigilance towards real enemies.
8. We request that you three elder brothers consider the views set forth above and respond by telegram.

Luo [Fu]  [Lin] Yu[ying]  [Zhou] En[lai]
Bo [Gu]  [Wang] Jia[xiang]  [Peng De]huai
Kai [Feng]  [Mao] Ze[dong]

Putting the Emphasis on the Political Education of Captives from the White Army

(August 13, 1936, 12:30 A.M.)

To Peng [Dehuai], Liu [Xiao], Zuo [Quan], Nie [Rongzhen], Zhu [Rui], and Deng [Xiaoping], Xu [Haidong], Cheng [Zihua], and Wang [Shoudao], Song [Shilun] and Song [Renqiong], Yan [Hongyan] and Cai [Shufan], Xiao [Jingguang], Li [Fuchun], Xie [Song] and Liu [You'an], Zhong [Chibing], Guo [Baoshan], and Huang [Chunpu]:

1. In order to strengthen united front activities and the work of winning over the White army, it is necessary to place emphasis on political education among officers and soldiers captured from the White army, and give them special preferential treatment so as to train a group of qualified personnel who can go anywhere, or who can at least engage in liaison and communications work. Therefore, it has been specially decided that:
   a. Where there are large numbers of captives, it is necessary to select out a group of the best officers and men and give them special training.
   b. All individual prisoners captured occasionally on various fronts, and all those who cross over [to our side] should remain for training and not be released immediately.
   c. As for organs to conduct the training, some [captive] should remain at the front to be trained by the various political departments, and some should be sent to the General Political Department and the Anti-Japanese Front Department in the rear.
   d. The content of the training shall emphasize the united front and work within the White army.
   e. After training is completed, they should immediately be sent to work within the White army, with an emphasis on higher level activities and interaction with officers.

2. In accordance with the development of the work at present, it is hoped that all captives and all officers and men who have crossed over who remain at the various political departments at the front from the forces of the two Mas,\(^1\) He

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 567–69, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
1. Ma Hongkui and Ma Hongbin.
[Zhuguo], Dong [Yingbin], Shen [Ke], and Wang [Yizhe], and those of the two Gaos,² Tang [Enbo], and Yang [Hucheng] will be sent here to the Military Affairs Commission for training.


Letter to Du Bincheng¹
(August 13, 1936)

To Mr. Bincheng and his associates:

Your return during the Midautumn Festival is an act of ample kindness, and hearing your wise views on resisting Japan and saving the nation won my immense admiration. At present the national calamity is worsening day by day, the traitors are acting in a savage manner, and our beloved country is in extreme peril. The Mongolian puppet army is launching an attack in the direction of Suiyuan, and the Hebei-Chahar Political Affairs Council is undergoing a qualitative reorganization. All such things reflect the intensification of Japanese banditry. We, your younger brothers, have issued repeated appeals, calling for the whole country to unite as one, without regard to parties and factions, to resist foreign aggression. There has been steady progress over the last year. Mr. [Yang] Hucheng has agreed to a united front, and it is anticipated that further progress will be made. The time is ripe; it is, indeed, precisely the time to take responsibility for resisting Japan and saving the nation. One word from you gentlemen is enough to arouse the nation, so it is fervently hoped that you will accelerate your driving force, and also that great efforts will be made in persuading the various units of the Northwest. In the great and glorious cause of saving the Northwest, saving North China, and saving the whole of China, we wish to exert ourselves to the utmost together with you gentlemen. Comrade Zhang² is being sent especially to call on you with reverence and receive your instructions respectfully in all matters. The goal is in sight and great efforts toward it are anticipated. As for other matters, we have a tacit understanding and I will not go into details. Wishing you days of peace and comfort.

Respectfully yours,

Mao Zedong

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1. Du Bincheng (1888–1947) was a native of Shaanxi. As chief adviser to the Seventeenth Route Army, he had played an active role in encouraging Yang Hucheng to accept the Communists’ policy of an anti-Japanese united front.

2. Zhang Wenbin (1910–1944), a native of Pingjiang in Hunan, was sent by the Red Army to make contact with Yang Hucheng’s forces. He later became the provincial Party secretary in Guangdong, and died in prison in 1944.

2. Gao Guizi and Gao Shuangcheng.
Letter to Yang Hucheng

(August 13, 1936)

For your inspection, honorable Mr. Huchen:¹

Your favor in agreeing to the united front, kind sir, is indeed greatly to be desired. Over the past nine months, our humble side has never considered you an enemy. Because from the point of view of reason, circumstance, and history there was always the possibility that you would participate in the anti-Japanese front, we have held fast to our united front policy and never changed our direction in the slightest on account of your hesitant stance. Your being friend or foe, on the other hand, has to be clearly expressed by you. False or circuitous tactics do not fit in with the true intentions of a gentleman such as yourself. Japan is presently attacking Suiyuan, and Shaanxi and Gansu are both under its threat. In an overturned nest, no egg stays whole. Mr. Chiang seeks a way out in the Southwest in an attempt to salvage the half of the country remaining; relying on Britain, the Northwest is no longer the focus of his attention. The united resistance against Japan on the part of all factions in the country is gradually maturing step by step, but you, on the other hand, have maintained a rather detached attitude—initiating neither secret contacts nor covert preparations, which is certainly not something our comrades were hoping for from you gentlemen. Comrade Zhang Wenbin is hereby being sent to visit you and pay you our sincere respects, in the hopes of obtaining an accurate expression of your intentions so that we, for our part, may forge a comprehensive plan. If you, sir, were to join the united front in good faith, then all of us would be willing to make plans on your behalf to deal with all your troubles and difficulties, and do our best to keep you, sir, and the whole of your honorable army in an advantageous position out of harm’s way. We have recently heard that your honorable forces will move to defend Fu[shi]² and Luo[chuan], which means that our two sides will be even closer to each other. For our part, we are glad to get such good neighbors, and we have every hope at the same time that your honorable troops will maintain discipline in dealing with the popular masses and ensure the workings of the economy and trade. More harmonious relations between us will not only be to the benefit of both armies, but will also be a blessing for the national salvation front.

¹We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 38–39, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
²Huchen is an alternate form of Yang Hucheng’s given name.
²Fushi is the old name for Yan’an.

Comrade Zhang has been enjoined to hasten forward to work out [with you] and agree upon all such matters as concrete measures and quickly establishing correspondence and communications, and so on. I am writing specially to you about all this, but there is much more that I desired to say. Respectfully wishing you

All the best in your endeavors

Mao Zedong
To Take Minzhou Would Bring Great Strategic Advantages
(August 13, 1936)

Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi]:

If it is possible to take the town of Minzhou, this would be extremely advantageous for fighting Ma [Bufang], Mao [Bingwen], and Wang [Jun], and seizing the upper hand strategically. If by any chance it is not possible to take the town, then it should be kept under siege to fight the [enemy’s] relief forces. Just now, Mao Bingwen is sending a unit from western Gansu as reinforcements, and this is a good opportunity to wipe them out. Commander-in-Chief Zhu should hasten to send someone to meet Wang Jun and Zeng Wanzhong; they are isolated and in danger, so it would not be difficult to have an impact. It would also be appropriate to send someone to Lu Dachang in town, and permit him to escape in the direction of Lintan. What is your opinion? It is hoped that you will consider this matter.

Mao [Zedong]  Zhou [Enlai]  Peng [Dehuai]

Letter to Song Zheyuan
(August 14, 1936)

For your inspection, honorable Mr. Chairman Mingxuan:

Since Mr. Liu Ziqing’s arrival, we have learned that you, sir, are eager to resist Japan. I can scarcely express my admiration for this. Long ago, when the Japanese bandits first invaded our land, you made every effort to defend the borders and fervently fend off humiliation. As a result, your renown as a righteous man has resounded both in China and abroad. Moreover, today as the Japanese bandits have continued to advance, attacking simultaneously on the military, political, and economic fronts, you stand alone maintaining your position, refusing to give up under the siege of the powerful bandits and Chinese traitors. Nor have you continued last winter’s policy concerning the North China mass movement. You have, after all, firmly established the resolve to resist Japan—on the one hand, to engage in forceful preparations to unite the people of North China, on the other, to renew the policy of unifying with Russia and unifying with the Communists once carried out by the Northwestern Army during the glorious period of 1925–1927—while waiting for the opportune time to launch a large-scale war of resistance against Japan. Then, not only will the Soviet Red Army support you, sir, and the Twenty-ninth Army with all its might; the popular masses of the whole country as well as all the anti-Japanese forces will support you, sir, and your honorable army as true anti-Japanese heroes. At present, the Japanese bandits have eager designs on Suixian, Prince De is ready to make trouble any time, and perhaps it will not be too long before the second Mongolian puppet regime appears. The proportion of Chinese traitors on the Hebei-Chahar Political Council is also increasing. All this is steadily closing in on you, sir. And yet,

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 40–42, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Song Zheyuan (1885–1940), a native of Shandong, had served from 1925 to 1929 in Feng Yuxiang’s army. In the 1930s, he held various important political and military posts in North China under the Nanjing government. At this time, he was chairman of the Guomindang’s Hebei-Chahar Political Council and commander of the Guomindang’s Twenty-ninth Army.

2. The reference is to policies aimed at curbing anti-Japanese activity by the masses of North China, which Mao had repeatedly accused Chiang Kaishek of following in order to ingratiate himself with the Japanese.

3. On Prince De (De Wang), commonly known in English as Demchukdogruber (1902–1966), see above, the note to the order of February 18, 1936. He had earlier been a commissioner of the Chahar provincial government under Song Zheyuan.
your younger brother and the rest of us truly hope that you will be able to stand firm in your original resolve, even under such trying circumstances. We and the people of the whole country will never let you face your difficulties alone. We vow to stand behind you with all our might. Recently, the domestic united front has made great progress, the Red Army's main forces are gradually becoming more concentrated, and there is already assurance of international coordination. All of this is not just empty words, but actual force that can be employed to resist Japan. Only the concrete steps for carrying it out must be carefully planned, to avoid bungling. Now I am sending Comrade Zhang Jinwu to you to receive your instruction. Please meet with him to discuss the matter. If you are kind enough to agree, Comrade Zhang will respectfully serve as long-term liaison representative on our behalf stationed with you, and all the correspondence and communications will be carried out in secret. As for Han of Shandong, Fu of Suiyuan, and Yan of Shanxi, your younger brother and the rest of us strongly wish to establish relationships with them, to form a Northern United Front. You, sir, are surely of the same mind, and I beseech you to favor us by finding a way to arrange an introduction. I eagerly await your reply with the utmost anticipation. I write specially to wish you well-deserved blessings.

With utmost respect, I am

Your younger brother, Mao Zedong

Letter to Fu Zuoyi

(August 14, 1936)

For your inspection, honorable Mr. Chairman Zuoyi:

The renown of the heroic battle of Zhuozhou has long sounded in our ears. Moreover, now that we are situated close by, we admire it all the more. Recently Li Shouxin and Zhuo Shihai have been pressing hard towards Suiyuan, and Prince De is not to be outdone by Puyi, so that the performance of the Mongolian puppet régime is truly overbearing. How can anyone sleep soundly just next to the bed of Japanese imperialism! You, sir, are a leader of the North; are you willing to lag behind others in your patriotism? To protect Suiyuan, to protect the Northwest, and to protect North China is your responsibility, sir, as it is also the responsibility of the Red Army and of the people of the whole country. What is of vital importance today is that if we retreat, we will perish, but if we resist, we will survive; if we harass one another, we will perish, but if we fight for the country we will survive. For several years now your younger brother and the rest of us have been calling on people of all walks of life throughout the country to unite as one in resisting Japan, and to organize a government of national defense and a unified anti-Japanese army. Fortunately, the hearts of the people are not yet dead, those who respond grow more numerous every day, and the light of resistance against Japan and striving for survival is beginning to dawn. Recently the Red Army has become more concentrated, and its strength has increased. If you, sir, can resolutely fight against Japan, your younger brother and the rest of us

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 43–44, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Fu Zuoyi (1895–1974), zì Yishun, was a native of Linxi, Shanxi. At this time, he was chairman of the Guomindang Suiyuan Provincial Government and commander of the Guomindang Thirty-fifth Army.

2. The Battle of Zhuozhou refers to the battle between Fu Zuoyi's division from Shanxi and Feng Yuxiang's forces at Zhuozhou, Hebei, from October 1927 to January 1928. At the time, Yan Xishan's troops were attacking Feng's army, and Fu Zuoyi, the commander of the Fourth Division, led his troops to push toward Zhili (Hebei) Province and occupied Zhuozhou. Under a fierce siege by Feng's army, Fu's division held the city for three months.

3. Li Shouxin (1892–1970), a native of Inner Mongolia, had capitulated to the Japanese in 1933. In May 1936 he became chief of staff of the puppet Mongolian Military Government, and commander of the puppet Mongolian army's First Army, under Prince De. Zhuo Shiheizi Zhuoebazhapu, who was deputy commander of the puppet Mongolian army.

4. Zhang Jinwu is a pseudonym for Zhang Jingwu (1906–1971), a native of Linxian, Hunan. At this time he was the Chinese Communist Party representative sent to North China for United Front work.

5. Han of Shandong refers to Han Fuqu (1890–1938), a native of Hebei, who was at this time pacification commander for Shandong Province. Fu of Suiyuan refers to Fu Zuoyi; see the note to the following text. Yan of Shanxi refers to Yan Xishan; see the note to the text of November 30, 1935.
will surely stand behind you. It is our fervent hope that representatives can be exchanged, and a plan to further this great cause can quickly be established, so that we may strive to ward off catastrophe and pursue survival. I know that you, sir, are surely of the same mind.

I am writing specially to wish you well-deserved blessings.

With utmost respect,

Mao Zedong

Letter to Song Ziwén

(August 14, 1936)

Dear Mr. Ziwén:

It is ten years since we parted, and now the state of affairs in the nation has changed completely. Only by returning to the united front can the country be saved from ruin and manage to survive. When elder brother Dong Jianwú was here earlier, I asked him to convey my humble regards; I wonder whether or not they have reached you? Your younger brother and the rest of us have made three appeals over the last several years, in the hope that the Nanjing authorities would change their foreign and domestic policies. Although at present there seems to be some hint of this, the main aspects remain unchanged, making it very hard to achieve true unity to resist Japan.

You, sir, are a person of renown in our country, and have on occasion voiced your opinion on resistance against Japan, thereby filling us with admiration! We fervently hope that you will advance further in that direction, taking the initiative in rejecting the traitors who are selling out the country, restoring Sun Yatsen’s revolutionary spirit in your honorable party, as practiced before 1927, and carrying out the three great policies of uniting with Russia, uniting with the Communists, and uniting with the peasants and workers. Thus you will not only save the country, you will also save yourselves. The [Japanese] bandits have caused extreme calamity. We cry out urgently in search of friends who will stand together with us to brave the storms, and we wish to hear your illustrious opinions. In haste I have set down my views, though there is so much more to be said! I avail myself of the opportunity to wish you all the best in your work.

Mao Zedong

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 45–46, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Song Ziwén (1894–1971), known in English-language sources as T.V. Soong, was born in Shanghai. His eldest sister, Song Qingling, was the widow of Sun Yatsen; his second sister, Song Meiling, married Chiang Kai-shek in 1927. Thanks to these connections with the holders of political power, his family’s economic position, and the knowledge of economics acquired in taking a B.A. at Harvard, Song became the key figure in the establishment of a modern financial system in China. At this time, he was chairman of the National Economic Committee of the Guomindang government, and chairman of the board of the Bank of China.

2. Dong Jianwu, mentioned above in the text of March 4, 1936, entitled “Views Regarding Negotiations with the Nanjing Authorities,” was engaged at this time in underground work under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party in Shanghai.
To Yi Lirong

(August 14, 1936)

Elder Brother Yunshan:

It is five years since I heard personally from Wenliang that you, elder brother, had not forgotten your old friend. At that time I wrote you a letter, and I wonder whether or not it ever reached you. Recently I found out from someone who came here that you have been engaged in mass work and have shown an interest in cooperating with us. I was delighted to hear this. The situation at present is such that we cannot survive without resisting Japan, and cannot resist Japan without cooperation. This is why the trend is toward nationwide support for the united front. Your younger brother fully understands his elder brother’s difficulties. Yet today things are very different from the past, and the only way to national salvation and self-preservation is through turning in good faith toward anti-Japanese revolutionary work. I do not know whether or not this view could gain my elder brother’s complete acceptance. As regards the Shanghai workers’ movement, it would be advantageous for the Guomindang and the Communist Party to establish a united front and join together in dealing with imperialism and the Chinese traitors. I sincerely hope that you, elder brother, will make efforts to bring this about. If there are further measures to take, I hope that secret communications can be established, and that frequent correspondence may take place. Are the couple Li Heming and Wang Huigu still in touch with you? I have read

Li’s translation and feel very sympathetic to it. If it is convenient, please be so kind as to convey my greetings. To be able to establish a friendship and correspond with him would be even better. I have heard that in your circles there are quite a few old colleagues from the past. I miss them very much, and hope you will be able to give them my regards. I hope you can develop a collective force that will benefit the country and benefit the people.

Is Wenxuan still at your side? How is she? Give her my regards as well. My physical health has stayed very much the same, and my spirits are even better than in the past. Ten years of tempering has done me a world of good. I have written in haste, yet there is so much more to be said.

Respectfully wishing you the best of health,

Yang Ziren

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong shuxin suanj, pp. 47-48, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Yi Lirong (1898– ), alternate names Runsan and Yunshan, was a native of Xiangtan, Hunan. Regarding his earlier association with Mao Zedong, see the note in Volume I, p. 611. In 1936, he was working in a union under the control of the Guomindang in Shanghai.

2. The reference is to Xu Wenliang, Yi Lirong’s brother-in-law. He had worked at the Changsha Cultural Book Society before 1923. He went to the Soviet Area of Jiangxi in 1931, and was subsequently killed.

3. Li Da (1890–1966), zi Yongyang, hao Heming, was a native of Hunan. He played a major role in the establishment of the Chinese Communist Party, and at the First Congress of 1921 became the first head of the Propaganda Department. In 1923, he resigned from the Party because of his opposition to the policy of the “Bloc Within” with the Guomindang. He remained, however, firmly committed to Marxism. At this time he was head of the Economics Department at Beijing University. His wife Wang Huigu was working at China University in Beijing. For a biographical sketch and a detailed analysis of his contribution to Marxist theory and of his influence on Mao Zedong, see Nick Knight, Li Da and Marxist Philosophy in China (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996).


5. Xu Wenxuan, Yi Lirong’s wife. In earlier days, she had joined the New People’s Study Society, and worked as an accountant for the Changsha Cultural Book Society.

6. Ziren was one of Mao Zedong’s pen names, which he had used since the 1920s. (See Volume II, p. 135.) Here he has added the surname Yang, which was that of his martyred first wife, Yang Kaishui.
Seeking Comments on the Operational Deployment of the First, Second, and Fourth Front Armies

(August 22, 1936)

Peng [Dehuai]:

Please consider the following points today and tomorrow and then reply.

1. Our investigation shows that the two Mas of Ningxia\(^1\) have twenty infantry regiments and eight cavalry regiments. Are these figures accurate?

2. Is the period during which the Yellow River freezes actually three months long, or two months long?

3. If the Fourth Front Army waits for the opportunity to attack Qinghai independently, the First Front Army attacks Ningxia independently, and the Second Front Army is placed in a central position (for example, in the area of Minzhou,\(^2\) Jingning, and Tianshui) to contain the enemy and support the two sides by coordinated action, do you estimate that the goal of occupying Qinghai and Ningxia can be achieved? The main thing is whether the First Front Army is assured of defeating the Ningxia Mas independently. If the uncertainty has more to do with attacking the cities than with operations in the field, then does it make a big difference whether more or fewer troops are used to attack the cities?

4. If the Second Front Army is positioned near the Shaanxi-Gansu road to contain the enemies Mao [Bingwen], Wang [Jun], and He [Zhuguo], and we decide whether to send reinforcements and where to send them only after seeing the initial combat results of the First and Fourth Front armies' separate attacks on Ningxia and Qinghai, would the distance and time factors allow us to do this successfully? I feel that if the freezing period is longer than two months, then there would be enough time to send reinforcements. Does this judgment correspond to reality or not?

Mao

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 572–73, where it is reproduced from a mimeographed copy in the Central Archives.

1. The reference is to Ma Hongkui and Ma Hongbin. See above, the relevant notes to texts of May 25 and June 28, 1936.

2. That is, Minxian in Gansu Province.

A Letter from the Chinese Communist Party to the Chinese Guomindang

(August 25, 1936)

For the inspection of all the gentlemen of the Central Committee of the Chinese Guomindang, and to be transmitted to all members of the Chinese Guomindang:

More than a year has passed since our Party, together with the Soviet Government and the Red Army, issued the proclamation on fighting Japan and national salvation.\(^3\) Although the proposal, formulated by our Party together with the Soviet Government and the Red Army, to organize a national united front joining all parties, factions, and sectors throughout the country to fight together against Japan has won the support of all patriotic leaders and patriotic people nationwide, because your honorable party and the government of your honorable party have hesitated and refused to adopt it, the sacred national war of self-defense has not yet been launched even to this day. The Japanese bandits, on the other hand, have already seized on this weakness and come right in, and having been given an inch are going for the mile; the terrible disaster of falling into subjugation looms right before our eyes. The whole nation is in a state of panic, a truly desperate situation. This most grievous threat to the whole country and the whole nation has been brought on wholly by the erroneous policies of your honorable party and its government. We are now at a crucial moment in which we face the ruin of our state and the extinction of our race, so our Party cannot but once more urgently and forcefully call out to your honorable party: immediately stop the civil war, organize a national anti-Japanese united front, launch a sacred war of national self-defense, resist the Japanese imperialist attacks, defend and recover China's territorial sovereignty, and save the people of the whole country from an abyss of misery. If you insist on continuing the internal struggle, do not turn your guns from an inward direction to an outward direction, do not shift from accommodation policies to a war of resistance, do not change the situation of fragmentation into one of unity, and do not turn the situation of dispersion into one of integration, then the disasters that strike will be utterly unimaginable, and all of

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 424–34, where it is reproduced from a mimeographed copy in the Central Archives. The editors of the Mao Zedong wenji indicate that it was drafted by Mao.

1. Refers to the August 1, 1935, "Notice to All Compatriots on Fighting Japan and National Salvation," issued in the name of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic, known as the "August First Proclamation."
fairs Council, the Japanese Army’s invasion and occupation of Hebei and Chahar, the loss of economic control over North China, open smuggling that runs rampant throughout the country, the fact that national industry and commerce have fallen into a hopeless state, the near-bankruptcy of national finances, sabotage of the Customs authority, widespread establishment of Japanese intelligence organs in North China and as far as various provinces in the Northwest, the major attack on Suiyuan by the Japanese and puppet Mongolian armies, the founding of the independent Inner Mongolian government, the unrestricted flight of enemy aircraft in our territorial air space, the running amok by Japanese rōnin, direct and indirect interference inflicted by the Japanese bandits on the patriotic students’ movement and on the expression of patriotic ideas by the people, the slaughter of huge numbers of worker-peasant masses, the unbearable humiliation suffered by many patriotic people, patriotic soldiers, patriotic police, patriotic journalists, and even many of your honorable party’s key members and its government’s officials, the forced retreat of the defense troops, the sounding of an alarm in Qingdao,2 instigation of the southern China autonomous movement, and so on—every single one of these is seen as an enormous blow to China’s territorial sovereignty. To the people across the nation, the Shanghai Truce Agreement,3 the Tanggu Truce, the He-Umezu Agreement,4 the North China Anti-Communist Treaty, and the other unpublicized written and unwritten agreements are all treaties that give away our rights and territories. Therefore, as far as the people of the whole country can see, there has long been no hope for peace, and the final moment for sacrifice was reached long ago. Unless all the nation’s people and armed forces nationwide are mobilized for a resolute war of self-defense, there is no way to prevent the total loss of China’s territorial sovereignty.

Japanese imperialism’s gangster plan to destroy China will certainly never change unless all of China’s strength is mobilized to deal it resolutely a crushing blow. Modifications in their forms of invasion, shifts in the direction of their invasion, and even expressions of so-called “economic guidance and support” are not at all because they plan to halt their invasion, but rather precisely to facilitate their invasion. Therefore, to think that after sending troops into Hebei and Chahar the Japanese bandits will for a time concentrate on the economic 

2. The reference is to the landing of Japanese marines in Qingdao in November 1935, to help enforce a lockout of striking workers and arrest anti-Japanese agitators.

3. The reference is to the truce agreement concluded on May 5, 1932, between Chiang Kai-shek’s representative and the Japanese, following the fighting in Shanghai, establishing a demilitarized zone in Shanghai and Suzhou from which Chinese forces were barred, but allowing Japan to station troops in various places. For Mao’s denunciation of this agreement at the time, see the telegram of May 9, 1932, in Volume IV of our edition, pp. 219–20.

4. The reference is to the agreement signed on July 6, 1935, between He Yingqin and the commander of the Japanese forces in North China, Umezu, providing that all armies of the Chinese government were to be removed from Hebei.
invasion of the Five North China Provinces, and that there is hope for peace is a form of self-deception. To think that the Japanese bandits' invasion will come to a halt north of the Yellow River and that we may be content to retain sovereignty over the territory south of the Yellow River is pure fantasy as well. Have a look: at the same time that you gentlemen go on about not giving up hope for peace, the Japanese puppet army of northern Chahar has launched a large-scale attack in the direction of Suiyuan. Intelligence organs were set up all over Suiyuan, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia, and Gansu, after which many aviation stations and substations were set up in these places as well. The forcible establishment of a consulate in Sichuan gave rise to the enormous tragedy of the slaughtering of our patriotic countrymen. Having received troop reinforcements in North China, the ferocious Japanese army is ready to start trouble again. There have been periodic brief engagements on the Twenty-ninth Army's defense line, and the situation in North China is daily worsening. The Japanese bandits' various intelligence groups such as military investigation teams and economic investigation teams move about all over and get into everything. Their intelligence network covers the entire country and has spread all over the various organizations of your honorable party and its government. All of this can only point up the fact that with regard to the Japanese bandits destroying China, the situation has become extremely menacing. It is a clear and unquestionable fact that peace is absolutely impossible and resistance against Japan cannot be avoided; your thinking, gentlemen, is altogether mistaken.

The proclamation of the Second Plenum of your honorable party’s Central Committee solemnly declared: “A prerequisite for warding off humiliation at the hands of foreigners is to rally all forces for national salvation under the command of the Center, to unite them in concerted action, and to consolidate the front lines. Therefore, it is truly an unshakable iron principle that unity and discipline are absolutely necessary to fend off humiliation at the hands of foreigners, and above all, unification of army and government and of military orders are minimum requirements in achieving the organization of a ‘modern country.’” We fully acknowledge that in order to mobilize the maximum defensive strength of the people of the whole country, and in order to achieve complete victory in the war of resistance, it is absolutely necessary to concentrate and unify the nationwide forces for national salvation. As long ago as the September Eighteenth [1931] Incident, our Party, the Soviet Government, and the Red Army appealed to the people and the armed forces of the whole country to carry out a sacred national revolutionary war to drive Japanese imperialism from China. After the January 28th [1932] war of resistance in Wusong and Shanghai, our Party, the Soviet Government, and the Red Army proposed to all the armed forces of your honorable party and its government that we were encircling and attacking the Soviet areas that there be an immediate cease-fire and a joint resistance against Japan. After the North China Incident, once again we proposed the new policy of rapidly organizing the broadest possible anti-Japanese united front incorporating all parties, factions, and all walks of life throughout China, made repeated requests for your honorable party and its government to stop the civil war and unite against Japan, and proposed to call immediately a national assembly elected by the people of the whole country and all armed forces willing to fight against Japan, to lay out an overall plan to resist Japan and save the nation, to elect a national defense government uniting the whole country, and to organize a unified anti-Japanese army to carry out a large-scale anti-Japanese war. We also resolutely declared that the Soviet Government is willing to become a component part of such a national defense government and the Red Army is willing to submit to the command of the unified anti-Japanese army’s general headquarters, to take on responsibility for certain front lines, and to guarantee the completion of each combat task. All these proposals of our Party, the Soviet Government, and the Red Army are in complete accord with the demands of the people of the whole country and are the only correct policies to save the nation and ensure its survival. Never before now have the people of the whole country so urgently demanded an end to the civil war and concentration and unity for the purpose of joining together to resist Japan. Only the Japanese bandits and their agents will fan the flames of China’s continuing fragmentation and continuing civil war, as this can only create favorable conditions for the Japanese bandits to destroy China.

But the “concentration and unification” mentioned at the Second Plenum of your party’s Central Committee was actually putting the cart before the horse. It must be made known that the civil war and disunity of the last ten years are entirely the result of your honorable party’s and its government’s wrongful policy of relying on imperialism, and especially the policy of nonresistance ever since the “September Eighteenth Incident.” Under your honorable party and its government’s slogan, “Internal order must come before driving out foreign aggression,” civil war has been waged for years without end, innumerable encirclement attacks have been mounted against the Soviet Red Army, and the patriotic and democratic movements of the whole country’s people have been relentlessly suppressed. Up until the present you have continued to ignore the fate of the Northeast and North China, forgotten that Japanese imperialism is China’s greatest enemy, and instead pitted all your might against the Soviets and the Red Army, engaged in internal struggles between the various camps within your own party, and used all your strength to impede the Red Army’s resistance against Japan, make trouble in the Red Army’s anti-Japanese rear, ignoring the whole people’s demands to resist Japan and depriving them of their freedoms and their rights. Patriotism is made a crime, and unjust charges pervade the land; treason is

5. The reference is to the Japanese actions in North China in 1935, which led to the He-Umezu Agreement, and to a similar agreement giving Japan a free hand in Chahar.
rewarded, and Chinese traitors congratulate one another in anticipation of attaining higher position. Seeking centralization and unification through such erroneous policies is just like climbing a tree to catch fish, and will surely lead to results opposite to those intended. Gentlemen, we hereby serve you with this stern warning: If you do not fundamentally change your mistaken orientation, and if you fail to direct your hatred toward the Japanese imperialists, but rather continue to direct it toward your own compatriots, then no matter how much you want to maintain the present situation forcibly, it will be impossible, and centralization and unification, and any so-called “modern country,” become all the more a matter of purely empty talk.

What the people of the whole country now want is centralization and unification in resisting Japan and saving the people, not centralization and unification in fawning on foreign powers and harming the people. The people of the whole country are now eagerly demanding a government that can truly save the nation and the people, a true democratic republic. The people of the whole country demand a democratic republican government that seeks their own well-being. The main guidelines of requirements for such a government are: First, that it can ward off humiliation at the hands of foreign powers; second, that it can offer the people democratic rights; third, that it can develop the national economy so as to lessen and even eliminate the people’s suffering in their daily lives. If we talk about a “modern country,” these guidelines are exactly what is needed at present for China, which is in fact a colony and a semicolon. The people of the whole country are now fighting with fervent hopes and firm determination to realize such a goal. Your party’s and its government’s policies, on the other hand, run exactly counter to such desires of the people of the whole country. It is absolutely impossible to win the people’s trust this way.

The Chinese Communist Party, the Chinese Soviet Government, and the Chinese Red Army hereby solemnly declare: We support the nationwide establishment of a unified democratic republic and the convening of a national assembly elected through universal suffrage. We endorse an anti-Japanese national salvation representative congress of the whole people and all anti-Japanese troops and a unified national defense government. We declare: When a nationwide unified democratic republic is established, the soviet areas will become a component part of this Chinese democratic republic, people’s representatives of the soviet areas will take part in the Chinese national assembly, and the same democratic system as is carried out in the rest of China will be carried out in the soviet areas.

Our opinion is that the national defense conference that your honorable party’s Second Plenum decided to organize and the national assembly currently being convened by your honorable party and its government cannot accomplish the task of centralization and unification, resistance against Japan, and national salvation. According to the regulations of the defense conference passed by your party’s Second Plenum, its organization will be limited to a few officials within your party and your party’s government, and its task is merely to serve as a consulting organ for your party’s government. It is rather obvious that such a conference will not accomplish much and will not win the people’s trust. In addition, the National Assembly to be called by you gentlemen, according to the “Draft Constitution of the Republic of China” and the “Organizational Laws and Election Regulations of the National Assembly” passed by your party’s government will, likewise, not be able to accomplish much nor win people’s trust in any way whatsoever, because such a national assembly is merely an institution manipulated by a few officials of your party and your party’s government, and constitutes an appendage and a decoration for them. Such a defense conference and such a national assembly have nothing in common with the nationwide representative conference to resist Japan and save the nation (i.e. the defense conference) advocated by our Party, and the Chinese Democratic Republic and its parliament. We think that the defense conference to resist Japan and save the nation must recruit representatives from all parties, all factions, all walks of life, and all armed forces in order to form a powerful institution that can truly devise effective plans to resist Japan and save the nation. Out of this conference will come a defense government uniting the whole nation. The national assembly, moreover, must be a parliament born of a general election, and the highest organ of power of the Chinese Democratic Republic. Only such a defense conference and such a national parliament will be welcomed and participated in by the people of the entire nation, and will secure upon a firm foundation the great enterprise of saving the nation and the people. Otherwise, no matter how good a term sounds, it will not be practical and will not be approved by the people of the entire nation. The failure of various meetings called by your party and your party’s government is the best proof of this.

It is stated as well in the proclamation of your honorable party’s Central Committee Second Plenum, “Dangers and obstacles are to be expected. We must not shirk our responsibilities simply because the nation is in difficulty,” and “Our party must, from beginning to end, devote every ounce of its energy to preserving the fate of the nation.” Your honorable party is, indeed, the party that rules the major portion of China’s territory, and it cannot but take responsibility for all political measures carried out in the past. Under the one-party rule of the Guomindang government, the Guomindang certainly cannot escape its responsibilities. Especially since the September Eighteenth Incident, your honorable party has violated public opinion of the whole country and gone against the interests of the entire nation in carrying out absolutely erroneous policies that have resulted in the loss of nearly half of China. The responsibility for this can in no way be shifted onto anyone else. But in our view and that of the whole country’s people, since your honorable party has given up almost half of China, we cannot but urge upon your party the responsibility for recovery of our territorial sovereignty. At the same time, many people of conscience within your honorable party have now also begun to realize how dreadful is the prospect of allowing our country to perish, and the fact that the public will is inviolable, so
they have begun to make changes and to harbor anger and resentment against those elements in their own party who have brought calamity to the party and the nation. The Chinese Communist Party is in complete sympathy with such changes, enthusiastically welcomes the aspirations and consciousness of these patriotic and conscientious members of the Guomindang who are preserving and inspiring the heroic national spirit of the Chinese people, and welcomes their spirit of being willing to sacrifice and struggle and having the courage to make reforms in the face of a perilous national crisis. We are aware that within your honorable party’s Central Committee and within its various provincial parties, its central government and various provincial governments, in cultural circles, student circles, scientific circles, artistic circles, journalistic circles, industrial circles, women’s circles, religious circles, medical circles, police circles, and in the various mass groups, especially within the vast military forces, the newer and older members of the Guomindang, and at all levels of leadership, there are, indeed, many patriotic people of conscience, and their number is daily growing. This is something very heartening. Members of the Chinese Communist Party are prepared at any time to join hands with these Guomindang members to organize a solid national united front to oppose our greatest national enemy—Japanese imperialism. We hope that these Guomindang members can quickly form a powerful force to overcome those evil, shameless Guomindang members who care nothing for the national interests and have actually become agents of Japanese imperialism and bona-fide Chinese traitors who are pro-Japanese—those Guomindang members, that is, who have brought insult to the memory of Mr. Sun Yat-sen—and restore the spirit of the Three People’s Principles of Mr. Sun Yat-sen’s revolution, reassert Mr. Sun Yat-sen’s three great policies of uniting with the Soviet Union, the Communist Party, and the workers and peasants, use their “minds and talents” to “carry through from beginning to end” the revolutionary Three People’s Principles and the Three Great Policies, “carry out from beginning to end” Mr. Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary testament, resolutely shoulder the responsibilities of Mr. Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary endeavor, and join hands with all patriotic leaders and patriotic masses of all parties, factions, and all walks of life across the country to strive toward expelling Japanese imperialism and saving China from perishing, struggling for democratic rights for all the nation’s people, struggling for the development of the Chinese national economy to alleviate the suffering of the great majority of the people, and struggling for the realization of the Chinese Democratic Republic and its democratic parliament and democratic government.

The Chinese Communist Party declares to all the members of the Chinese Guomindang: If you truly do these things, we will offer you firm support, and we will be prepared to form a solid revolutionary united front with you, just as took place during the first Great Chinese Revolution of 1925–1927, when the two parties joined together and formed a great united front in opposition to national oppression and feudal oppression, for this is the only correct path towards saving the nation from ruin and ensuring its survival.

Gentlemen, all members of the Guomindang, surely you have not yet forgotten the glorious history of cooperation between our two parties during the last great revolution! Because of such cooperation, all oppressors of our nation and all feudal oppressors trembled before us. The oppressors of our nation at that time, Japanese imperialism in particular, knowing full well that our cooperation would lead to thorough victory and bring complete liberation to China, drove a wedge between us, alternating between intimidation and bribery and resorting to every conceivable means, and finally instigated one side of the cooperation to bury the first united front. When you gentlemen examine your conscience at night, you must have a deep sigh of emotion. It is now clear for all to see that if the Guomindang at the time had cooperated with the Communist Party through to the end, China would not be facing its current tragic plight of being slaughtered at will, but would instead be a totally free and independent China! The burning desire of the people of the whole country that the two parties cooperate again and work together to save the nation has reached an extreme height. They believe that only renewed cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party and overall cooperation among all parties, factions, and circles in the whole country can truly bring about national salvation and survival. But Japanese imperialism and the Chinese traitors selling out their country will surely once again sabotage this cooperation because they know full well that such cooperation would deal a fatal blow to Japanese imperialism and the Chinese traitors selling out their country. The so-called “Three Cardinal Principles” centered on “guarding against communism” proposed by Japanese imperialism to your honorable party’s government is just such an attempt to prevent and prepare to destroy any cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party. But the question is crystal clear: whether to establish a united front with Japanese imperialism and the Chinese traitors to guard against communism, which is tantamount to a united front for national extinction, or to establish a united front with the Chinese Communist Party and the people of the whole nation to resist Japan, which means a united front for national salvation. Now is the crucial moment for a decision. Any hesitation and wavering can only be to the detriment of our nation and to the advantage of Japanese imperialism. The key to cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party is now in the hands of your honorable party. Just as was said at the Second Plenum of the Central Committee of your honorable party, the nation’s rise or fall depends entirely on your honorable party. If your honorable party truly wishes to shoulder the responsibility for saving the nation from ruin and ensuring its survival, then now is the time to make up your minds, for it will be too late to talk about cooperation when we have all become slaves without a country. For our part, we

6. The reference is to the three principles put forward by Japanese premier Hirota. See above, the text of April 5, 1936.
have long been prepared to send our plenipotentiary to any place at any time to begin concrete, realistic negotiations with your honorable party's plenipotentiary so as to draw up quickly a concrete agreement to resist Japan and save the nation, and we wish to carry out such an agreement resolutely.

Once a united front between you and us, and a united front between you and us on the one hand and all parties, factions, and circles in the country on the other is successfully declared, then you and we and all the people of China will have the right to shout: Let those Chinese traitors selling out their country and all servile lackeys without integrity yell in the face of Japanese imperialist violence, "China is powerless to resist Japan!" Descendants of the great Chinese nation swear that they will never capitulate or submit! We will shed our last drop of blood in the struggle for independence, liberation, and for the great Chinese nation! China is definitely not Abyssinia! The Chinese nation of 450 million will one day stand majestically in the East, holding high the great banner of the final victory of the national revolution, joining hands with all other liberated nations of the world, including the Japanese nation apart from its imperialist elements, to rule the whole planet earth! To rule a bright and shining new world! Let our enemies tremble before our united front! Victory certainly belongs to us!

With national revolutionary salutations!

Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party

To Lin Biao

(August 26, 1936, 2:00 P.M.)

Comrade Lin Biao:

I agree entirely with what you said in your letter. There is another point, which is that the cultural education component (that is, the development of such skills as basic literacy, written composition, general reading ability, and so on) in the three sections is one of the most important and most fundamental parts of the educational plan as a whole. As you said, emphasis should be put on both "practice" and "theory," and the cultural tools are a part of the "practice." You talked as well about linking practice and theory, and these cultural tools can and must be used to connect the two. If the students have learned all their lessons but cannot read or write, then their further development after they leave school remains severely limited. If they have studied a variety of subjects, even though not a great number and in no great depth, but have learned to read and write, then they will possess basic tools for their development that they can use quite frequently after they leave school. If you agree with this view, I think that in the second and third sections, during the later four months, the cultural curriculum (the three subjects of basic literacy, reading, and written composition) should be somewhat strengthened. What I mean is to increase the time on these subjects to a fourth or a third of the total study time (including time for study on one's own). Would you and Comrade Ruiqing? Please consider this question? During the regularly scheduled periodic examinations, cultural [skills] should be one of the important examination criteria.

Bolshevik Salutations!

Mao Zedong

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 52–53, where it is reproduced from the manuscript.

1. The reference is to Luo Ruiqing. On Luo, see above, the relevant note to the text of May 29, 1936.
**The Heart of Our Policy Is to Unite with Chiang to Resist Japan**

(August 26, 1936, 10:00 P.M.)

Dear Elder Brother Xiaokai:

1. Because there are beginning to be effective changes in Nanjing, the core of our policy is to work with Chiang to resist Japan, and it is necessary that brother Li Yi continue to maintain unity with Nanjing.

2. Your letter and the Nanjing secret code were received today, but Zhang Zihua has not arrived. It is now urgent that you go to Nanjing for the purpose of negotiations, and that you carry with you a handwritten letter and the secret code. It is also necessary to report in person the overall guidelines of the negotiations. If you are unable to go by way of Yan'an, however, the trip back and forth would take too long. Please reply right away, whether you are able to go by way of Yan'an.

Dong

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**Operational Guidelines for the First, Second, and Fourth Front Armies Prior to the Winter Season**

(August 30, 1936)

Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi]:

Our views on the guidelines for deployment of the First, Second, and Fourth Front Armies prior to the winter season are as follows:

1. Conditions
   a. Japan is poised for an imminent attack on Suiyuan.
   b. The anti-Japanese movement among the popular masses nationwide has developed even more widely.
   c. The struggle between Guangxi and Nanjing has not yet been resolved. We reckon that after the Southwest problem has been solved Chiang Kaishek will send troops to the Northwest; this is still about two months away.
   d. In Chengdu on the 27th, during the disturbances caused by close to ten thousand of the popular masses, two Japanese were killed and two were wounded. It looks as if Japan will use this as an excuse for serious escalation of its oppression of China.
   e. In Nanjing a fierce struggle is going on between the anti-Japanese and the pro-Japanese factions.
   f. Zhong Song's brigade under Hu Zongnan has started to move from Zhengzhou to Lanzhou.
   g. Chiang Kaishek has plans to split up his Northeastern Army and replace Zhang Xueliang after the Southwest problem is solved.

2. Our basic orientation
   a. Force Chiang to resist Japan by creating various kinds of situations in which the Guomindang and Chiang's troops have to accommodate us, so as to achieve the objective of having the two parties and two armies join together to oppose Japan.

We have translated this telegram from *Wenxian he yanjiu*, 1985, no. 3, p. 3.

1. Xiaokai was the pen name of Pan Hannian (1906–1966), a native of Jiangsu, who had joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1925 in Shanghai. During the period of the Jiangxi Soviet Republic, he had been head of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee. From this time on, Mao frequently employed him in negotiations with the Guomindang.

2. I.e., Zhang Xueliang.

3. Zhang Zihua was an underground member of the Communist Party in Shanghai at this time. His activities in establishing links with the Guomindang are referred to above, in the Introduction, but no further biographical information is available.

Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 574–77, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The reference is to the rebellion of Guangdong and Guangxi against Chiang Kaishek, which lasted from June until September 1936.
2. The anti-Japanese demonstrations and riots in Chengdu actually occurred on the 27th, not the 27th of August.
3. Zhong Song commanded the supplementary brigade of the First Army's Second Division under the Guomindang Army's Northwest “Bandit Suppression” Headquarters.
b. Form a close alliance with the Northeastern Army and proceed with negotiations to ally with other units in the Northwest so as to create a new situation in the Northwest.

c. Oppose the Japanese plan to break up relations between China and the Soviet Union, and prepare to break through to the Soviet Union in winter.

d. Develop southern Gansu into one of the strategic base areas, and at the same time consolidate and develop the southern Shaanxi soviet area so that it becomes another strategic base area and can work in concert with northern Shaanxi and northern Gansu.

e. Force Hu Zongnan’s troops to halt east of Gansu.

3. Actual deployments for the months of September to November

a. The main forces of the First Front Army are to occupy Haiyuan, Jingyuan, Guyuan, and the areas to the north and south. One section is to defend the soviet area made up of Dingbian, Yanchi, Yuwang, and Huaxian; another section is to defend the northern Shaanxi soviet area; and another section is to defend the Guanzhong soviet area (between Jingshui, Huanshui, and Luoshui).

b. The Fourth Front Army is to occupy the area around Lintan, Minxian, Zhangxian, Weiyuan, Wushan, and Tongwei, and make every possible effort to take the three [xian] towns of Minxian, Wushan, and Tongwei. If there is no way to take Minzhou, however, then a small number of troops should be used to guard it.

c. The Second Front Army is to set out quickly for the border between Shaanxi and Gansu. After first breaking through Wang Jun’s defense lines, they are to occupy the area around Fengxian, Baoji, Liangdang, Huixian, Chengxian, and Kangxian, and after that do battle with Wang Jun.

4. Advantages of the above deployments

a. Results of the First Front Army’s main force going to the region around Haiyuan and Jingyuan and the Fourth Front Army’s going to the region around Wushan and Tongwei. On the one hand, this would give the three divisions under Li Zhong an excuse to take total control over the areas of Lanzhou and Dingxi, and would give the forces under Li Ren and Li Yi a chance to extend westward from Pingliang and to control towns such as Longde, Jingning, and Huining. On the other hand, it would make Mao Bingwen leave Lanzhou and draw him toward the area around Longxi.

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4. That is, Minxian in Gansu.
5. As noted earlier, Wang Jun was commander of the Third Army under the Guomindang Northwest “Bandit Suppression” Headquarters.
6. The reference is to Yu Xuezhong, commander of the Fifty-first Army under the Guomindang army’s Northwest “Bandit Suppression” Headquarters.
7. Li Ren refers to Wang Yizhe, commander of the Guomindang’s Sixty-seventh Army; the editors of the Junshi wenji indicate that Li Yi’s identity is unknown.
8. A smaller city located some 50 miles southeast of Lanzhou.

where we could strike a blow at him as opportunity offers. It would also draw the troops of the two Mas of Ningxia toward Zhongwei and areas to the west, and we could await an opportunity to strike a blow at them as well, protecting from threat the soviet areas of Dingbian, Yan [chi], and Yu [wang].

b. The results of the Second Front Army’s moving eastward: First of all it would draw Zhong Song’s brigade toward the border between Shaanxi and Gansu, rendering it unable to advance westward; second, it would provide an opportunity to strike a blow at Wang Jun; and third, it would connect the soviet area in southern Shaanxi with southern Gansu.

C. Among the movements of the three Front Armies, most important is the Second Front Army’s movement eastward. Not only is this a necessary step in the Red Army’s winter movements toward the Northwest, but it is also necessary at present in terms of the bilateral negotiations between responsible leaders that are about to take place between Chiang Kai-shek and ourselves. In addition, it is also necessary in terms of protecting Army A and Li Yi against possible attacks from Chiang Kai-shek, and for solving the problems of supplies and reinforcements. Please consider and give your response to the views above.

[Lin] Yu [yin] [Luo] [Fu]
[Zhou] [En] [Bo] [Gu]
[Mao] Ze [dong]

9. “Army A” refers to the Northeastern Army.
10. This refers to Zhang Xueliang. (The character “Yi” here is different from the one referred to in footnote 7.)
13. Qin Bangxian.
To Wang Yizhe
(August 1936)

For your honorable inspection, Army Commander Dingfang:

As the invasion of the Japanese bandits becomes more and more intense, it would be well for your side and ours to intensify our preparations for national salvation so as to be of the greatest benefit to the national salvation front. Since you, elder brother, have always shown great foresight, I trust that you are of the same mind. At present the international and domestic situations are getting tenser. On the one hand, the aggressors have mobilized their invading fronts, and on the other, the anti-aggressor forces have mobilized the broad popular masses to form a front for peace and national salvation. Although the forces of the Chinese traitors are increasing day by day (for example, the faction that talks about using Japan to deal with Chiang, using the government to deal with the party, and using the regiments to deal with the army), the forces opposed to Japan and to the Chinese traitors have also gained strength. Several new changes in Mr. Chiang’s policies and the beginnings of the formation of a Left faction within the Nanjing Guomindang are some of the most recent encouraging developments. If Mr. Chiang and the Guomindang can resolutely cast aside their past policies, restore Mr. Sun Yatsen’s three policies of uniting with the Soviet Union, the Communists, and the peasants and workers, stop attacking the Red Army, and lift the ban on other parties and factions, your younger brother and the rest of us are eager to cooperate with them and jointly shoulder the great task of fighting Japan and saving the nation. Negotiations between our two sides are now about to enter a more concrete stage, and even though it is not known when this will be accomplished, the hope is there. If this can truly be accomplished, it will naturally be of enormous benefit to the cooperation between our two sides.

Rumor has it of late that Mr. Chiang will attack the Northeastern Army after the Southwest problem is solved, and it is said that he will use the policy of provoking splits, which would be unfavorable to Deputy Commander-in-Chief Zhang [Xueliang]. If this is indeed true, it means that Chiang has not given up his insidious policies of dissension and eliminating disdissent. If his policy is actually carried out, your younger brother and the rest of us dare say with assurance that Mr. Chiang will face ultimate failure, because Deputy Commander-in-Chief Zhang’s and your advocacy of uniting with the Soviet Union and the

Communists and fighting Japan is not the proposition of a handful of people, but is, rather, one supported by all patriotic people of the entire nation; it is not the insincere and impure proposition of Chen Jitang and others, but rather one that is sincerely in the interests of our country and the nation. If anyone opposes Deputy Commander-in-Chief Zhang and you, my elder brother, not only will the Red Army under our command give their all in denouncing the criminal actions of Mr. Chiang and the rebel elements within the Northeastern Army, but all patriotic people throughout the country and international revolutionary forces will staunchly refuse to tolerate the outrageous acts of Mr. Chiang and others. As for the determination of the great majority of Northeastern Army officers and soldiers to fight Japan and to recover our territories, and their solid organization, these too will by no means allow the few elements without integrity do what they intend to do and let them commit the extremely vicious and selfish acts of betraying their country, their native place, and their units. At present Chiang and his faction have also begun the policy of uniting with the Soviet Union and the Communists. You, my elder brother, along with Deputy Commander-in-Chief Zhang, were actually the original advocates and implementors of this policy, so how could you reject it, considering it at fault? In regard to this, your younger brother sincerely hopes it is merely rumor, or the conspiracy of a few Chinese traitors surrounding Chiang, and not the opinion held by Mr. Chiang and the majority of people of conscience within the Guomindang, all of whom have just begun to make various changes. But you would do well to remain strictly vigilant, to solidify unity within your own group, to prevent some evil-intentioned elements in the Northeastern group from stirring up trouble, and then, given the favorable situation in the whole country and the Northwest, plus the combined strength of the Northeastern Army and the Red Army, there will be no reason to fear any external disturbances. The autumn winds are fierce; please take care of yourself for the sake of the nation. I have expressed myself in haste herein.

Respectfully wishing you all the best in your affairs,

Mao Zedong

We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shushin xuanji, pp. 49–51, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. As noted above in the Introduction, Wang Yizhe participated in Zhang Xueliang’s conversations of April 1936 with Zhou Enlai, which constituted the first formal contacts between the Communists and the Northeastern Army.
Directive on the Problem of Forcing
Chiang Kaishek to Resist Japan

(September 1, 1936)

1. At present the main enemy of the Chinese people is Japanese imperialism, so it is wrong to treat Japanese imperialism and Chiang Kaishek in the same manner, and the slogan, “Resist Japan and Oppose Chiang” is also inappropriate.

2. Under the conditions of continued attacks by Japanese imperialism and the continued development of the national revolutionary movement throughout the country, there is the possibility that all or part of the Guomindang’s central army may participate in the resistance to Japan. Our general policy should be to force Chiang to resist Japan. On the one hand it is to continue to expose every word and deed of theirs that spells retreat, compromise, or national betrayal and humiliation, while on the other hand proposing and demanding of them the establishment of an anti-Japanese united front and the signing of an anti-Japanese agreement. We are just now notifying them that the Central Committee of the Communist Party is prepared to send representatives immediately or receive representatives of the Guomindang and Chiang Kaishek in the soviet areas, for the purpose of engaging in negotiations.

3. Our central slogan at present is still “Stop the civil war and unite to resist Japan.” For this reason it must be explained that we truly advocate “peaceful unification,” and what we advocate is in complete accord with the demands of the people of all China. The Chinese Communist Party also proclaims that it supports the establishment of a unified democratic republic of all China, supports the convening of a national assembly elected by universal suffrage, and supports a unified Chinese national defense government and anti-Japanese joint army. When a democratic republic of all China is established, the soviet areas may become component parts of the united republic, soviet area representatives will participate in the all-China national assembly, and the Red Army will submit to a unified military command. To propose a policy of “resistance to foreign aggression must be preceded by domestic pacification” is to sabotage peaceful unification, and Nanjing’s National Defense Conference and National Assembly are not able to bring together and unify the anti-Japanese forces of all China.

4. Under the policy of forcing Chiang to resist Japan, we certainly will not discard the union of the various factions that are opposed to the warlordism of Chiang and are pursuing resistance to Japan. The more we can organize the various factions of warlords outside of Nanjing to move toward resisting Japan, the more we shall be able to realize this policy. As concerns Guangxi, our agreement with their launching a movement to resist Japan is correct. But we should further demand that they demonstrate the sincerity of their resistance to Japan through real actions, most importantly by giving the people all democratic rights to resist Japan and save the country, and by launching an anti-Japanese mass movement. It is only in this way that they will be able to strengthen and expand the anti-Japanese movement, and to make the anti-Japanese movement a powerful one. The freedom to criticize their errors must certainly not be relinquished. As regards the Chiang Kaishek side, it must be pointed out to them that resorting to civil war definitely cannot solve the problem of concentration and unification, and we should demand the cessation of civil war and joint resistance against Japan. Their arguments should be submitted to the people of all China for public judgment.

5. When dealing with the conflict between Nanjing and Guangdong, we should strive to avoid the attitude of taking sides before the people of all China. When facing the people of all China, we should show that we firmly hold to the view of “haling the civil war and uniting to resist Japan,” that we are the organizers and leaders of the anti-Japanese united front of all parties throughout the country, and of all factions (including Chiang Kaishek’s Guomindang). This is the attitude that can best capture the broad sympathy and support of the people who are anti-Japanese, and will also be useful for our activities within the Guomindang territories.

6. Regarding the declaration proposing “Guomindang-Communist cooperation,” it will be included in the next communication. When it arrives, have it widely reproduced and send separate copies to all party, political, military, student, merchant, worker, and peasant circles in Nanjing and the various provinces.

Secretariat of the Central Committee

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1. I.e., the “Southwestern problem” referred to above.
2. The reference is presumably to the letter of August 25, 1936, to the Guomindang, translated above.
“Resist Japan” and “Oppose Chiang” Cannot Be Raised Simultaneously

(September 8, 1936)

Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi],

1. Your telegram has been received. Actions toward the west require the assistance of the Soviet Union. We have already sent several telegrams to the International, and have also sent Deng Fa via Xinjiang to Moscow to make the request. They are now waiting until the situation has been clarified following Deng Fa’s arrival, after which a reply will be forthcoming. Your telegram has already been forwarded. From September to November, the dispositions of the three front armies will be carried out according to the methods discussed and decided on.

2. China’s primary enemy is Japanese imperialism, and it is wrong to call for resisting Japan and opposing Chiang simultaneously. Beginning in February we changed our slogan. In March someone came from Nanjing for consultations. The general conditions we raised were again sent to Nanjing. In June and August, two further communications came from Nanjing. In early August the Politburo discussed policy toward Nanjing, the main outlines of which were presented in the previous telegram sent to you. However, our calculations were still not adequate, and in late August the International sent further instructions. At present our liaison representative has again left for Nanjing for consultations, and the official responsible representatives of both sides are engaging in concrete discussions of the problems. In the light of the circumstances, there is hope for success. On Nanjing’s part, it is not only the problem of ourselves, but also the problem of Soviet Russia. Considering that Nanjing has announced making Jiang Tingfu ambassador to the Soviet Union, there is also hope for success with the question of Soviet Russia. We have already just issued a letter from the Chinese Communist Party to the Chinese Guomindang, which is our new declaration and includes new content on a democratic republic, a democratic national assembly, and democratic government. The International’s political directive on the Chinese parties has already been received, and after the Politburo has discussed it, it will be possible to notify you.

3. You should not raise any slogans about overthrowing the central army or any Chinese armed forces. On the contrary, you must raise slogans about joining together to resist Japan. Personnel sent to engage in negotiations with the forces of Mao [Bingwen], Wang [Jun], and others, will fight them only when they meet with opposition to territory that we must occupy, but will at the same time engage in propaganda and consultations. We hope you will change your own propaganda work in accordance with this policy.

4. Do not adopt a truly aggressive attitude toward any of the troop units of Zhang Xueliang. You should write letters to their division, regimental, and battalion commanders, and carry out ordinary propaganda among their soldiers. Until our talks with Nanjing achieve results, none of the various northwestern units under Zhang Xueliang’s command, including the Northeastern Army, will be able to cease their hostile actions against us. We have as yet had little influence on the two northeastern Army units under He Zhuguo and Yu Xuezhong. Since He is in contact with Chiang, Zhang cannot tell He of his contacts with the Red Army. You need to intensify your work.

5. The case you raised of Sichuan, Shaanxi, Henan, and Hubei would be one kind of aggressive stance against Nanjing. It will be possible and necessary only if and when we cannot break out to the Northwest and talks with Nanjing are broken off. We have already reported on this point by telegram to the International, and we have also suggested to the International the two plans, for moving out to the Northwest, and if there is no alternative, breaking out to the southeast.

6. [Peng] Dehuai is at the front directing the field armies. [Lin] Yuying is in Huaixian engaged in work with the Northeastern Army, and we are in Bao’an.

Luo [Fu]  [Zhou] En[lai]
Bo [Gu]  [Mao] Ze[dong]

We have translated this document from Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 438–39, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
1. Regarding these contacts, see above, the Introduction.
2. See the text of August 25, 1936, translated above.
To Shao Lizi

(September 8, 1936)

Mr. Lizi:

Reading the newspaper I found that it remains focused exclusively on “bandit suppression” and contains not even a single word about resisting the Japanese bandits. How can such wise sages be so narrow-minded! I would venture my view that the Mr. Lizi of the era of Consciousness seems to have thoroughly remolded himself as soon as he embarked on an official career. The situation at present is going from bad to worse. It is not just that crying can be heard all along the road, but in fact the whole country and the whole nation are crying! Why can’t you abandon the old and start afresh, restore the banner of the Consciousness, and bring joy to the whole country and the whole nation? I pray that you will read the letter to the Guomindang from the Communist Party. It has been said: If a man of Yue bends his bow to shoot someone, I too will bend my bow to shoot him, but if my own brother bends his bow to shoot him, I shall shed tears and cry and try to reason with him. Surely you gentlemen do not regard these tearful, crying words of reason as far-fetched, do you? To “open up the Northwest” and “construct the Northwest” are certainly great ambitions on the part of you gentlemen, but your methods are not appropriate. As a matter of fact, Japanese imperialism has just such ambitions, and is going at it with airplanes and cannons that shake the very earth. If you gentlemen wish to compete with them in “opening up” and “constructing,” and care to go at it with airplanes and cannons that shake the very earth to knock them out of the competition, then your own “opening up” and “constructing” will certainly not have succeeded; clearly it is a problem of method here. Speaking of this question of method, all the citizens agree that it is possible to take counsel with one another, and I refuse to believe that you alone, sir, find it impossible. If this is the case, then there is actually no reason why the Guomindang and the Communist Party cannot cooperate with one another. It is said in the Romance of the Three Kingdoms: “The trend of events in the empire is that when it has long been united, division must follow; when it has long been divided, unification must follow.” Your younger brother and you, sir, have been separated for ten years, and now we once again have the opportunity to join together. Do you have such intentions, sir? In any event, I cannot write all that I would convey to you, and wish to express herewith my kindest regards and hopes for your every success!

Mao Zedong

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong shushin xuanji, pp. 54–55, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Shao Lizi (1891–1967), a native of Zhejiang, had been briefly attracted to Communism in 1920, and had studied at Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow in 1926-27. From 1928 to 1931, he was secretary general of Chiang Kai-shek’s military headquarters. At this time, he was chairman of the Guomindang’s Shaanxi government.

2. Juewu (Consciousness) was a supplement to Guomin ribao (Republican Daily), published in Shanghai. Shao Lizi had helped to found the newspaper in 1915, and served as its editor until 1925. He was also editor of the supplement from its foundation in 1919. Both papers moved gradually to the right after Shao left Shanghai for Guangzhou in 1923.

3. The reference is to a passage from Mencius, VI, II, III, 2, which Legge (Vol. 2, p. 427) translates as follows: “There is a man here, and a native of Yuieh bends his bow to shoot him. I will advise him not to do so, but speaking calmly and smilingly, for no other reason but that he is not related to me. But if my own brother be bending his bow to shoot the man, then I will advise him not to do so, weeping and crying the while, for no other reason than that he is related to me.”

4. Mao here quotes the very famous opening lines from the Romance of the Three Kingdoms, one of his favorite traditional novels, already referred to above.
To Wang Jun

(September 8, 1936)

Mr. Zhiping:

Ever since the Jinggangshan we’ve been fighting you gentlemen, and the fighting has been going on for ten years. It’s time for a rest! Our letter to the Guomindang was about joint resistance to Japan, which is, in fact, a unanimous demand all over the country, and we trust that you gentlemen, as valiant patriotic fighters, surely share such sentiments! Comrade Zhu Yujie is very anxious to cooperate with you, and if you could be in touch with him, then the less energy we expend on each other, the more strength we can reserve for resistance against Japan. Now that our two parties are about to begin cooperating with each other before long, it is best for both sides to avoid to the extent possible any confrontation on the front lines. I await with respect your wise opinion on how to proceed, and wish to express herewith my kindest regards, having left much else unsaid.

Mao Zedong

To Zhu Shaoliang

(September 8, 1936)

Mr. Shaoliang:

During the last ten years of fierce conflict, you and I, sir, have run into each other everywhere—one might say we have some deep predestined relationship! But when the snipe and the clam grapple with each other, the fisherman lies in wait for his chance; are not the snipe and the clam in common peril? Enclosed please find a letter from the Communist Party to the Guomindang, which is a plan for the state and the nation, and for you, sir, as well. Between our two parties and two armies, there should be no invertebrate hatred, rather an obligation to help each other sail through troubled waters. Were we to cast away all misunderstandings and dissolve all hatreds so that we may deal with our common enemy and become national heroes praised by all the world’s people today as well as those of generations to come, would this not be a “life sentence” for Mr. Hu Zongnan? As for “bandit suppression,” this would be not just a life sentence but rather a capital sentence. Do not say that the Red Army is sentencing you gentlemen to death, for Japanese imperialism is actually doing so. They are not just sentencing a certain number of our people to death; in reality they want to sentence our entire nation to death. Alas, what great peril! As long as you support a united front, I humbly and sincerely wish to hear what you have to say. But it is better to take care of this matter quickly, for any delay will only benefit the bandits who have been driving straight into our territory. I hope that you will report this to Mr. Chiang and reach a decision immediately, so that there is still time to do something about our country’s destiny. I cannot write all that I would convey to you, and wish to express herewith my kindest regards and hopes for your every success!

Mao Zedong

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 56–57, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. On Wang Jun, see above, the relevant note to the text of September 8, 1935.
2. Yujie was the zi of Zhu De, who had been Wang Jun’s schoolmate at the military academy in Yunnan.

We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 58–59, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Zhu Shaoliang (1891–1963), a native of Jiangsu, was at the time in charge of the Guomindang government’s Pacification Office in Gansu.
2. This is a slight variant on a common adage implying that when two adversaries struggle with one another, it is the third party that benefits.
To Peng Dehuai, Liu Xiao, and Li Fuchun

(September 11, 1936, 4:00 P.M.)

Peng, Liu, and Fuchun:

1. We approve of Fuchun’s idea about organizing a mobile library.
2. We will start immediately tomorrow with the first delivery of books, ten in all this time, to be given first to Fuchun, and then after three days to be turned over to Peng and Liu, where they can be retained for a week.
3. It is imperative that every comrade should mail the books back on time so as to avoid losing them.
4. In future a delivery will be made once a week or once every ten days.


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Deployment for the Occupation of Ningxia

(September 14, 1936, 6:00 P.M.)

Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi]:

1. The International has sent us a telegram agreeing to the occupation of Ningxia and the western part of Gansu. After our troops have occupied the region of Ningxia, they can give us assistance.
2. The First Division under Hu Zongnan and the Forty-third, Seventy-eighth, and Ninety-seventh divisions left Changsha on the 10th. Their advance guard reached Xianyang on the 18th. At the end of the month, they will concentrate in Dingxi. Their supplementary brigade has already started out from Jingning in the direction of Dingxi. Their purpose is none other than to control the Lanzhou region to prevent Army A and Army B from opening a route to the Soviet Union, so that they may monopolize Soviet supplies after forging an alliance with Russia, and coordinate plans with Suyuan when the time is right.
3. In order to carry out resolutely the instructions from the International, we plan to occupy Ningxia after two months. It is proposed that the following deployments be made:
   a. The main force of the First Front Army shall remain in the Haiyuan-Guyuan region during the months of September and October. At the end of October or the beginning of November, they shall proceed to take the Lingwu-Jinji region from the Tongxinchen-Yuwan line so as to ford the River and occupy northern Ningxia in December. The rest of the troops of the First Front Army shall defend the northern Shaanxi-Gansu Soviet Area.
   b. The main force of the Fourth Front Army shall immediately occupy the Longde-Jingning-Huining-Tongwei region and control the Xilan route, and come into close proximity with the units of the First Front Army deployed in the Xiaocheng region west of Guyuan so as to block the westward advance of Hu Zongnan and to attack him at an appropriate time. In October or at the beginning of November, it shall advance to the line of Jingyuan, southern Zhongwei, and Ning’anbao so as to ford the river in December to seize southern Ningxia.
   c. The Second Front Army shall engage in active operations on the Shaanxi-Gansu border to lure Hu Zongnan to the region south of the Xianyang.

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We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, p. 60, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Li Fuchun (1900–1975) was a native of Hunan, who had spent several years in France. He went to the Jiangxi Soviet Area in 1931, and participated in the Long March. At this time, he was secretary of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Party Committee.

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 578–80, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

To Peng Dehuai, Liu Xiao, and Li Fuchun

(September 11, 1936, 4:00 P.M.)

Peng, Liu, and Fuchun:

1. We approve of Fuchun’s idea about organizing a mobile library.
2. We will start immediately tomorrow with the first delivery of books, ten in all this time, to be given first to Fuchun, and then after three days to be turned over to Peng and Liu, where they can be retained for a week.
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a. The main force of the First Front Army shall remain in the Haiyuan-Guyuan region during the months of September and October. At the end of October or the beginning of November, they shall proceed to take the Lingwu-Jinji region from the Tongxinchen-Yuwang line so as to ford the river and occupy northern Ningxia in December. The rest of the troops of the First Front Army shall defend the northern Shaanxi-Gansu Soviet Area.

b. The main force of the Fourth Front Army shall immediately occupy the Longde-Jingning-Huining-Tongwei region and control the Xilin route, and come into close proximity with the units of the First Front Army deployed in the Xiaohecheng region west of Guyuan so as to block the westward advance of Hu Zongnan and to attack him at an appropriate time. In October or at the beginning of November, it shall advance to the line of Jingyuan, southern Zhongwei, and Ning'anbao so as to ford the river in December to seize southern Ningxia.

c. The Second Front Army shall engage in active operations on the Shaanxi-Gansu border to lure Hu Zongnan to the region south of the Xianyang-

We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, p. 60, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

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We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 578–80, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

Pingliang line, coordinate with the Fourth Front Army, and make contact with the guerrilla area of southern Shaanxi.

d. A guerrilla detachment shall be dispatched from northern Shaanxi to get to the region south of Jingshui through the Guanzhong Soviet Area and act to harass the rear flank of Hu Zongnan.

4. The important point in the deployment outlined above is for the Fourth Front Army to control the main Xilin road to prevent Hu Zongnan from severing it and prevent him from interfering in the action of the First and Fourth front armies to seize Ningxia. At the time of the seizure of Ningxia by the First and Fourth Front Armies, the Second Front Army is still south of the Xilin road in the Shaanxi-Gansu border area and southern Gansu, and has the responsibility of containing the enemy units. As for the occupation of western Gansu, some units should be sent to take it only after obtaining assistance from the International following the occupation of Ningxia. In this strategic action, which has a decisive impact on the growth of the Chinese Red Army and the launching of the Chinese war of resistance against Japan, the three front armies shall do their utmost, forge the closest possible unity, and obtain close coordination with Army A.

5. As for the movements of the soldiers and of the Muslims among the troops of the Mas of Ningxia, we are making great efforts at present, and will shortly send you a telegram containing detailed intelligence on the enemy situation and on topography.

6. We ask that our elder brothers consider this and reply by telegram.

[Lin] Yuying  Luo Fu
[Zhou] Enlai  Bo Gu
[Mao] Zedong

Nie Rongzhen’s Forces Should Move Southward to Engage in Coordinated Action with the Red Fourth Front Army

(September 15, 1936, 12:00 noon)

Peng [Dehui]:
1. There has been no attempt on the life of Li Yi.1 He should keep his ties with Nanjing, but should prepare a defensive position just in case.
2. The supplementary brigade of Hu [Zongnan]'s division is advancing on Lanzhou rather than going to Gan[zhou], Liang[zhou], and Su[zhou]. Hu's main forces are advancing very rapidly, hence it is hereby ordered that the Fourth Front Army quickly control the main road between Jingning and Huining.
3. Nie Rongzhen’s forces should move straight to the area between Jingning and Longde to coordinate actions, after which they should operate near the Guyuan-Wating line so that the enemy troops on that line will not dare to advance northward.

Mao [Zedong]

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Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 581–82, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. As indicated previously, this was an alternative name for Zhang Xueliang
Views Regarding the Operations of the Three Front Armies  
(September 15, 1936)

To Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Chen [Changhao], and for transmission to Ren [Bishi], He [Long], and Liu [Bocheng]:

After sending you the telegram on proposals for strategy, we received your telegram of 8:00 P.M. on the 13th; our respective views are basically in agreement. In our opinion, however, it would be best for the Fourth Front Army to have its main force quickly occupy the stretch of road centering on Jieshipu and running near Long[de], Jing[ning], Hui[ning], and Ding[xi], and the nearby area, so as to prevent Hu [Zongnan]'s troops from occupying that line. Some of its units, along with a transmitter station, should move eastward toward the area around Huating and Longxian to engage in extensive guerrilla warfare and become a detachment operating far away. A detachment of the Second Front Army, along with a transmitter station, is to move directly east of Baoji and Meixian. We have already sent a division in the direction of the Jing[ning]-Long[de] line, which should be able to deter Hu Zongnan's advance and facilitate the Fourth Front Army's move to the Long[de]-Ding[xi] road and its preparation for combat. If the First Front Army's main force moves southward to engage in combat, then Enemy Ma* will definitely seize the three cities of Ding[bian], Yan[chi], and Yu[wang], and it would not be advantageous to advance to Ningxia after that. It is, therefore, inappropriate to leave the Gansu-Ningxia border before having dealt major blows to Enemy Ma. In fighting the enemy in the east, it is appropriate to use the Second and Fourth Armies as main forces, and, when necessary, the First Front Army may send up to one army to assist it. It is requested that you consider this.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]    Peng [Dehuai]

We have translated this document from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 583–84, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. This refers to the telegram translated above, "Deployment for the Occupation of Ningxia," dated September 14, 1936.

2. This telegram proposed that the main forces of the First Front Army should move toward Jingning and Huiinng, join up with the Fourth Front Army in the south, and launch a surprise attack on Hu Zongnan.

3. The editors of the Junshi wenji note that another copy of this document held in the Central Archives adds here: "This is most important."

4. Ma Hongkui.

The Fourth Front Army Should Use Its Main Force to Take Control of the Major Road Between Longde, Jingning, Huining, and Dingxi  
(September 15, 1936)

Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], and Ren [Bishi]:

1. A compromise has been reached between Chiang [Kaishek] and Guangxi. Li Zongren has become head of pacification and Commander in Chief of the Fifth Route Army. Bai Chongxi has been transferred to Nanjing. Hu Zongnan has been incorporated into the Seventh Route Army. The entire First Division and Seventy-eighth Division reached Xiayang on the 18th. The Forty-third and Ninety-seventh Divisions are following behind them, later to be deployed along the Jingning, Huining, Dingxi, and Lanzhou line to coordinate with the troops from Sichuan and units of Mao [Bingwen] and Wang [Jun] to press on toward Minzhou.

2. The First Front Army has already moved off in the direction of Haiyuan and Guyuan. The First Army Group has sent its First Division to the major road between Jingning and Longde to coordinate plans with the Fourth Front Army.

3. Within five to seven days, the Fourth Front Army should dispatch its main force to the major road between Longde, Jingning, Huining, and Dingxi to take control of the advantageous base points centered on Jieshipu (Jieshipu is larger than Tongwei). Any delay entails the danger that the route might be severed. Small units should be left to the south of the Wei River to engage in action. Please give consideration to the above suggestions.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]    Peng [Dehuai]

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 585–86, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. This accord marked the resolution of the "Southwestern Problem" mentioned in several texts translated above.

2. For biographies of Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi, see below, the relevant note to Mao's letter to them dated September 22, 1936.

3. Regarding Hu Zongnan, see above, the relevant note to the text of June 16, 1935.
Block and Delay the Westward Advance of Hu Zongnan's Forces
(September 17, 1936, 12:00 noon)

Peng [Dehuai]:

All of Hu Zongnan's forces have reached Xi'an and are now being moved westward very rapidly one after the other. Several successive telegrams have been sent to Zhu and Zhang ordering them to attack and occupy Jieshipu quickly with their main forces. In order to coordinate the attacks on Hu Zongnan, it seems necessary to dispatch certain units of the First Army Group to move to the southern and southwestern part of Guyuan. In addition, within one or two days the First Division under Nie [Rongzhen] should concentrate and take action, support the others by coordinated action north of the major road between Jingning and Longde, and make a flanking attack towards the road to block and delay the westward advance of the enemy under Hu. This will also be conducive to the northward deployment of the Fourth Front Army along the Jieshipu route. What do you think? Awaiting your reply.

Mao [Zedong]

Jieshipu Should First Be Occupied by a Unit of the Red First Army Group
(September 17, 1936, 3:30 P.M.)

To Peng [Dehuai], and inform Nie [Rongzhen]:

Since there are no enemy [forces] in Jieshipu, the First Division should use one regiment plus a cavalry unit to occupy it tomorrow without fail, and engage in guerrilla warfare toward the southeast, so as to wait for the Fourth Front Army to replace it. Otherwise, if Hu Zongnan occupies it first, the situation will be very unfavorable. A separate unit should be dispatched directly to the Longde-Jingning road to engage in harassment.

Mao [Zedong]
To Song Qingling
(September 18, 1936)

Mme. Qingling and her associates:

Suddenly almost ten years have passed since we parted from one another in Wuhan. Each time we read in the papers or learn from comrades coming from other places about the revolutionary and patriotic speeches and actions you, madam, have made, we feel boundless respect and admiration for you. Since 1927, you, madam, and our comrades are the only ones who are really carrying on the revolutionary and patriotic spirit initiated by Mr. Sun Yatsen. Although the appeal to stop the civil war and unite in resistance against Japan prevails over the whole country at present, yet Mr. Chiang, the man who commands the huge army, and the Central Committee of the Guomindang still have no intention of repenting thoroughly of what they have done. It is evident that such an attitude, which goes against the revolutionary Three People’s Principles and three major policies put forward by Mr. Sun Yatsen, is truly unacceptable to the majority of members of the Guomindang and should be rectified immediately. To this end, it occurs to me that, in order to awaken all the principal leaders of the Guomindang and to help them realize that our nation is in terrible danger of being subjugated, and that the will of the people cannot be violated, so that they can change their wrong policies without delay, we depend on someone like you, who, with her position and influence as a member of the Central Committee of the Guomindang, can really do something concrete and practical about it. I am now sending Comrade Pan Hanhian to discuss with you in person some specific details regarding organization of the united front and ways to undertake some public actions as well. I respectfully request that you meet with him and offer some advice after his arrival. For your reference, I respectfully submit a copy of the letter that we have sent to the Central Committee of the Guomindang. In addition, we would be most grateful if you would introduce Comrade Hannian for a chat to some key figures in the Guomindang with whom you have a fairly close relationship, such as Wu Yahui, Kong Xiangxi, Song Ziwen, Li Shizeng, Cai Yuanpei, and Sun Fo. I take this opportunity to

Wish you the best of health.

Mao Zedong

On the fifth anniversary of the “September Eighteenth Incident”

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 61–62, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Song Qingling (1893–1981) was the widow of Sun Yatsen. In 1927, after the break between Chiang Kaishek and the Communists, she had been one of the most resolute representatives of the “Left Guomindang” and, in this capacity, had signed jointly with Mao a declaration of August 1, 1927, calling on all members of the Guomindang to carry out Sun’s policy of alliance with the Communist Party. (See Volume III, pp. 20–26.) At this time, she was residing in Shanghai, where as the sister of Song Meiling (Mme. Chiang Kaishek) and Song Ziwen, she had an influential network of acquaintances.

2. Wu Yahui (1865–1953), a native of Zhejiang, was at this time a member of the Guomindang Central Control Commission.
3. Kong Xiangxi (1880–1967), better known in English as H.H. K’ung, was a native of Shanxi. At this time he was vice president of the Guomindang Executive Yuan and minister of finance.
4. Li Shizeng (1881–1973), a native of Hebei, was one of the founders of the Sino-French Educational Society, under which many of Mao’s friends from Hunan went to study in France. In 1927, at the time of the split in the Guomindang, he had taken a strongly anti-Communist stand. At this time, he was residing in Shanghai.
5. Sun Fo (1891–1973), also known as Sun Ke, a native of Guangdong, was the son of Sun Yatsen. In 1927, he had supported the Left Guomindang government in Wuhan, and in 1931 he participated in a short-lived opposition national government in Guangzhou. Apart from these episodes, he served as a member of the government in Nanjing, but often opposed Chiang Kaishek’s policies. At this time, he was president of the Legislative Yuan.
To Song Qingling
(September 18, 1936)

Mme. Qingling and her associates:

Suddenly almost ten years have passed since we parted from one another in Wuhan. Each time we read in the papers or learn from comrades coming from other places about the revolutionary and patriotic speeches and actions you, madam, have made, we feel boundless respect and admiration for you. Since 1927, you, madam, and our comrades are the only ones who are really carrying on the revolutionary and patriotic spirit initiated by Mr. Sun Yat-sen. Although the appeal to stop the civil war and unite in resistance against Japan prevails over the whole country at present, yet Mr. Chiang, the man who commands the huge army, and the Central Committee of the Guomindang still have no intention of repenting thoroughly of what they have done. It is evident that such an attitude, which goes against the revolutionary Three People’s Principles and three major policies put forward by Mr. Sun Yat-sen, is truly unacceptable to the majority of members of the Guomindang and should be rectified immediately. To this end, it occurs to me that, in order to awaken all the principal leaders of the Guomindang and to help them realize that our nation is in terrible danger of being subjugated, and that the will of the people cannot be violated, so that they can change their wrong policies without delay, we depend on someone like you, who, with her position and influence as a member of the Central Committee of the Guomindang, can really do something concrete and practical about it. I am now sending Comrade Pan Hannian to discuss with you in person some specific details regarding organization of the united front and ways to undertake some public actions as well. I respectfully request that you meet with him and offer some advice after his arrival. For your reference, I respectfully submit a copy of the letter that we have sent to the Central Committee of the Guomindang. In addition, we would be most grateful if you would introduce Comrade Hannian for a chat to some key figures in the Guomindang with whom you have a fairly close relationship, such as Wu Yahui, Kong Xiangxi, Song Ziwen, Li Shizeng, Cai Yuanpei, and Sun Fo. I take this opportunity to

Wish you the best of health.

Mao Zedong

On the fifth anniversary of the “September Eighteenth Incident”

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To Zhang Naiqi, Tao Xingzhi, Shen Junru, and Zou Taofen

(September 18, 1936)

Messrs. Naiqi, Xingzhi, Junru, and Taofen:

The speeches and heroic actions by you gentlemen on behalf of resisting Japan and saving the nation have already won sympathy from the broad popular masses all over the country, as well as boundless respect from all the Red Army soldiers and people throughout the soviet areas! But in order truly to put an end to the attacks launched by the Guomindang troops against the Red Army and to carry out the proposal to stop the civil war and unite to resist Japan, you gentlemen and we ourselves must expand our efforts and cooperate more closely in every respect.

I am persuaded that all of you will endorse the slogan of the democratic republic put forward by us just recently because this is the best way to unite all democratic people and effectively carry on the movement to resist Japan and save the nation.

I respectfully enclose a copy of the letter we sent to the Guomindang on August 25. Please go over the letter and be kind enough to enlighten us on this matter.

As the Guomindang armies continue to launch their attacks on the Red Army, and all the barbarous laws and decrees have still not been abolished, even to this day we are separated from you gentlemen, and we cannot have frequent discussions or exchange our concrete views on how to resist Japan and save the country. This inevitably leads to some estrangement and misunderstandings on the part of you gentlemen regarding our orientation and concrete actions at present on behalf of the united front against Japan. For this reason I have entrusted Comrade Pan Hannian with the task of constantly exchanging views with you gentlemen and conveying our cordial wishes to you.

With anti-Japanese, national salvation salutations!

Mao Zedong

On the fifth anniversary of the “September Eighteenth Incident”

We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp 63–65, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. These were the four principal founders of the National Salvation Association. See above, Mao’s letter to them dated August 10, 1936.

The Main Force of the First Army Group Shall Remain Where It Is for the Moment to Await Opportunities

(September 18, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

Commander Peng [Dehuai]:

Two telegrams have been sent to Zhu and Zhang requesting that they quickly occupy Jieshipu, but no reply has yet been received. It is necessary to use the Fourth Front Army as the main force to attack Hu [Zongnan]'s troops. Before their deployment and intentions become clear, the main force of the First Army Group should for the moment remain where it is to await opportunities. If another blow can be dealt to He Zhuguo in northern Guyuan so as to eliminate the possibility that our route of retreat could be severed, this will provide even more security. In our future advance on Ningxia, the First Front Army can only advance along several separate routes from Yanchi, Yuwang, and Tongxincheng, and the area west of Tongxincheng will be the Fourth Front Army’s zone of operation. Hence, it is extremely important to maintain a route for retreat. Please give consideration to this.

Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 590–91, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. See above, the two telegrams of September 15, 1936, to Zhu De, Zhang Guotao, and others.
The Key Point of Expansion Is in Ningxia and Not in Western Gansu

(September 19, 1936, 3:00 P.M.)

To Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], and for transmittal to Ren [Bishi] and He [Long]:

Your telegram sent on the afternoon of the 17th was received at 12:00 on the 19th. We respectfully reply as follows:

1. In expanding to Ningxia and western Gansu, the key point is in Ningxia and not in western Gansu. This is because Ningxia serves as an axis in terms of Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, Suiyuan, and Inner and Outer Mongolia—in other words, the entire Northwest. In addition, the International has sent a telegram saying that it will render us assistance after the Red Army has reached the Ningxia area, and the telegram says nothing about western Gansu.

2. We have already reported to the International the constraints on maneuvers in western Gansu because of its narrowness and the difficulty in sacking cities because of the strength of their defense works, and have also explained that we shall be able to take the cities only after obtaining help from Soviet aircraft and artillery. The International’s reply says that it will offer assistance once we reach the Ningxia area. As long as our troops are able to occupy the rural areas of Ningxia, then, and approach the Helan Mountains, we will be able to obtain the weapons for taking the cities, and we will proceed to capture them.

3. The area between Outer Mongolia and Ningxia is grassland, on which there are many roads passable by automobiles. In the past, assistance was rendered to Feng Yuxiang along these roads. Comrade Deng Xiaoping also once personally made a trip from Dingshuyang along these automobile roads. They will provide us with assistance from Outer Mongolia, so we shall first occupy Dingshuyang.

4. According to comrades from Ningxia, because of the Helan Mountains in Ningxia, the climate there is warmer than it is in Suiyuan, Qinghai, northern Shaanxi and Gansu, and western Gansu, and it is a rice-producing area and the richest in the Northwest. After the Fourth Front Army occupies southern Ningxia, it should remain there for a couple of months, and wait until next year’s warm spring weather to renew its attack on western Gansu. In carrying out the

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 592–94, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Here Mao uses conventional Chinese characters for the date and the hour. That for the hour means "between 3:00 and 5:00 P.M."

2. At the end of 1926, on his way back to China from the Soviet Union, Deng travelled from Ulan Bator (then called Kulan) to Dingshuyang (now known as Bayanhaote City of the Alashan Left Banner), and thence to Yinchuan, Lanzhou, and Xi'an. See the relevant notes to the text as published in Mao Zedong junshi wenji, as well as Deng Maomao, Deng Xiaoping—My Father (Basic Books, 1995), pp. 111–12, and Richard Evans, Deng Xiaoping and the Making of Modern China (New York: Viking, 1993), p. 39.

3. I.e., Zhang Xueliang.

attack on western Gansu, it is also only with Soviet assistance that we can take the strong fortresses in the three prefectures of Ganzhou, Liangzhou, and Suzhou. At present we are able to buy a large quantity of cloth from Yanchi and Dingbian. We are now borrowing funds from Li Yi to make a batch of uniforms for you. To get from Zhongwei to Hongshui and Yongdeng, it is possible to go along the western shore of the Yellow River without crossing the desert at all.

5. The attack on Ningxia needs to wait until ice forms (there is no certainty of being able to build boats). The freeze begins in December according to the solar calendar. There are approximately seventy days until then. Within these seventy days, food supply will not be a problem for the Fourth Front Army in occupying Jingning, Tongwei, Huining, Jingyuan, Haiyuan, Zhongning (Zhongning xian is located to the southwest of Jinji xian), and part of Jinji. The First Front Army, for its part, shall occupy Guyuan, Lingsu, Tongxin, and part of Jinji and prepare to ford the river in early December.

6. Because Ma Hongkui has more than twenty regiments and the troops of Tang Enbo, He Zhuguo, Gao Guizi, Gao Shuangchen, and others are to the side and rear of our forces, there is the danger that, in attacking Ningxia on its own, the First Front Army may pay attention to one while neglecting another. If Hu Zongnan firmly occupies the Jingning-Huining area and joins forces with Mao Bingwen, then, on the one hand, he will be able to reinforce Ma Hongkui and cause the defeat of our plan to take Ningxia and, on the other, he will be able to frustrate your plan to take western Gansu. This way there is the danger of being defeated separately. The only way to avoid this loss is to concentrate on taking Ningxia first.

7. According to recent investigations, from above Jingyuan to Lanzhou there is no freeze, and there is a freeze below Jingyuan.

8. At present it is not appropriate to engage in a decisive battle against Hu Zongnan. All that is needed is to make rapid advances west of Jingning, occupy a broad front, and let him build fortifications. We shall gradually move northward within the next seventy days, and in December the First and Fourth Front Armies shall move their main force northward to take Ning(xia) and, in coordination with assistance from the Soviet Union, seize Ningcheng while using some of their units to block the enemy to the south. In the warmth of spring next year we shall decide on separate advances westward, southward, and northward.

9. The taking of Ningxia to open a route to the Soviet Union is a decisive move, be it for the expansion of the Red Army, the establishment of a national united front, the creation of a new situation in the Northwest, or from the point of view of combat. It is also a decisive move in very quickly frustrating Hu’s attempt to separate the First and the Fourth Front Armies. Time is pressing, opportunities come and go very quickly, and even the slightest laxity spells defeat. We earnestly entreat you to take care, and extend to you our very best wishes.

Mao [Zedong]  Zhou [Enlai]  Peng [Dehuai]

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To Cai Yuanpei

(September 22, 1936)

Mr. Jiemin and associates:

During the period of the May Fourth Movement I had the pleasure on several occasions of hearing you, sir, expound your marvelous ideas and opinions in the classrooms of Beijing University, at rallies in the old capital, and at lectures in Changsha. And now twenty years have passed in a flash since then! And what are things like today? Now our people and our nation hover between existence and subjugation. Older people such as you, sir, and your generation, middle-aged people such as myself, Zedong, and my generation, and youngsters such as today’s students, be they poor or rich, workers, peasants, businessmen, or intellectuals, no matter what their beliefs, will together fall into the hands of the foreign invaders. The mountains and rivers will no longer be our own mountains and rivers; the people will no longer be our own people; the cities and towns will no longer be our own cities and towns. This is what is called the loss of the state and the destruction of the race, something truly unprecedented in ancient times and in our own day. What would you, sir, do about this? The Communist Party has proposed to establish a united front against Japan. People all over the country believe this is feasible, and we assume that you believe so, too. Only those gentlemen in positions of power are doing nothing, either saying that it can’t be done or advocating a delay in carrying it out. This is tantamount to failing to resist the robber who breaks into your home, or refusing to fight the tiger who threatens to eat you alive, and will lead the whole country into a hopeless disaster in which the people become utterly apathetic and await their own death by suffocation. And what would you, sir, do about this? Mr. Sun Yat-sen’s policies are aimed at uniting with Russia, uniting with the Communist Party, and uniting with the peasants and workers, were carried out and proved to be effective during the First Great Revolution from 1925 to 1927. What is more, the period of cooperation between the two parties, the Guomindang and the Communist Party, was the most revolutionary period for the Guomindang. With Mr. Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary policies trampled and abandoned, civil war has been raging ceaselessly, and foreign invasion has got out of hand like a torrential wave bursting open an embankment! What is proposed in the Communist Party’s August 25 letter to the Guomindang, even though a reaffirmation of an old principle, is actually the best stratagem to save the country from destruction. And what would you, sir, do about this? When I read A Commentary on the New Words, I was greatly impressed to find that your honorable name occupied the first place. After twenty years to suddenly see that Mr. Jiemin, a man I deeply admire and respect, has expressed an entirely fresh idea that sharply differs from that of any ordinary old, new, or dichard faction—you must know, sir, that I am surely not the only person, and the Communist Party is surely not the only party, to rejoice upon seeing it but, rather, that countless people will do so! There is, likewise, not a single doubt that those who rejoice upon hearing from comrades and friends about your supporting the cause of resistance against Japan and national salvation are surely not limited to me alone or to the Communist Party, but, rather, include all honest and sincere sons and daughters of the nation. And yet there is still a long way to go after this first important step. For the sake of such a noble cause, you should stand up in the lead as the national hero of the Restoration Society and the Tongmenghui and as the academic leader of Beijing University and Academia Sinica, to harness the raging wave of this adverse current, not only with words but also with deeds, not only with sympathy but also with leadership, strongly urging that the Nanjing authorities immediately stop the civil war; abandon their erroneous policy of making concessions to the foreign powers while imposing harsh treatment domestically; abolish their subjugationist guideline of punishing patriots as criminals and rewarding traitors as heroes; mobilize all the forces of the navy, army, and air force in the country to wage an authentic war of resistance against Japan; revive the spirit of Mr. Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary Three People’s Principles and three major policies; rescue our 450 million compatriots from the abyss of suffering; call together a congress of representa-

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 66–69, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Cai Yuanpei (1868–1940), zi Heqing, hao Jiemin, was a native of Zhejiang. In 1894 he became a compiler at the Hanlin Academy. After studying in Germany and then in France in the years 1908–1916, he returned to China and was appointed chancellor of Beijing University. Cai held this post until 1926 and was thus in charge when Mao Zedong made his two visits to Beijing, in 1918–1919 and 1919–1920. In 1927, he took Chiang Kai-shek’s side in the conflict with the Communists and assumed various official posts, but in 1928 he resigned from the government to become the first president of Academia Sinica. In 1935, he resigned all official posts and issued a public statement denouncing the restrictive political and intellectual controls exercised by the Guomindang authorities.

2. The text referred to here (Chinese title: Xin wenzijiyianshu) may be the statement of 1935 mentioned in the previous note.

3. Sun Yat-sen’s Tongmenghui or “Revolutionary Alliance,” referred to in these volumes by its Chinese title, was the most important revolutionary organization in the early years of the twentieth century, to which many of those who played a role in Chinese politics during the 1920s and 1930s had belonged. The Restoration Society (Guangufu hui) was active mainly in Zhejiang in the years 1903–1907, but contacts were also made outside the province, and Cai Yuanpei, himself a native of Zhejiang, was persuaded to become its nominal head. In fact, his role was very limited. Its most celebrated figures were Xu Xilin, who assassinated an imperial governor, and the woman revolutionary Qiu Jin, both of whom were executed in 1907.
To Li Jishen, Li Zongren, and Bai Chongxi

(September 22, 1936)

To Mr. Renchao, with the request for transmission to Messrs. Delin and Jiansheng, for your honorable inspection:

Mr. Qian Shoukang came and told me everything about your situation and the draft agreement that you sent to me. There is no excuse for delay in working for a magnificent future for our country. At present, the great plan for resisting Japan and saving the country must enter the stage in which it becomes concrete reality. We have already put forward such a concrete plan in the letter we sent to the Guomindang on August 25. Now, we ask Mr. Qian to present it to you for your honorable inspection. It is my belief that, as men of broad vision and great foresight, you gentlemen will agree with our plan. The most urgent task for us at this point is to call off the civil war throughout the country and to unite against Japan. Although your honorable side seems fortunately to have avoided the disaster of a war for the time being, the battle on the northwestern front is still going on. All parties, factions, circles, and armed forces in the country are appealing to the Nanjing government for it to shift its venal hostility from its compatriots to the foreign invaders and for Mr. Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Guomindang to join the united front against Japan. This is truly a vital step in the overall tactics for saving the country. If the whole country is in a state of turmoil, and resistance against Japan is hampered, the reason is simply that the

We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuzi yuanji, pp. 70–72, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Li Jishen (1885–1959), zhi Renchao, was born in Guangxi. He had been twice expelled from the Guomindang because of conflicts with Chiang Kai-shek, the second time in 1934 following the collapse of the Fujian rebellion, of which he was the titular head. (See the telegram addressed to him by Mao on January 13, 1934, in Volume IV of our edition, pp. 649–50.) He had been a leader in planning the Guangdong-Guangxi revolt of June 1936, and when it was suppressed he fled again to Hong Kong. Li Zongren (1891–1969), zhi Delin, was a native of Guangxi and graduated from a military academy there. By 1926, he had established himself as the dominant military figure in Guangxi and continued to play a major role in the affairs of that province. He participated in the anti-Chiang action of June–July 1936 but, unlike Li Jishen, retained his post there after that affair was settled. Bai Chongxi (1893–1966), zhi Jiansheng, was born into a Muslim family in Guangxi. A graduate of the Baoding Military Academy, Bai had become by the end of 1925 one of the three leaders of what was subsequently called the Guangxi clique. Thereafter he served repeatedly under Li Zongren, with whom he organized a Guangxi military government in July 1936. After the collapse of the rebellion, he was reappointed deputy commander of the Nationalist forces in Guangxi, under Li Zongren as commander.
Nanjing authorities not only lack understanding of and resolution in supporting the movement to resist Japan and save the country from subjugation, but obstinately adhere to their erroneous policy of making concessions to foreign powers and imposing harsh treatment domestically. It is the duty of people all over the country, as well as of all influential factions, to exhort the government, criticize it, and force it to reform.

It is absolutely necessary for our side and your honorable side to sign an agreement on resistance against Japan and national salvation. We have expressed our humble views on each article in your draft and made some minor changes. Two copies have been prepared, and once again we ask Mr. Qian to take them along to you and respectfully request your further consideration. If you have no objections, please sign your names and affix your seals. You may keep one of the two copies and allow Mr. Qian to bring the second copy back to us. By then, the agreement will be final and will go into effect as of the date that you sign the document (please date the agreement). In the event that there is still something that needs to be discussed, please let us know. We can send the document back and forth for further discussion before it is finalized. Once the agreement is in effect, both sides must work hard, in accordance with the agreement, until our mission to resist Japan and save the country from subjugation is completely accomplished. The agreement between us can be seen as the first step to save the Chinese nation from subjugation and to drive out Japanese imperialism from China. We have made this reply in response to your request.

With respect, we extend our very best wishes.

Mao Zedong

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To Jiang Guangnai and Cai Tingkai

(September 22, 1936)

For the perusal of the honorable Messrs. Jingran and Xianchu:

Months and years go by without end, and the seasons flow on like a stream. Looking back on 1933 and 1934, when you, elder brothers, and we were cooperating to save the country, I realize that another three years have passed. The national crisis is daily becoming more urgent, as the [Japanese] bandits continue to advance. Even to this day, the Nanjing authorities still have shown no repentance for their evil deeds which have brought about this calamity. The civil war continues as before, and the people of the whole country are still struggling in an abyss of misery. Thinking of the future, my heart burns with anxiety! Currently, however, the situation in the world has moved into a new stage, while the patriotic movement in our country is developing vigorously. Under the leadership of you gentlemen and your colleagues, the glorious Nineteenth Route Army is continuing to struggle unrelentingly. Meanwhile, your younger brothers are getting closer to the anti-Japanese battlefront, after fighting in various places in the south and the north. The united front to resist Japan and save the nation from extinction has won praise and support from various parties, factions, social circles, armed forces, and all patriotic people with a conscience. Even within the Guomindang some changes have begun. All this tells us that, compared to the past, things have now taken on a new aspect. It is evident that the day when we can drive out the Japanese bandits and save the nation from extinction is not far away. Our humble Party has put forward a new and concrete plan in our letter of August 25 to the Guomindang. I am enclosing a copy and respectfully request

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We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 73–75, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Jiang Guangnai (1888–1967), z Li Jingren, and Cai Tingkai (1892–1968), z Xianchu, were both natives of Guangdong. They had risen to prominence in 1932 because of their resistance to the Japanese in Shanghai as commanders of the Nineteenth Route Army. In 1933–1934, they had participated in the Fujian rebellion against Chiang Kaishek.

2. Although negotiations took place between Jiang, Cai, and their associates, on the one hand, and the Jiangxi Soviet Republic on the other, both before and during the military action by which Chiang Kaishek suppressed the “People’s Revolutionary Government” in Fujian, in the end the Communists failed to support the rebels. (On Mao’s role in these events, see the Introduction to Volume IV of this edition, pp. lxxix–lxxxiv.) Mao’s statement here about “cooperating to save the country” is therefore something of an exaggeration.
you to scrutinize it. In order to mobilize the whole country (including the Nanjing government) to carry out a real anti-Japanese war, I propose to you, and to all the comrades in the Nineteenth Route Army, that we reach an agreement on resistance against Japan and national salvation on the basis of a new program. We have drafted eight articles for discussion. Please pass them on to Mr. Chen Zhenru and all the comrades in the Nineteenth Route Army. If you all agree with these articles, we can dispatch our respective representatives to meet in an appropriate place, where the agreement can be officially signed. If you, elder brothers, feel that there is still something to be discussed, changed, or added, we may discuss it again and again until it is perfect, and then sign it. At any rate, the real task of national salvation can be completely accomplished only when more and more people with lofty ideals who are truly anxious to save the country unite as one and do their utmost in accordance with a political program in which they all firmly believe. Anyone who loves the country as sincerely as you gentlemen do knows that what I have said here is not empty words. When will Mr. Zhenru come back from abroad? I am deeply concerned about it. It is our anxious hope that he will come back immediately and join us in the great cause of the united front. Since Mr. Qian Shoukang is traveling southward, I have asked him to present my letter to you. Although we are thousands of miles apart, it is never too late for us to hear from each other.

I write especially to extend to you with respect my very best wishes.

Mao Zedong

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3. According to a note to Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, the Chinese Communist Party produced a "Draft Agreement on Cooperation Between the Chinese Communist Party and the Guomindang to Resist Japan and Save the Country" in September 1936. The same document was used as a basis for negotiations with various regional forces regarding an anti-Japanese united front, and it is to this that Mao is referring here. For a revised version of the text as it stood on October 11, 1936, see below.

4. Chen Mingshu (1890–1965), zi Zhenru, was a native of Guangdong, and had been governor of that province from 1929 to 1931. When the Nineteenth Route Army gained international fame in 1932 as a result of its resistance to the Japanese in Shanghai, Chen was overall commander. He also took the lead in the Fujian rebellion of 1933 and was chairman of the short-lived "People's Revolutionary Government." After the Fujian régime was suppressed, Chen fled to Hong Kong. In 1936, he traveled to Europe, where he stayed until the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in July 1937.

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To Yu Xuezhong

(September 22, 1936)

For the perusal of the honorable Chairman Yu:

With our two armies confronting each other so closely, we still have not had a chance to exchange greetings. Please accept my sincere apologies. I have known all along that you, sir, deeply love our country, and that you have long been in sympathy with the War of Resistance against Japan. Now it is of great urgency for us to stop the mutual slaughter between your honorable army and our own, so that we may seek a ceasefire and a peaceful solution in the Northwest. To this end I am sending Mr. Peng Yufeng to meet you and explain in detail the proposal of our humble side to initiate a joint effort to save the nation. I hope that you will be kind enough to see him and give him the benefit of your instruction about all these matters. Undoubtedly, the success of our cooperation in resistance against Japan will benefit both of our armies, and bring good fortune to the nation and to the country.

I write especially to convey my best wishes for your good fortune, and more.

Mao Zedong

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 76–77, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Regarding Yu Xuezhong, see the relevant note to the text of January 25, 1936. At this time, in addition to his position as chairman of the Gansu provincial government, he was commander of the Guomindang's Fifty-first Army.

2. Peng Yufeng is an alternative name for Peng Xuefeng. See below, the letter to him dated December 20, 1936.
Interview with Edgar Snow on the United Front
(September 23, 1936)

Snow: Will you please explain the United Front policy of the Communist Party and its change in attitude toward the Guomindang government?

Mao: Three main factors have influenced the decision leading to the policy announced in our recent manifesto.¹

First of all the seriousness of Japanese aggression: it is becoming more intensified every day, and is so formidable a menace that before it all the forces of China must unite. Besides the Communist Party, we recognize the existence of other parties and forces in China, of course, and the strongest of these is the Guomindang. Without its cooperation our strength at present is insufficient to resist Japan in war. Nanjing must participate. The Guomindang and the Communist Party are the two main political forces in China, and if they continue to fight now in civil war the effect will be unfavorable for the anti-Japanese movement.

Secondly, since last August (1935), the Communist Party has been urging, by manifesto, a union of all parties in China for the purpose of resisting Japan, and to this program the entire populace has responded with sympathy, notwithstanding the fact the the Guomindang has continued its attacks upon us.² Today the Chinese people, as well as many patriotic officials, are eager to see the reunion of the two parties for the purpose of national salvation. They are eager to see an end to the civil war. Without it, the movement for resisting Japan is faced with great obstacles.

The third point is that many patriotic elements, even in the Guomindang, now favor a reunion with the Communist Party. Anti-Japanese elements even in the Nanjing government, and Nanjing’s own armies, are today ready to unite because of the peril to our national existence.

These are the main characteristics of the present situation in China, and because of them we are obliged to reconsider, in detail, the concrete formula under which such cooperation in the national liberation movement can become possible. Such a formula has, in fact, been proposed in our recent negotiations with the Guomindang. The fundamental point of unity which we insist upon is the national liberation anti-Japanese principle. In order to realize it we believe there must be established a National Defense Democratic Government, within a national defense democratic republic. Its main tasks must be (1) to resist the foreign invader, (2) to grant popular rights to the masses of the people, and (3) to intensify the development of the country’s economy.

Such a program fulfills the will of the people at present and has their unanimous support, and this is why the Soviet government favors the establishment of such a united people’s democratic government.

We will support a parliamentary form of representative government, an anti-Japanese salvation government, a government which protects and supports all popular patriotic groups. If such a republic is established, the Chinese Soviets will become a part of it. We will realize in our areas the same measures for a democratic parliamentary form of government as realized in the rest of China.

Snow: Does that mean that the laws of such a government would also apply in Soviet districts?

Mao: Yes.

Snow: Does it mean that the present laws of the Soviets, especially on the land question, will be nullified?

Mao: If and when the formation of a united front with Nanjing is realized, that problem can easily be settled.

Of course, we realize that Japan and pro-Japanese elements in China will violently oppose this program. Its principles are directly opposed to their own interests. But the Chinese people will welcome it, and we believe will fight to realize it. Everyone who still has a conscience must feel that the alternative,³ which is subjugation by Japanese imperialism, means extinction for the Chinese people.

Part of the Guomindang, we know, is already opposed to accepting further humiliation at the hands of the Japanese. Among the people, among all classes, among army men, scientists, students, merchants, policemen, professional people, as well as among our own workers and peasants, there are already organized anti-Japanese patriotic groups, and with these groups we want wholeheartedly to shake hands and cooperate. We hope that such elements will form a united force to overcome the influence of the Japanophiles and those who have betrayed the guiding principles of Sun Yatsen.⁴ We hope that such elements will help to restore and once more to realize Sun Yatsen’s basic principles and his final will

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¹ As indicated by Snow in a note to the manuscript, and to the published text, the reference is to the “Letter to the Guomindang” of August 25, 1936, translated above.

² As in the interview of July 16, certain passages critical of the Guomindang, including the words italicized here, were omitted from the text as published in the China Weekly Review.

³ Here Snow has added a note reading: i.e., if the united front is not achieved and civil war continues.

⁴ This remark, obviously aimed at Chiang Kaishek, is also omitted in the text as published by the China Weekly Review.
in the Great Revolution [of 1924–1927], i.e. (1) alliance with the U.S.S.R. and those countries which treat China as an equal, (2) union with the Chinese Communist Party, and (3) fundamental protection of the interests of the Chinese working class. We hope such elements will help to realize the final will of Sun Yat-sen and oppose Japanese imperialism.

If such a movement develops in the Guomindang we are prepared to cooperate with and support it, and to form a united front against imperialism such as existed in 1925–1927. We are convinced that this is the only way left to save our nation. If such a program is realized we need not fear Japan. Japanese imperialism is incapable of defeating a really united, armed, and organized Chinese people.

Meanwhile, however, Japan hopes to form an anti-Red front of her own. This in reality means a front of subjugation for the Chinese people. We want to form a national liberation front, and success for it will mean victory in the anti-Japanese struggle, and a victory, ultimately, for world peace. For only by such a victory can the Chinese people march hand in hand with all the free peoples of the earth.

Snow: What exactly do you mean by “representative” government? What, for example, would you insist upon as the minimum demand for suffrage?

Mao: Suffrage should be universal, without any qualifications of property, position, education, or sex.

Snow: If such a program is accepted by Nanjing, will the Red Army agree to change its name and submit to the higher command of Nanjing?

Mao: We recognize (as mentioned in an earlier interview) that in an anti-Japanese war there must be a unified command of the national armies, but we also believe that the war council must be representative. It should be emphasized that this is only possible on the basis of the anti-Japanese liberation front. Some Guomindang members also talk of “unification,” but not to support the national liberation and anti-imperialist movement. In reality it is perfectly clear that without real anti-imperialist struggle there can be no unification of the country.

Whether or not the Red Army changes its name depends upon the conditions of the reunion.

Snow: Does the new policy mean recognition by the Communist Party that national liberation must be established before class revolution can be accomplished?

Mao: It is and has been all along a principle of the Communist Party that in this stage the anti-imperialist drive must be realized, so that our emphasis on the

national struggle against Japan does not represent any new thesis. At the same time, as already pointed out, we believe the anti-Japanese movement can only be made effective if realized simultaneously with the liberation of the oppressed peasantry and the realization of Sun Yat-sen’s third point, i.e. the protection of the interests of the workers.

Snow: Does the United Front policy mean that the Communist Party is willing to give up, or postpone indefinitely, the practice of land confiscation from landlords and redistribution to poor and landless peasants?

Mao: This will also have to be decided upon with the development of the anti-Japanese movement. However, we are confident that the anti-Japanese program cannot be realized without relief to the peasantry. Agrarian revolution, as you know, is of bourgeois character. It is beneficial to the development of capitalism. We are not opposed to the development of capitalism now in China, but against imperialism. This principle meets the demands of all democratic elements in the country, and we support it wholeheartedly.

Snow: Would not the realization of the United Front on this basis in actual effect mean an immediate declaration of war on Japan?

Mao: Yes, quite possibly if the reunion were proclaimed today, war might begin tomorrow.6

Snow: So it is now only possible to conceive of acceptance of the program at Nanjing if Chiang Kai-shek really intends to go to war with Japan?

6. The text of this interview as published in the China Weekly Review ends here. It is followed by a note reading:

In conversation with various Soviet functionaries I was assured that the Soviet government might agree to change the name of the Soviets, as well as that of the Red Army. On the latter’s banners already the inscription has been altered from “Workers and Peasants Red Army” to “Chinese People’s Anti-Japanese Vanguard Red Army.” It has been suggested in informal “Red-White” talks that the Soviet districts might change their name to the “Experimental Areas” or “Special Administrative Districts.” Generally there seems to be a willingness among the Communists to make such changes in nomenclature as might facilitate an agreement, but not fundamentally affect the independent role of the Communist Party and the Red Army. The Communists evidently will not insist upon representation in the Cabinet of the proposed “democratic republic.” They would be prepared to submit to its discipline. The point of universal suffrage would perhaps not be insisted upon. But a central demand would be the guarantee of civil liberties, of the rights of freedom of speech, press, and assembly, and the release of political prisoners. The Communist Party, I was assured by Chairman Mao, would be willing to agree not to organize mass movements opposed to the principles of the National Salvation United Front, and not to “promote” class struggle.—Edgar Snow. Peiping, Nov. 5, 1936.
Mao: Yes, that is the fundamental proposition. And that is the point we are not sure of, and that is why Chiang Kaishek wavers and delays and may try to avoid an agreement altogether.

Snow: What events in the last two or three months have brought about these new decisions of Communist policy? The three points mentioned by you are conditions which have existed for several years, only gradually becoming more intensified, are they not? Is there any immediate cause for the new proposals—which must certainly be regarded as the most important decision in your party’s history for a decade?

Mao: The immediate cause is the great acceleration in Japanese aggression, the severe new demands of Japan, capitulation to which must enormously handicap any attempts at resistance in the future, and the popular response to this deepening Japanese invasion in the form of a great people’s patriotic movement. These conditions have in turn produced a change in attitude among certain elements in Nanjing. Under such circumstances it is now possible to hope for the realization of such a policy as we propose, whereas had it been offered in this form a year ago or earlier neither the country nor the Guomindang would have been prepared for it.

At present negotiations are being conducted, and while the Communist Party has no great positive hopes of persuading Nanjing to resist Japan it is nevertheless possible. As long as it is, the Communist Party will be ready to cooperate in all necessary measures. If Chiang Kaishek prefers to continue the civil war the Red Army will also be ready to receive him.

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Block Hu Zongnan’s Westward Advance, and Ensure That We Continue to Hold Jieshipu

(September 25, 1936, 2:00 P.M.)

To Peng [Dehuai], and inform Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. The Fourth Front Army is resolved to move westward to cross the river at Yongjing and attempt to occupy Yongdeng and Liangzhou. Its units at Tongwei withdrew on the 24th. It is said that, after crossing the river, one unit of the troops will move to Zhongwei to support the First Front Army in taking Ningxia. The only proper course in this matter is to let them do as they see fit.

2. For the present, however, it is still important to block the westward advance of Enemy Hu. Has the Thirteenth Regiment returned to the First Division? If not, it would be good to send troops first to strengthen it. Jieshipu must remain in our hands. In addition, would it be possible to use the main force of the First Front Army and the Eighty-first Division to occupy the Guyuan-Zhenyuan line and to threaten Pingliang and Wating? Please consider this and reply.

3. As for the movements of the Second Front Army, we are still in the process of thinking it over, and discussing it by telegram.

Mao

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Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 595–96, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
The Fourth Front Army Has Full Certainty of Controlling the Major Road Between Long[de], Jing[ning], Hui[ning], and Ding[xi]

(September 26, 1936, 12:00 noon)

Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao]:

Reliable information: Hu Zongnan’s forces have not moved since they reached Xianyang. Their reinforcements have not all arrived. The Fourth Front Army has full certainty of controlling the major road between Long[de], Jing[ning], Hui[ning], and Ding[xi]. There can be no serious battles. The First Front Army’s main force may move southward to relieve them. The Second Front Army may also go north so as to form a pincer movement. If we move northward, there will be no problem with food supply. If, on the other hand, we move westward to western Gansu, our forces will be restricted to a small corner of Qinghai, and we will have difficulty with our operations from there on.

[Lin Yu]ying
Bo [Gu]
[Luo] [Fu]
[Wang] Jia[xiang]
[Zhou] En[lai]
[Mao] Ze[dong]

Strongly Raise in the Talks with Nanjing Guomindang-Communist Cooperation and a Halt to the Civil War

(September 27, 1936)

Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian], Chen [Changhao]:

The other side\(^1\) has sent another telegram, which emphasizes all the preparations that your younger brothers and the rest of us have just made in the area indicated in our last telegram. The projections made in the telegram of 12:00 noon on the 26th from you, our elder brothers, are not realistic.

1. In talks with Nanjing, Nanjing has already undergone internal changes, and the national bourgeoisie and the upper level of the petty bourgeoisie are already different from what they were. Therefore, our emphasis on Guomindang-Communist cooperation and a strong attempt to bring a halt to the civil war in order truly to resist Japan is currently the only correct policy. [Zhou] Enlai is preparing to leave in response to Nanjing’s request. This is indeed necessary because for the past seven months the mediators going back and forth have been lesser representatives and formal negotiations cannot take place without having responsible persons.

2. Li Yi\(^2\) is closer to us, and Yang Hucheng has put into effect a ceasefire with us. Li [Zongren] and Bai [Chongxi] are sending representatives seeking to sign an agreement to resist Japan. In North China, Song Zheyuan, Fu Zuoyi, and Han Fuqu are all in negotiations. Ma Bufang also has a compromise line. Only Ma Hongkui is adamantly reactionary, and we should combine forces to destroy him.

3. Ningxia has a population of more than 1.2 million, and is the richest in the Northwest. If it were joined together with the Shaanxi-Gansu Soviet Area, it would be easy to consolidate the old soviet area. By connecting with Liangzhou and Yongdeng, we could progress toward western Gansu, and from the border of Suiyuan it would be convenient to advance eastward to resist Japan. That all the major political, military, economic, domestic, and international elements can be linked together, and that there will be the determined policy of a northward

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1. I.e., the Guomindang authorities.
2. Zhang Xueliang.

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, p. 597, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
The Fourth Front Army Should Move Northward Immediately

(September 27, 1936, 2:00 P.M.)

To Comrades Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao]; Chen [Changhao] and Xu [Xiangqian]; and for them to inform He [Long], Ren [Bishi], and Liu [Bocheng]:

1. The two successive telegrams sent on the 26th have been received, and the contents are respectfully acknowledged, including words to the effect that, without explicit orders from the Party Central Committee to call it off, the plan to cross [the Yellow River] westward will definitely be carried out. The Central Secretariat and the Politburo have carefully and methodically discussed this operational problem, and we hereby present to you our conclusions as follows:

   2. The Central Committee holds that if our First and Fourth Front Armies are combined, their strength is great; when they are separated, their strength is small. If they are combined, they can occupy both Ningxia and western Gansu and accomplish the task entrusted to us by the International; if they are separated, it will be difficult for them to occupy either place, and there is the danger that they may not actually be able to accomplish the task. If the First and Fourth Front Armies combine their strength to move northward, then the Second Front Army may check the enemy from the outer flank. If the First and Fourth Armies are separated and the Second Front Army moves north, then the outer flank will be weak and all three Front Armies will be located in narrow strips of territory, the enemy will blockade us relying on the Yellow River, and we will find it difficult to expand in the future. Moreover, because the road between Xi'an and Lanzhou has been cut, Enemy Hu [Zongnan] fears that we may attack him with a pincer movement and also fears that the Northeastern Army may not be reliable. He does not dare to move in the direction of Longde and Jingning and apparently intends to move toward Tianshui in order to be nearer to Wang Jun. If the Fourth Front Army crosses [the river] westward, the other side will dispatch Mao's unit

Our source for this telegram is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 598–600, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The reference is to two telegrams from Zhang Guotao and others to Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and others, sent at 12:00 noon and 10 P.M. on September 26. A note to *Mao Zedong junshi wenji* indicates that the first telegram stated that the most important thing at that moment was to occupy northern Gansu; the second declared, as indicated below in this telegram, that the Fourth Front Army would continue to follow the plans for the western expedition unless clear orders to the contrary were received from the Central Committee.
first, to be followed by Hu’s, and they will first intercept and attack us on the Qing-Lan road, and then intercept and attack us on the Liang-Jing road. After that the enemy would be in the center and we would be on the periphery, and it would no longer be possible to concentrate our forces. The danger exists that we might lose the whole game through this one misstep.

3. The Central Committee therefore holds that the Fourth Front Army should stick to the September 18 deployment plan of Zhu, Zhang, and Chen, and immediately move northward along the Tongwei and Longxi line, thus being able to reach the Jingyuan-Haiyuan area in less than a couple of weeks and cross the river at Jingyuan. The First Front Army would follow suit and cross the river, or it might combine forces with the Fourth Front Army and first take Ningxia, or divide its forces to take Ningxia and western Gansu together. As long as the Second Front Army remains at the outer flank to check the enemy, there will be no possibility of failure. The First Front Army, while assuring its occupation of Jieshipu, will immediately dispatch at least four regiments to pass through the Longde-Jingning line and directly press on to Tai’an and Tianshui, so that Enemy Hu will not dare to make a move. This will enable the Fourth Front Army to move north very safely. It is requested that our four elder brothers, Zhu, Zhang, Chen, and Xu, take into consideration the whole situation and adopt these guidelines, that is, the September 18 guidelines of comrades Zhu, Zhang, and Chen.

4. It is requested that our elder brothers come to a decision rapidly and reply promptly.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]    Peng [Dehuai]

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2. The reference is to the highways between Xining in Qinghai and Lanzhou in Gansu, and between Liangzhou in Gansu and Lanzhou.

Telegram to Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian], and Chen [Changhao] on Again Ordering the Fourth Front Army to Advance Northward Rapidly

(September 27, 1936, 6:00 P.M.)

Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian], and Chen [Changhao]:

1. The Central Committee has already issued an explicit order, so please immediately order the Tongwei troops to return and occupy Tongwei. The rest are to follow the northward march.

2. As soon as we receive a telegraphic reply, our Second Division will go to Zhuanglang and Tai’an, and our First Division will go to the border between Wa[ing], Long[de], and Jing[ning] to coordinate actions.¹

3. Hu Zongnan’s reinforcement brigade has retreated from Huining to Lanzhou. Only two companies remain in the town of Huining, where panic prevails. To raid and occupy this town is possible. The rest of Hu’s forces dare not advance on the Xi’an-Lanzhou highway towards Baoji and Tianshui, so our Second Front Army is perfectly capable of forcing them into submission. When the Second Division goes to Zhuanglang, Hu will certainly not dare to advance rashly. The Fourth Front Army now has plenty of time to enter the Long[de]-Jing[ning]-Hui[ning]-Ding[xi] highway, and the enemy has no possibility of blocking it.

4. Even though the Lanzhou-Liangzhou line is five or six hundred li long, it is very sparsely populated, there is not enough food, and there are great snow-covered mountains in the middle. This we have been told by Deng [Xiaoping], who wrote on the basis of personal experience.² If the enemy occupies the strategic points first, we will run into tremendous difficulties.

5. Please decide quickly and respond likewise.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]    Peng [Dehuai]

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1. All the places mentioned in the first three paragraphs of this text are located in the area where the three provinces of Gansu, Shaanxi, and Ningxia (as it then was—now the Ningxia Muslim Autonomous Region) converge. Mao refers to the “border” between Wating, Longde, and Jingning because the first two of these are in Ningxia, and the third in Gansu, whereas Zhuanglang and Lai’an are both in Gansu.

2. Regarding Deng Xiaoping’s journey through this area, see above, the relevant note to the text of September 19, 1936.
It Is Proposed to Order That the First and Second Divisions Support the Northward Advance of the Second and Fourth Front Armies by Coordinated Action

(September 28, 1936, 10:30 P.M.)

For Peng [Dehuai], and for the information of Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. Zhu and Zhang have sent a telegram:¹ They have stopped their westward movement to cross the river and have turned north. Their lead division can reach Tongwei by October 4 and reach Jieshipu by the 8th.

2. Intelligence reports indicate that six regiments of Enemy Hu have arrived at Tianshi and Tai’an; six regiments are at Fengxiang and on the Tianshi route. Guan’s division² is moving in the direction of Baoji.

3. Our army has the task of supporting the Fourth Front Army in its northward advance by coordinated action, and the following deployments are proposed:
   a. That the Second Division immediately move southward, cross the Longde-Jingning road at right angles and take Zhuanglang, Tai’an, and Tianshi by surprise when the opportunity arises. It should subsequently engage in extensive guerrilla activities in the direction of Huating and Longxian in the area between the road and the Wei River, so as to become the strategic contingent among the three front armies. They should strengthen their political affairs personnel.
   b. That the First Division work in concert with the Second Division in its original area.
   c. The rest of the tasks remain unchanged.

Mao

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 601–2, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

¹. According to a note to the Mao Zedong junshi wenji, this telegram from Zhu De and others, sent on the 27th, stated that, in obedience to the instructions of the Central Committee, their armies would proceed to Huining and would not change their plans again.

². The reference is to the Twenty-fifth Division of the Guomindang’s Northwest Bandit-Suppression General Headquarters, commanded by Guan Linzheng.

It Is Extremely Necessary to Open Schools Attached to the Troops

(September 29, 1936)

Comrades He [Long], Ren [Bishi], Guan [Xiangying], and Liu [Bocheng]:

1. We are in receipt of your telegram dated the 28th.¹ You still maintain great strength. The prospect for future development knows no bounds, something for which you should be congratulated in the name of the Chinese revolution.

2. It is extremely necessary to have schools attached to the troops; it is mainly through these schools that you will get the cadres you need. We have transferred a large number of high ranking cadres from troops at the front to open up the Red Army University to engage in training and to be held in reserve for future use. Lin Biao is the president and Luo Ruiqing is the provost. Chen Guang, Luo Ronghuan, Zhou Jianping, Liu Yalou, Tan Zheng, Zhou Shidi, Zhou Kun, Yuan Guoping, Peng Xuefeng, and more than a hundred battalion, regimental, and division commanders are studying there. For the first four months the focus is on political theory, and for the second four months, equal emphasis is placed upon political and military matters. In addition, there are general courses which are taken by six hundred people who will become platoon and company commanders. All of these people were superior lower-level cadres and soldiers. For the moment, therefore, we cannot supply them to you. We are prepared, however, to allocate some of them to you after they graduate.

3. Under the circumstances of the Fourth Front Army’s moving northward, as long as your present situation permits, you should strive as much as possible to undertake recuperation and expansion within your present areas.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]    Peng [Dehuai]

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 603–4, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

¹. According to a note to the Mao Zedong junshi wenji, this telegram asked that divisional and regimental level cadres be sent to the Second Front Army to replace those lost recently in more than ten battles.
We Must Actively Establish an Anti-Japanese United Front with the Guomindang Forces

(October 1, 1936, 4:00 P.M.)

For Comrades Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao], and to be transmitted to He [Long], Ren [Bishi], Guan [Xiangying], and Liu [Bochong]:

According to reports: the Seventh Regiment of the Third Cavalry Division of Jingning 1 has sent a representative to Tongwei to make contact with the Red Army at Tongwei. Those in Tongwei, however, reckoned that the Seventh Cavalry Regiment did this only because they were afraid we would attack them, and it seems that for this reason they did not actively seek to establish a united front relationship with the Seventh Cavalry Regiment. We recommend to our elder brothers that they should send a circular to all units instructing them that whenever a White army unit seeks to approach us, our side should first send someone over on a trial basis carrying a sincerely worded letter demanding the establishment of a united front to resist Japan. If the other side sends someone over for the first time after agreeing to our request, no matter whether their motives are fear of attack or a sincere desire to cooperate in resisting Japan, our side should receive them all with equal sincerity, in the hope of communicating with them and enlarging the scope of the united front in the Northwest. On the basis of our ten months of experience, it is difficult for Red Army commanders and fighters to engage in the work to establish a united front with the White army unless they have undergone thorough education or learned from experience accumulated in their own work. The reason for this is that it is not very easy for ordinary comrades to understand the complex situation of needing to fight and, at the same time, needing to maintain peace.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]    Peng [Dehuai]

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We have translated this document from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 605–6, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. A regiment commanded by Zhang Chengde, under the Guomindang army’s Northwest Bandit Suppression General Headquarters.

It Is Appropriate for the Second Division to Be Stationed in the Xiaohecheng Area

(October 2, 1936, 2:00 P.M.)

Peng [Dehuai]:

Hu Zongnan is still in the Longxian area. Our Second Front Army will move north of the Wei River in one week. According to Li Fuchun’s report, the masses in Ningxia are very good, Ma’s troops are in a panic, most enclosures and fortresses except for a small number of strongholds can be taken without a fight, and it is possible that we can seize the ferry boats. If this is the case it would be appropriate for the Second Division to be promptly stationed in the Xiaohecheng area, so that once the decision to attack Ning[xia] earlier is made, it will be convenient to move the Second Division, and it will not be too exhausted. Please offer your opinion about an early attack on Ning[xia].

Mao

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 607–8, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
The Operational Deployment of Our Troops After the Second Front Army Has Crossed the Wei River

(October 2, 1936, 2:00 P.M.)

To Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao], and to be transmitted to Ren [Bishi], He [Long], Guan [Xiangying], and Liu [Bocheng]:

1. In terms of the operations of the Second Front Army, given their current location as well as the fact that they themselves need a rest, it does not seem a good idea for them to fight a campaign alone south of the Wei River. We therefore suggested that they find out about crossing the Wei River and prepare to undertake strategic or campaign operations in one week. Now, according to their telegram of the 1st, they plan to cross to the area north of the Wei River after a week. We feel that this is feasible. Please advise us of your opinions.

2. After the Second Front Army has crossed over to the north of the Wei River, all three front armies will be operating on interior lines, and our major enemies, the troops of Hu [Zongnan], Guan [Linzheng], Wang [Jun], and Mao [Bingwen] will first build up their blockade line along the banks of the Wei River, after which they will force us north of the Shaanxi-Gansu road and then build another blockade line along this road. It will take about two months for the enemy to complete their two steps, and if we can join our forces and impose a considerable blow upon the enemy, the time may be extended. Starting from December, our main forces will move northward to open up new prospects, and the Second Front Army will resist the enemy in the south from interior lines until next February, after which we will have entered new positions and will surely be able to use some forces to break the blockade in the south and begin to maneuver on exterior lines.

3. We predict that after the concentration of Hu's troops, if they are not attacked by us, the Second Front Army will be able remain stationary for long between the highway and the Wei River. By then they could naturally move a

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 609–11, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. According to a note in Mao Zedong junshi wenji, He Long and his comrades did indeed propose, in a telegram of October 1, that in the face of fierce attacks by the enemy, they should cross the Wei River within a week.

2. The editors of the Junshi wenji suggest that there is a typographical error here, and that the character bu ("not") should be inserted after "will."

The Second Front Army Should Take Advantage of the Fact That All the Enemy Troops Are Not Yet Concentrated to Move Away at Once

(October 3, 1936, 1:00 A.M.)

He [Long], Ren [Bishi], Guan [Xiangying], Liu [Bocheng):

Three regiments of Hu Zhongnan's First Division and Seventy-eighth Division have arrived at Qingshui, and the other six regiments are following close behind in Fufeng and Qishan. The four regiments of Guan Linzheng are moving toward Baoji and it looks as if they will, in cooperation with Wang Chuan's troops, launch an attack on you first. It is better for you to move away at once before all of Hu's troops are concentrated. Your best route for the transfer seems to be the road near Wushan, and you should first send out a detachment equipped with a radio transmitter to cross the river near Tianshui, advance toward Enemy Hu, approach Enemy Hu, and pin down his forces by segment so as to cover for the transfer of the main forces. It would be best, if possible, to have another detachment equipped with a transmitter to remain at the present location for some time, on the one hand, to attract the enemy and, on the other hand, to wait until Hu's succeeding six regiments have concentrated in Qingshui, cross the river to the east of Qingshui and move to the Huating and Longxian area, and maneuver in the enemy's rear. It would be best if both these detachments were no smaller than a division. We remain hopeful that you will deal with this matter after careful consideration.

Mao [Zedong] Zhou [Enlai]

The Fourth Front Army Should Quickly Concentrate Its Main Forces in the Area of Maying and Tongwei

(October 3, 1936, 12:00 noon)

Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao]:

1. The Ninety-third Division should quickly take Zhuanglang, after which follow-up units should proceed to take Tongwei. The troops in both Zhuanglang and Tongwei should get as close as possible to Qin'an to assist the Fourth Front Army's northward march as well as to assist the Second Front Army's move northward from west of Tianshui. The Fifth Army should follow the original plan of advancing to Zhuanglang so as to reinforce the troops in the east, for six regiments of Hu Zhongnan's forces have arrived at Qin'an and Qingshui, but their follow-up troops are still on the road between Fufeng and Qishan, and we estimate that it will take five to seven days for them to complete their concentration in Qingshui.

2. Huining City has already been occupied by our western detachment, and it looks as though, except for the two towns of Jingning and Dingxi, the major communication line centered on Jieshipu and Huining is already in our hands. Apart from sending one unit to take over the major communication line in Huining and Jieshipu, you, our elder brothers, should quickly concentrate your main forces in the Maying and Tongwei area and pay the most attention to the Tianshui and Qin'an direction. The troops in Minxian and Lintan should rapidly withdraw to the north.

3. An appropriate number of troops should be stationed in the Wushan and Gan'gu direction to cover for the Second Front Army's transfer movements.

4. Since you have arranged to take Zhuanglang, and the Second Front Army is also going to march northward, for the time being our Second Division will stop at Xiaohecheng.

Mao [Zedong] Zhou [Enlai] Peng [Dehuai]

We have translated this document from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 614–15, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. This detachment was composed of one infantry regiment and three cavalry regiments.
To Zhang Xueliang  
(October 5, 1936)

His Excellency Mr. Hanqing:

It has already been more than a year since the Chinese Communist Party proposed a national united front against Japan consisting of all parties, all factions, all circles, and all armies throughout the country. Although this has already received the support of the people of the whole country, the Chinese Guomindang to this day has not only adopted an ambivalent attitude but, just when the Japanese invaders are preparing for a new and massive assault, has on the contrary commanded Hu Zongnan’s army to penetrate deeply into Shaanxi and Gansu to act in concert with the troops under your command and enlarge the civil war of mutual self-destruction. We have formally proclaimed our views about bringing a rapid halt to the civil war and resisting Japan together. Asking only that the Guomindang troops not obstruct the path of the Red Army’s resistance against Japan and not invade the rear areas of the Red Army anti-Japanese resistance, we shall initiate a cessation of attacks on the Guomindang armies as a demonstration of our determination to stop the war and resist Japan. We shall wait quietly for the Guomindang to come to its senses, and only when attacked by Guomindang troops shall we return fire as necessary for our self-defense. This likewise is for the purpose of urging the Guomindang authorities to wake up. You command the various armies of the Northwest and also bear a heavy responsibility for the diverging paths of civil war or a war of resistance. If you are concerned about finding a way out at this juncture in the history of the Chinese nation, then pray grasp this opportunity and make the decision to put an immediate stop to attacks on the Red Army by the Northwest armies. We also implore that you convey our views to Mr. Chiang Kaishek for a speedy policy decision for both sides to send formal representatives to negotiate the concrete conditions for stopping the war and resisting Japan. We have drawn up a draft agreement between the Guomindang and the Communist Party on resisting Japan and saving the nation, which we send to you for your perusal.1 The invaders threaten imminent disaster, and we hope that you will quickly come up with a plan.

Mao Zedong  Zhou Enlai

Send Some People to Find Out About the Situation of the Enemy Troops in Ningxia and Suiyuan  
(October 5, 1936, 3:00 p.m.)

Luo Mai, Song [Shilun], and Song [Renqiong]:1

1. Send some people at once via Ningxia in two groups (disguised as businessmen) directly to Dingyuanying, base area of Da Wang of the Alashan Banner,2 to find out precisely about the situation of the building of the airport and the storing of airplanes of the Japanese, the height and thickness of the fortresses and castles in this area, the number of mounted Mongolian troops and that of the infantry of Da Wang, as well as circumstances such as the distance, buildings, and narrow passages from Ningxia to here.

2. Please also send some people to find out whether the Japanese in Ningxia and Suiyuan have built airports and set up intelligence agencies in these places.

3. I must be informed of the above two items by November 5.

4. Zhang Xinyu3 must reach Dingbian on November 5th and await further orders. Please also write to Zhang at once and ask him to tell you in advance everything he knows about the roads, buildings, and narrow passages between Ningxia and Dingyuanying, as well as everything about Dingyuanying.

Mao

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 618–19, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Luo Mai was the pseudonym of Li Weihan (1896–1984), a native of Hunan, who had gone to France in 1919 on the work-study program and helped organize the Socialist Youth League. In 1927, at the August 7th Emergency Conference, he became head of the Party’s Organization Department. In 1928–1930, he supported Li Lisan. After the Fourth Plenum of January 1931, he was sent to Moscow; in 1933 he returned to China and went to the Jiangxi Soviet area. During the Long March, he was a political commissar. His name is grouped here with those of Song Shilun and Song Renqiong, who were, respectively, commander and political commissar of the Twenty-eighth Army because these three constituted a committee charged with devising a strategic plan for taking Ningxia.

2. Da Wang (Darijaya) was the ruling prince of the Alashan Banner, and Guomindang commander of the area.

3. Zhang Desheng, alternate name Xinyu (1909–1965), was a native of Shaanxi, where he had worked underground during the years 1930–1934. At this time, he was secretary of the Third Border Region Special Committee of the Chinese Communist Party.
Cut the Roads Between Hui[ning], Jing[ning], and Ding[xi], and Take Zhuanglang Immediately

(October 5, 1936)

To Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao]; Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao]; and for the information of He [Long], Ren [Bishi], Guan [Xiangying], and Liu [Bocheng]:

1. In order to wipe out completely the enemy troops pressing in on the southwestern gate of the town of Huining, please order your troops marching toward Huining and Jingning to cut communication lines immediately between Huining, Jingning, and Dingxi so that our First Division as well as the defending troops, Chen’s detachment, will be able to capture all the enemy troops tomorrow after scattering them. This enemy may consist of one to two regiments of Deng Baoshan’s forces.

2. Hu Zongnan’s vanguard units have just arrived at Qingshui and Qin’an, and the majority are still on the way between Xianyang and Qingshui. We estimate that it will take about ten more days for this enemy to concentrate all his forces and begin to deploy them. Beginning from the 6th, the Second Front Army should get to Tongwei by way of the west of Tianshui in four days. We do hope that you will send a strong unit to take Zhuanglang at once, and the troops in Tongwei and Zhuanglang should both approach Qin’an on guerrilla missions, so as to cover effectively for the arrival of the Second Front Army.

Mao [Zedong]  Zhou [Enlai]

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 616–17, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

At Present Ningxia Should Not Be Threatened Too Much

(October 6, 1936, 10:00 A.M.)

Luo [Mai] and Song [Shilun]:

At present Ningxia should not be threatened too much, and therefore it is still appropriate to operate by detachment in the East. Nor is it a good idea for the Twenty-ninth Army to arrive at Dingbian too early.

Mao

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, p. 620, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
My Opinion Regarding the Operations of the Main Forces of the First Army Group

(October 6, 1936, 3:00 P.M.)

To Peng [Dehuai], and for him to inform Zuo [Quan] and Nie [Rongzhen]:

1. The Fourth Front Army agrees with our view that one army should be sent to Jingyuan to arrange for the crossing of the [Yellow] River. One unit should operate in the area between Gangu and Wushan, as well as in Zhuanglang, to cover for the Second Front Army’s northward movement. The main forces are to be positioned in the area around Tongwei, Maying, Longxi, and Huining, to deal with Hu [Zongnan] and Mao [Bingwen] and the enemy in Dingxi. The Second Front Army arrived south of Tianshui from Huixian on the 5th, and should arrive at Tongwei around the 9th. After that, the plan is to order them to move to the major road between Wating, Longde, and Jingning and the area south of it.

2. After the Fourth Front Army has assumed the tasks for the Huining and Jingning area, please send us promptly your suggestions regarding the operations of the main force (the First and Second divisions) of the First Army Group. In my opinion, it is better for them to take the area between Guyuan City, Xiahe City, and Qingshizui as well as the nearby area and to get closer to the Second Front Army in the south, so that Hu Zongnan’s troops and the troops from the northeast will be drawn to the west as much as possible, thus benefiting future maneuvers. What do you think? I await your reply as soon as possible.

Mao

Operational Dispositions After Concentrating to the North of the Wei River

(October 6, 1936, 5:00 P.M.)

Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao], He [Long], Ren [Bishi], Guan [Xiangying], and Liu [Bocheng]:

1. We are in complete agreement with the deployments for the Fourth Front Army as set out in the telegram of the 5th, as well as the Second Front Army’s transfer from west of Tianshui to Tongwei.

2. After our three front armies have concentrated north of the Wei River, the three armies under Hu [Zongnan], Mao [Bingwen], and Wang [Jun], and the Northeastern Army must all make new deployments, which will require a considerable amount of time. Afterward it is planned that the main forces of the Fourth Front Army should continue to remain in the Tongwei, Maying, Longxichuan, Huining, and Jieshi area and that one army should seize the proper opportunity to attack and take Jingyuan and arrange to cross the river to the Zhongwei stretch from north of Jingyuan. It is planned that the Second Front Army should move from Tongwei to the area between Tongwei, Jingning, Longde, and Zhuanglang, and that after passing on to the Fourth Front Army the security tasks of Huining and Jieshi, the First and Second divisions of the First Front Army should move to the area north of the Long[de]-Jing[ning] road and south of Guyuan, forcing the armies of Hu, Wang, Mao, He [Zhuguo], and Wang [Yizhe] to begin to build fortifications and fortresses before advancing. Thus we can use the time to rest our troops and begin to carry out our new tasks by the time November comes around.

Mao [Zedong]     Zhou [Enlai]

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 621–22, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 623–24, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Strive to Begin Negotiations Quickly with Major Nanjing Representatives

(October 8, 1936)

To Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian], Chen [Changhao], Ren [Bishij], He [Long], Guan [Xiangying], and Liu [Bocheng], and to Comrade [Peng] Dehuai:

1. In order that political, military, and diplomatic secrets may be securely protected, beginning today telegrams sent to you will be in secret code. Please designate a specific person to translate, and burn and destroy them as soon as you nine comrades have read them. You will please be responsible to us, and do not let any other person know.

2. The Nanjing representative for the third liaison meeting arrived in Guangzhou on September 20, and on the 28th a telegram from the other side arrived saying that if a representative from the other side came north he might attract attention and inviting [Zhou] Enlai to fly to Hong Kong or Guangzhou for talks. We have replied by telegram:

   a. A new large-scale Japanese attack is imminent, and it is earnestly hoped that Nanjing will uphold the national position and make immediate preparations for a war of resistance. Our side is willing to devote all its energies to mutual assistance. Under no circumstances whatsoever can we once again make concessions leading to the loss of territorial sovereignty, thus disappointing the entire nation yet again.

   b. Immediately put into effect a temporary cessation of hostilities against the Red Army to facilitate talks between major representatives of both sides. It is feasible for [Zhou] Enlai to fly to Guangzhou, on the condition that his safety can be guaranteed.

   c. Our side has declared that, as long as the other side does not obstruct our anti-Japanese resistance and refrains from invading the rear of the anti-Japanese resistance, the Red Army will lead the way in carrying out a cessation of hostilities against the other side, as an expression of our side's sincere desire to halt the civil war and join together to resist Japan. Only when attacked by the other side, when our side has no choice but to take up a defensive position, shall we return the attack as necessary.

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Our source for this telegram is the 1985 annual compendium of Wenxian he yanjiu, pp. 183–84.
The Current Deployment of the Twenty-eighth, Twenty-ninth, and Thirtieth Armies

(October 10, 1936)

To Song [Shilun] and Song [Renqiong], and for them to inform Peng [Dehuai]:

1. It does not seem likely at present that Enemy Gao Shuangcheng will advance westward. The enemy forces in Hengshan and Shiwan are now busy building blockhouses, and, because of delay and harassment by our guerrillas, their progress is extremely slow. If the Thirtieth Army maneuvers in the direction of Mi[zi] and Heng[shan] it will give rise to new deployments and create a confrontation. Moreover, there is a shortage of food in this area, and they will not be able to hold out for long, so it would be better for the Thirtieth Army to engage in eliminating bandits and turning the area Red south of Liu'an and Jingbian.

2. In the next month and a half, the Twenty-ninth Army will move to the north of Tiebian City to eliminate bandits and raise food supplies, move gradually to the north, and arrive at the end of the month in the area between Anbian, Dingbian, and Jingbian so as not to be exposed too early.

3. I agree with the current deployment of the Twenty-eighth Army.

Mao

Soliciting Opinions on the Draft Agreement Between the Guomindang and the Communist Party on Resisting Japan and Saving the Nation

(October 11, 1936)

To Comrades Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian], Chen [Changhao], Ren [Bishi], He [Long], Guan [Xiangying], Liu [Bocheng], and Peng [Dehuai]:

When the telegram of the draft regarding collaboration between the Guomindang and the Communist Party to resist Japan and save the nation arrives, please put forward your suggestions. This is our side's draft, which it is planned that [Zhou] Enlai will take to the negotiations. It is still not fully known what restrictions the other side will ultimately accept.

Luo Fu [Mao] Zedong

1. The Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Guomindang and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, cognizant of the fact that the Japanese imperialists' aggression against China continues to intensify without abatement, threatening the preservation of China's territorial sovereignty and the survival of the nation, are united in the view that only through cooperation between the two parties, calling upon the popular masses to arise, and unifying with all parties, all factions, and all circles throughout the country, and with those nations and states throughout the world that treat us on an equal basis, to carry out armed resistance against Japan, can we achieve the objective of driving out Japanese imperialism, protecting and restoring China's territorial sovereignty, and striving for national independence and survival. For this reason, both sides have sent plenipotentiary representatives to carry out negotiations and conclude this agreement on resisting Japan and saving the nation.

Our source for this document is the 1985 annual compendium of Wenzian he yanjiu, pp. 184–87. An identical text of the draft agreement, dated simply "October 1936," without the telegram transmitting it to Zhu De and others, appears in Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 640–42. According to Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 589–90, the agreement was drafted by Mao Zedong in September and was used as the basis for subsequent talks with the Guomindang and other influential factions. (See above, the letter of October 5, 1936, to Zhang Xueliang.) The text reproduced here was, however, never formally adopted.
2. Both sides mutually agree, with the greatest sincerity and determination, to work together on the great political tasks listed below:
   a. To carry out an armed war of resistance against Japan to protect and restore the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the whole of China;
   b. To bring about an anti-Japanese national salvation united front of all parties, all factions, all circles, and all armies of the whole country;
   c. To bring about a Democratic Republic of China founded on democratic principles.

3. In order to strive to fulfill the above political tasks, both sides agree to carry out the following essential steps and measures:
   a. From the day this agreement is signed, both sides shall immediately cease hostile military actions.
   b. The Chinese Guomindang side agrees, through the Military Affairs Commission of the National Government, to order the cessation of attacks on the Red Army and the invasion of the soviet areas and to eliminate the economic blockade. It also agrees, through separate consultations, on the one hand, to transfer the troop units attacking the Red Army from their present areas and send them to the anti-Japanese battlefront, and, on the other hand, to demarcate the necessary and appropriate Red Army bases, to provide the necessary military equipment, military uniforms, military expenses, food supplies, and all other military supplies, and to replace troop losses, so that the Red Army may focus on fighting Japan. The Chinese Communist Party side agrees, through the Revolutionary Military Affairs Commission of the Soviet Government, to order the Red Army not to attack Guomindang troop units, and agrees that during the period of the anti-Japanese resistance—on the condition that Communist Party personnel within the organizations and leadership of the Red Army not be changed—the national army, which shall include the Red Army, will have a unified leadership and a unified structure and that the Red Army shall be responsible for a specified line of defense and battleline.
   c. The Chinese Guomindang side agrees to reform its present political system; to abolish all laws and decrees that limit democratic rights; to grant the people the freedoms of speech, publication, assembly, and association; to punish Chinese traitors and pro-Japanese elements; to release political prisoners; and to release Communist Party members already seized. It also agrees from now on not to destroy Communist Party organizations again, and no longer to seize members of the Communist Party. The side of the Chinese Communist Party agrees to stop all words and actions promoting the armed overthrow of the Guomindang government. It agrees that, when a democratic republic is set up in the whole country, and when a national assembly of the whole country is convened after elections based on universal suffrage, the soviet areas will elect representatives to participate in this assembly, and the soviet areas will carry out a democratic system like that in all of China.
   d. The Chinese Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party both agree that, until an all-China democratic national assembly is convened and a democratic government is established, in order to carry out a genuine anti-Japanese war of armed resistance, it is necessary to convene an anti-Japanese national salvation representative assembly or national defense conference based on elections by all parties, all factions, all circles, and all armies nationwide, and that this anti-Japanese national salvation representative assembly or national defense conference shall have the right to decide all anti-Japanese national salvation policy and plans.
   e. The Chinese Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party both agree that, in order to carry on a genuine anti-Japanese war of armed resistance, it is necessary to set up speedily the organs to unify military leadership throughout the country (a military affairs commission and a general headquarters), and that all genuine anti-Japanese resistance measures must come from this organ. The Chinese Guomindang recognizes that the Military Affairs Commission and General Headquarters of the Red Army must select representatives to participate in the nationwide military affairs commission and general headquarters and also guarantees that said representatives will be able to proceed with their work smoothly. The Chinese Communist Party recognizes that the personnel of the Chinese Guomindang in such organs shall occupy the main positions of leadership.
   f. The Chinese Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party both agree that in order to carry on a genuine anti-Japanese war of armed resistance, it is necessary to sign an agreement of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union and, at the same time, that we should maintain friendship with and accept assistance from other countries, apart from Japan, on the condition that no territorial sovereignty is lost.

4. Both sides agree, with a view to the full application of this agreement, that the central committees of each of the two parties shall delegate the same number of representatives to organize a joint committee to be an organ of ongoing liaison and discussion.

5. Both sides mutually agree that the two parties must faithfully carry out all the principles and items stipulated in this agreement, but at the same time both sides will preserve their political and organizational independence.

6. In accordance with the principles of this agreement, the two sides must sign a number of agreements on particular problems.

7. This agreement shall become effective as of its signing and mutual exchange by the representatives of both sides.

8. Revisions to this agreement require the agreement of both sides.
On the Basis of the
October Operational Guidelines,
Carry Out All Items of Preparatory Work
(October 13, 1936, 5:00 P.M.)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. It is quite a few li from Diaobaozi to Dalachi and to Xiaohe City, and it is quite a few li from Huining to Dalachi and from Xiaohe City to Dalachi.

2. We have already telegraphed Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao] asking them when they would arrive at Dalachi.

3. The Second Front Army will arrive at the Shanjiaji-Xiaohe line within approximately seven days.

4. Please make preparations in accordance with the October operational guidelines, draw up an outline of a plan for the Ningxia campaign, and bring it before the military commission after discussing it personally with Zhu and Zhang.

5. Please be prepared to send a responsible person (how about Nie Heting?) equipped with a transmitter, or use Chen Manyuan’s transmitter, to the banks of the Yellow River to participate in the building of boats and guidance on deployment for crossing the river and for the campaign of the army sent by Zhu and Zhang.

6. The First and Second divisions must concentrate north of Guyuan by the end of this month so that the entire field army may have concentrated training for at least half a month and prepare food supplies beforehand.

7. Pay adequate attention to the possible wavering of certain comrades. Be prepared, in the absence of participation by other units, for the field army alone to carry out the plan for the period of the freeze.

8. The situation between China and Japan is extremely tense. On orders from Chiang [Kaishek], Tang Enbo has concentrated his forces and awaits orders to aid Suiyuan.

Mao
I Have Already Put Forward to Nanjing an Opinion on Four Points
(October 14, 1936, 4:00 P.M.)

[Ye] Jian[ying],

1. The delay in Hu Zongnan’s attack has caused us to keep the Xi’an-Lanzhou road in our hands until November 15 so that the Second and Fourth Front Armies may rest and reorganize and smoothly carry out their new tasks.

2. It has been suggested to Nanjing that:
   First, the advance of the Japanese bandits is extremely pressing, and our side is willing to assist with all our strength. We hope that the Nanjing side will maintain a national stand and not yield to any loss of sovereignty.
   Second, our side will initiate a cessation of offensive actions against Guomindang forces and take up a strictly defensive policy, to await peace negotiations and the joining of forces to resist Japan.
   Third, we look forward to an early realization of peace talks. Meanwhile, we ask Chiang to use any appropriate excuse to stop his troops from attacking, to facilitate the beginning of negotiations. To attack and negotiate at the same time would be quite irrational.
   Fourth, before hostilities cease and before [Zhou] Enlai departs, we are prepared to send Comrade Pan Hannian to Shanghai, to engage in initial talks. Please report on this matter to Yi and inform Nian.1

3. On what date will Nian go to Shanghai? On what date will Yi go to Nanjing?

[Mao Ze]dong

The Current Situation and Enlarging the Movement for a Ceasefire and Resistance Against Japan
(October 15, 1936, 12:00 noon)

Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian], Chen [Changhao], He [Long], Ren [Bishi], Guan [Xiangying], and Liu [Bocheng]:

1. At present relations between China and Japan are extremely tense. Japanese imperialism has increased its troops and gunboats in Shanghai and along the shores of the Yangzi River and has even demanded the stationing of troops on Hainan Island. The purpose is to focus the attention of the whole country on central and southern China and force the Nanjing government to capitulate, to induce Ying City1 to yield and facilitate the realization of their basic plan of autonomy for the five provinces of North China and their advance into Suiyuan and Mongolia. According to a statement of an organ of the Japanese special agents stationed in Guisui,2 Suiyuan is a special area that Japan is determined to obtain. The troops of Li Shouxin, Wang Ying,3 and others in northern Chahar and Inner Mongolia have already been reinforced to 20,000 to 30,000 men and the Japanese have sent a large number of military advisers along with the troops, the vanguard of which has already entered the borders of Suiyuan and has already had skirmishes with the outposts of the Suiyuan troops. Formal contact is imminent. The Shangxi-Suiyuan army has already begun to move toward eastern Suiyuan. Tang Enbo has also accepted Chiang’s secret order to prepare to begin a war of resistance in Suiyuan, and Wan Yaohuang’s division is setting up defense works in Luoyang. Chiang has also secretly ordered the Guangdong Army to join up with the Shanghai resistance, and the Hunan Army to move and

We have translated this document from the 1985 annual compendium of Wenzian he yanjiu, pp. 189–90.

1. The editors of Wenzian he yanjiu suspect that there may be an omission or an erroneous character here.

2. Guisui was established in 1914 by combining the two xian of Guihua and Suiyuan. In 1954 it became the town of Huhehot.

3. As indicated above in a note to the letter of August 15, 1936, to Fu Zuoyi, Li Shouxin was at this time commander of the puppet Mongolian Army’s First Army, under Prince De. Wang Ying, a native of Hebei, had served since the 1920s under Feng Yuxiang, and had held a command in 1933–1935 in Feng’s Chahar Anti-Japanese People’s Army. In 1936, however, he had transferred his allegiance to the puppet Mongolian government.

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We refer to Zhang Xueliang, Nian to Pan Hannian.
concentrate along the Beiping-Wuhan line. Chiang seems to intend to concentrate his troops to protect the Yangzi River valley and the area south of the Yellow River, and to carry out partial resistance in Shanxi and Suiyuan.

2. In order to take full advantage of the present opportune moment for expanding the movement for a cease-fire to resist Japan, in addition to our public communications to the Guomindang and telegrams demanding a cease-fire and negotiations, we should send a request in the name of the various generals of the Red Army to the various armies of the Northwest, reiterating the request that they immediately stop the civil war and send troops to defend Suiyuan, making it clear that the Red Army is willing to act as the vanguard to protect the Northwest, to protect North China, to protect China, and recover the Northeast. After this document is issued by the soviet areas, we shall proceed to expand the movement for a cease-fire to resist Japan among the White armies and in the White areas surrounding us, to respond and give assistance to the possible mobilization of resistance in eastern Suiyuan. We shall now ask the Second and Fourth Front Armies to telegraph the names of the present army commanders and political officers of the various armies so that they may be included, in order to expand propaganda and strengthen the call. Our elder brothers are requested to advise us by telegram of their views in this matter.

Luo [Fu], [Mao] Ze[dong], Bo [Gu]

Also inform Peng [Dehui]

Statement About a Cease-fire and Resistance to Japan

(October 15, 1936)

The Central Soviet Government and the Military Affairs Commission of the People’s Red Army have issued the following order:

1. All Red Army units shall cease all hostile actions against the National Revolutionary Army.
2. Only when attacked is it permitted to take the necessary defensive measures.
3. All personnel and weapons seized during attacks on us by the National Revolutionary Army while said army is fighting Japan shall be returned. Those who wish to join the Red Army shall be allowed to do so.
4. When National Revolutionary Army forces are moving toward anti-Japanese battlelines, any actions that would impede them are prohibited; in fact, all possible assistance must be given.

We have decided to launch an earnest appeal once again to all National Revolutionary Army forces and the Nanjing government to cease fighting us and to join hands in resisting Japan. The document requesting this is presently being drafted. The situation at present in the three provinces of Chahar, Suiyuan, and Shanxi is already extremely critical, and we urgently hope to cooperate with the Nanjing government to achieve the objective of assisting Suiyuan in resisting Japan and rescuing it from extinction. If the Nanjing government is truly able to heed the nation’s distress, halt the civil war, and send troops to fight Japan, the Soviet government is willing to devote all its forces to assistance, and is also willing to use the main forces of the Red Army as the vanguard in the fight to the death against the Japanese bandits.

We have translated this text from the 1985 annual compendium of Wenxian he yanjia, pp. 190–91, where it is noted that this is a statement by Mao in his capacity as chairman of the Central Soviet Government, published through the Soviet News Agency. The version in Mao Zedong ji, Vol. 5, pp. 81–82, reproduces the text as it appeared in Hongse Zhonghua, no. 307 (October 22, 1936), and includes an introductory sentence by that newspaper, which is omitted here.

1. The reference is obviously to the text which appears above under the date of October 11.
At Present Our Forces Should Persevere in the Orientation of Rest and Readjustment, and Delaying the Enemy’s Advance

(October 16, 1936, 10:00 P.M.)

To Ren [Bishi], He [Long], Guan [Xiangying], and Liu [Bocheng], and to Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao]:

1. We have taken note of your telegram of the 14th. After arriving in the area of Shanjiaji and Xiaohe City, the Second Front Army may begin rest and readjustment immediately. This area is relatively rich, and when the First Front Army carries out its new task of assuming security duty in the south, it will have the opportunity to rest as well.

2. At the moment the basic orientation of all three of our front armies should be rest and readjustment, storing up ardent spirits, and preparing to carry out new strategic tasks. As regards the enemy, the orientation is to delay his advance. We estimate that, given the conditions, including the enemy’s situation and the topography, this objective can be achieved. Even if we cannot cross the river by boat, we should continue to maintain this orientation, which is the only way to reap greater benefit in our future operations.

Mao [Zedong] Zhou [Enlai]

Conditions for Negotiations Put Forward by the Guomindang

(October 17, 1936, 4:00 P.M.)

To Zhu [De], Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian], Chen [Changhao], He [Long], Ren [Bishi], Guan [Xiangying], and Liu [Bocheng], and for the information of Peng [Dehuai]:

1. The negotiations with Nanjing have taken a critical downward turn. The third Nanjing liaison representative returned to Xi’an on the 14th bearing the following Guomindang conditions:
   a. The soviet areas are allowed to exist.
   b. The name of the Red Army will not be changed to allied army, and it will receive the same treatment as the national army.
   c. Representatives of the Communist Party will participate publicly in the national congress.
   d. People are immediately to be delegated for concrete negotiations.

2. Chiang Kaishik arrived in Xi’an on the 16th, and for our formal negotiations Chiang is sending a plane to Yan’an to take [Zhou] Enlai to Xi’an to talk directly with Chiang.

3. In order basically to stop Hu Zongnan’s attack, or to delay the date of his attack, please quickly print a large number of copies of Zedong’s statement of the 15th and have small detachments send most of them directly to the various Guomindang army units, primarily those of Hu Zongnan and Zhu Shaoliang. Also have [Xu] Xiangqian write to Hu, enclosing a copy of Zedong’s statement, and send someone specially to take it via Jingning to Hu (defense of Jingning is already undertaken by Hu’s forces). Looking forward to a quick response with your views.

Luo [fu] [Mao] Ze [dong] Zhou [Enlai]

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 630–31, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

Our source for this text is the 1985 annual compendium of Wenzian he yanjiu, p. 191.
The Current Situation as Regards the United Front

(October 18, 1936, 3:00 P.M.)

To Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], and to Peng [Dehui], He [Long], Ren [Bishi], Xu [Xiangqian], and Chen [Changhao]:

Our Party's letter to the Guomindang has already had an enormous impact throughout the country and among the Guomindang troops, and has evoked widespread sympathy within the Guomindang and in all strata of society. The constantly increasing Japanese aggression, too, cannot help but affect the cadres of the Guomindang army. The concentration of our three front armies also worries the other side. Just now, in the talks with the Guomindang, the other side does not want to cause a stalemate in the negotiations. Zhang [Xueliang] originally planned to fly to Nanjing to see Chiang [Kaishek] in person, with the request that Chiang send a deputy to the soviet areas to arrange a ceasefire. Chiang replied the same day that he would come to Shaanxi, mainly to deal with two matters, us and Japan. Yesterday, Hu [Zongnan], Wang [Jun], Guan [Linzheng], Mao [Bingwen], Shen [Ke], Li [Mo’an], Zeng [Wanzhong], and Tang [Weiyuan], all of whom are pro-Chiang commanders, sent a joint telegram to Chiang and Zhang, which, using the excuse of the obstacles to communication and the difficulties of transportation, first of all dealt with improving supplies and transportation, and also suggested that they do not want to press us too hard and want to delay their advance. Following an agreement between the two sides, Li Yi had the White regiment at Liwangbao play out a fake attack and we let the White regiment escape. Tang Enbo is prepared to assist in resisting Japan, and Nanjing has adopted a hard attitude toward Japan. Looking at the overall conditions on all fronts, the present situation is just at a crucial turning point, and we must not lose the opportunity. If we use it well, we can achieve domestic peace and turn toward the war of resistance against Japan. Along the lines of yesterday's telegram, please let Commander Zhu [De] send letters to Wang Jun and Mao Bingwen, Comrade [Xu] Xiangqian send letters to Hu Zongnan and to other Huangpu graduates, and Comrade He Long send letters to the units of He Zhuguo and Hu's troops, to expand our influence. To be effective, the

letters should consist of earnest exhortations, without any self-aggrandizement. While being serious and proper, they should raise morale and not dwell on failures. We look forward to your response as to how you are dealing with these matters.


We have translated this text from the 1985 annual compendium of Wexian he yanjiu, pp. 192–93.
Letter to Hu Zongnan Drafted for Xu Xiangqian

(October 18, 1936)

For the perusal of my respected classmate, Army Commander Zongnan:

Ten years have flown by in a flash since we last saw each other at Huangpu, but, recalling our friendship of old, it all seems like yesterday. At present the Japanese bandits are invading us on a large scale, the Northwest is in danger, and the entire country is shaken, so it is most urgent for you, my elder brother, and me to forget about past hostility and to rebuild our friendship, go to the anti-Japanese battlefront, and strive to rescue our nation and our people from peril. On orders from the Soviet Government and the Military Affairs Commission of the Red Army, my humble forces have ceased attacking your honorable army as well as other Guomindang armies, and only adopt measures of self-defense when under attack by your honorable army. Everything can be discussed and negotiated; in sum, the goal of stopping the civil war and joining forces to resist Japan can be achieved through peaceful means. It is not that we fear your honorable army, but the whole nation is in danger, and we truly do not wish to fight and kill each other, for this would only jeopardize our national strength and enhance the morale of the [Japanese] bandits. If you fail to see eye to eye with us, however, and insist on resorting to warfare, the troops of our humble side are quite well prepared and will have no alternative but to deal you the necessary counterblow from a position of self-defense. All of our humble forces are struggling for the purpose of resisting Japan, and are sincerely willing to conclude an alliance with your forces and march forward hand in hand. Commandant Chiang has now reached a high level of awareness, and I deeply admire him. If you and I and all the other teachers and schoolmates like us can forget about past hostility, restore the united front between the Guomindang and the Communist Party, and fight a war to the death against Japanese imperialism, the greatest enemy of the entire nation, then today will be the day that we will be able to defend the nation and the people, avenge all insults and wipe out all humiliation. You, my elder brother, stand up tall and are farsighted, and have always won the admiration of

respectfully submitted by your junior classmate,
Xu Xiangqian

We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 451–52, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives. As indicated by the title, Mao drafted it for Xu Xiangqian.

1. Hu Zongnan and Xu Xiangqian had both graduated from the Huangpu Academy in the first class of 1924, before Xu joined the Communist Party.

2. Of the Huangpu Academy.
To Ye Jianying and Liu Ding

(October 22, 1936)

Elder Brothers [Ye] Jian[ying] and [Liu] Ding:

1. Finances are extremely tight. We must economize and economize again on outside expenses and must not overspend in any way. At all times, do not abandon our position, and do not accept gifts or favors from others. Only when you have absolutely no other way out may you borrow even a little money from others, and then return the exact amount the next day. All expenses must be accounted for. This is being pointed out to you two brothers because in recent days several incidents of waste have occurred. Also, in a timely fashion, please alert to this problem [Peng] Xuefeng, [Zhu] Lizhi, and other comrades doing united front work. Those who have suffered for a long time find it difficult to stand firm when they encounter luxury. Thus it should be made an issue about which comrades should be educated and warned.

2. We want to buy a batch of popularly written social science, natural science, and philosophy books, probably some ten to fifteen titles in all. They should be selected to see that they are written in a truly popular style and that they are also worthwhile (such as Ai Siqi’s Philosophy for the Masses, Liu Shi’s Talks on the Street Corner), fifty copies of each, the total price not to exceed 100 to 300 yuan. Would Elder Brother Jian please make the selection, and Elder Brother Ting the purchase. Please buy and mail us an initial selection of a few titles by early November, to be used in the schools and by the troop units to raise the political and cultural level of the cadres. Those who are sent out will work, on the one hand, and on the other will promote reading books and newspapers.

Many of the books on military affairs that have been bought are not suitable, since they deal mostly with technical aspects of military tactics, while we want ones that deal with directing campaigns and strategy. Please select and buy a few that meet this criterion. Buy a copy of Sunzi’s The Art of War.

3. Please write us a report that is analytical and that provides a comprehensive overall summary.

Runzhi

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong shuzhuanxuanji, pp. 80–81, where it is reproduced from a manuscript copy.

1. For a brief biography of Ye Jianying, see the relevant note to Mao’s telegram of October 19, 1935. At this time, he was doing unified front work in Yan’an on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party. Liu Ding (1903–1986), a native of Sichuan, had joined the Socialist Youth League in 1923 and studied in Germany and in the Soviet Union. In 1936 he was sent to Xi’an by the Chinese Communist Party as its military representative in the Northeast.

I Agree with Peng Dehuai’s Plan for the Ningxia Campaign

(October 24, 1936, 12:00 midnight)

To Peng [Dehuai]; and to Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao]; He [Long] and Ren [Bishi]; Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao]:

1. I agree with the plan in the telegram of 9:00 A.M. on the 23rd.1

2. Hu [Zongnan], Mao [Bingwen], Wang [Jun], and Guan [Lingzheng] have occupied the main road,2 and if we continue to move northward the topographic conditions and problem of supplies may impose basic limitations. Thus we will find ourselves between the enemy in the south and the enemy in the north, and cannot move northward without shattering the enemy in the south. At present, although we judge, on the basis of various materials, that the enemy in the south cannot hold out very long, the possibility still exists that Chiang Kai-shek may make a desperate effort within a short period of time. Hence the question of top priority at the moment is how to stop the enemy in the south.

3. Please let me know right away your answers to the above questions.

Mao

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 632–33, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The reference is to Peng Dehuai’s telegram regarding dispositions for the campaign to take Ningxia, which is summarized in Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, p. 633, note 3.

2. The reference is to the highway between Xi’an and Lanzhou. (See above, the text of October 14, 1936.)
To Fu Zuoyi
(October 25, 1936)

For the perusal of the honorable chairman, Mr. Yisheng:

The Japanese bandits are invading westward, and the nation’s troubles daily become more urgent. The troops under your command are defending the border areas, and this summer’s small-scale display of your capabilities has already forced the enemy to retreat three stages.¹ Your statement that you are determined to persevere, as reported in the papers, vividly expresses the heroic aspirations of the nation’s people. When the 400 million people heard it, it made their spirits soar and their determination strong. You are truly to be congratulated and praised. The Red Army has marched ten thousand li, pushing forward, seeking to save China, working to resist the Japanese bandits. This spring, it crossed the river and advanced east, with the goal of reaching Hebei and Chahar to confront the Japanese enemy directly. Unfortunately and unexpectedly, because of the two gentlemen Yan [Xishan] and Chiang [Kaishek], the troops had to return west to engage in promoting an anti-Japanese united front of all sides. The present situation is that the Japanese bandits are invading Suiyuan, their arrows poised to strike. At the same time, North China and the Yangzi River are critically threatened. But the domestic united front is taking rough shape and the Nanjing authorities are also turning toward resisting Japan. The main forces of the Red Army, the three front armies, have already joined forces in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia area. As soon as all sides come to an understanding and draw a line against Japan, friendly armies can be united and proceed to launch the war of resistance. Although the Red Army is fully committed to the war of resistance, until an understanding has been reached with friendly armies, and especially until an understanding has been reached with friendly armies in the area of the war of resistance and with the local administrative officials, it definitely will not risk moving forward into the war of resistance battleground. When a formal understanding has been reached and it is advancing toward the battleground of the war of resistance and engaging in the resistance, then it will, of course, do everything in its power to aid the friendly armies and will definitely not obstruct in any way the friendly armies that are engaged together in the war of resistance, or the safety and order of their rear areas. We are sending Comrade Peng Yufeng
to make all arrangements with you and to ask for your instructive views, and in the hope of establishing direct communications and relations. This past spring repeated letters were sent to Mr. Baichuan,² and over the summer regimental Commander Han was also asked to convey our views. We still have received no reply, and ask you to relay our views to him once again. If it were possible to provide Comrade Peng with an introduction so that he could go to Shanxi for a meeting, that would indeed be a public service. It is an honor to be your neighbor and I hope we may work together against the common enemy. Any suggestions you have to offer will be most gratefully received. With most respectful good wishes,

Mao Zedong

¹ We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 82–83, where it is reproduced from a manuscript copy.
² I.e., Yan Xishan, whose zi was Baichuan.
Deployment to Shatter the Enemy Forces in the South

(October 25, 1936)

To Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], and Peng [Dehuai], and for transmittal to He [Long] and Ren [Bishi], and to Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao]:

1. In view of the fact that the enemy is pursuing and attacking in the direction of Dalachi, and the Thirtieth Army has crossed the Yellow River, we think that in our future campaign the first priority should be to focus our attention on shattering the enemy forces in the south and to stop the pursuing enemy. We are between two enemies in the south and the north. The campaign in the north has the characteristics of positional warfare, and we need two months to prepare for it. If we do not stop the enemy troops in the south, we will put ourselves in an unfavorable position in the future. Our second priority should be to focus our attention on the north.

2. Therefore, the deployment is as follows:

a. Instead of the Ninth Army, use another army to cross the river after the Thirtieth Army. After the crossing, the two armies should immediately take the pivotal region of Toulutang, Sanyanjingdao, Dayingpan, and Datangyi in the bend on the west bank of the Yellow River, and in the direction of Zhongwei, find out about the situation in Dingyuanying and Zhongwei, and be prepared to use one army to attack and take Dingyuanying, a place of strategic importance in the second step.

b. Apart from the two armies that have crossed the river, the Fourth Front Army still has three armies, of which the Ninth Army constitutes the heart. Apart from the troops sent to Qiying, the Second Front Army still has its main forces. It is unnecessary to set up too much resistance against the enemy in the south. If he gradually concentrates in the area to the south and north of Dalachi in a couple of days, we should strengthen the defenses and clear the fields, lure the enemy in deep, build fortifications on our own side, encourage the soldiers’ morale, and when the enemy advances we should be able to wipe out three or four regiments. This will be quite enough to stop the enemy in the south.

c. After the two armies of the Fourth Front Army have won control over the pivotal area on the west bank of the river, the main forces of the First Front Army will begin to operate, and will take the Jinji-Lingwu area in a sudden attack. Xu and Chen should assign half or more of the boat-building technical team to build boats as quickly as possible and get ready for the crossing.

d. After the enemy troops in the south have effectively received a heavy blow, the Ninth Army will cross the river in Zhongning. By now the entire war situation will have entered the second step of laying the stress on the north, and the two armies of the Fourth Front Army and the entire Second Front Army will defend against the enemy in the south. We look forward to hearing your opinions.

Mao [Zedong] Zhou [Enlai]

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 634–35, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
To Commander-in-Chief Chiang and to All Commanders of the National Revolutionary Army in the Northwest

(October 26, 1936)

An open letter to Commander-in-Chief Chiang [Kaishek], Deputy Commander-in-Chief Zhang [Xueliang], Director Yan [Xishan], Chairman Fu [Zuoji], Director Yang [Hucheng], Director Zhu [Shaoliang], Chairman Yu [Xuezhong], Ningxia Chairman Ma [Hongkui], Qinghai Chairman Ma [Bufang], General Commander Chen [Cheng], Commander of the Beijing Garrison Wang [Jun], Army Commander Hu [Zongnan], Army Commander Mao [Bingwen], Army Commander Wang Tingfang, Army Commander Dong [Yingbin], Army Commander He [Zhuguo], Army Commander Sun [Weiru], Army Commander Feng [Qinzai], Army Commander Tang [Enbo], Army Commander Su [Zichu], Army Commander Gao Peiwu, Army Commander Gao Shuangcheng, Army Commander Deng [Baoshan], and to all division, battalion, and regimental commanders of the National Revolutionary Army in the Northwest:

It has already been more than a year since our Soviet Red Army issued an announcement in August of last year proposing the establishment of a united front against Japan. During this year, the aggression of the Japanese bandits has continually increased, putting increasing pressure on the nation's territory and increasingly weakening the country's strength. Now the vicious destruction of the Japanese bandits is expanding even more. We are already facing the imminent prospect of having the Northeast split off, and Suiyuan and Ningxia overrun. Enemy ships congregate everywhere along the Yangzi River and the seacoast, restless and ready to move. Conditions that spell the loss of the state and the extinction of the race continue to be raised. The people of all China are threatened with the fate of becoming slaves without a country. The prospects for peace have long been hopeless, and there is no good way to avoid sacrifice. Things having come to such a pass, the people of all China are already convinced that they cannot possibly survive unless there is a war of resistance. What the people of all China expect today from your honorable party and government is that you will lead a war of resistance and expel the Japanese bandits. But to this day, we seem still to have heard no final decision from your honorable party and government. On the contrary, we have seen Commander-in-Chief Chiang go personally to the North-

west to oversee the "suppression" of the Red Army. This can only make the people of the whole nation lose hope, and it can only make the Japanese bandits very happy.

Today, at this late date, does your honorable party and government still want to stir up trouble in the rear lines of the resistance against Japan by making things difficult for the soviets and the Red Army? You gentlemen are in the Northwest yourselves and should know the true situation. Ever since coming north last year, the Red Army has proposed a ceasefire and resistance against Japan to all the armies around it. This spring, when passing through Shanxi, it repeatedly announced that it was headed east to resist Japan, and again Mr. Chiang and Mr. Yan refused to listen, so it had to turn back midway and seek another route. Now the three front armies, the main forces of the Red Army in the whole country, have already joined forces in the Northwest and have formally asked your units to go with them to the front lines of national defense, to join forces in the war of resistance. But Mr. Chiang, ignoring the fact that eastern Suiyuan is on the verge of serious disaster, instead of sending more troops to augment the defenses of Suiyuan, has, on the contrary, sent them to Gansu to attack the Red Army. Who is it that is disrupting the rear areas of the anti-Japanese resistance? Do you mean to say that it is all right to lose China, and all right to let the Japanese bandits drive right in, and not stop the assaults to destroy the Red Army that alone wants to resist Japan? We are afraid that the Japanese bandits will have already come before the Red Army is destroyed. Even if you gentlemen want to continue the civil war, the people of China, and the troops under you, will definitely not allow you to commit mutual suicide and murder once again!

Even though Mr. Chiang has great prestige and power, and he is calling for the total destruction of the Red Army, we do not think that the threat to the nation's survival permits any further petty struggles. For this reason the Soviet and the Military Commission of the People's Red Army have issued an order, which reads: "1. All Red Army units shall cease all hostile actions against the National Revolutionary Army. 2. Only when attacked is it permitted to take the necessary defensive measures. 3. All personnel and weapons seized during attacks on us by the National Revolutionary Army while said army is fighting Japan shall be returned. Those who wish to join the Red Army shall be allowed to do so. 4. When National Revolutionary Army forces are moving toward the anti-Japanese battlelines, any actions that would impede them are prohibited; in fact, all possible assistance must be given." In accordance with this order, the various frontline units of the Red Army until now have not put up any violent resistance to you gentlemen's troop units and, furthermore, have slowly retreated, waiting for you gentlemen to come to your senses. But if you gentlemen think that this indicates that the Red Army is afraid, you are thoroughly mistaken. During ten years of experience, you gentlemen have personally learned the lesson of the courage and fighting strength of the Red Army in its fight for

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 457–60, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
the nation, for freedom, and for justice. Now, with the finest of the whole country concentrated in one place, you gentlemen know full well the odds for success versus failure if they are called upon to defend themselves against any of the units of you gentlemen, which have been sent forth without just cause, and are permeated with sentiment in favor of stopping the civil war and resisting Japan.

With a soldier’s frankness and enthusiasm, we dare to warn you gentlemen that, at a time when the Chinese nation already finds itself at a critical moment, “if the nest is overturned, how can any of the eggs remain unbroken?” We sincerely hope that all you gentlemen will hang up your riding whips, immediately stop attacking the Red Army, and join hands with the Red Army to go together to the national defense frontlines, to strive to kill the thieves, protect the national territory, drive the Japanese bandits out, and take back those lands that have been lost. Now, more than ever, we represent the Red Army of all China and have the responsibility to declare: Provided only that your party and government are determined to wage a war of resistance, the Red Army is willing to act as the vanguard, and further swears to cooperate with you to the end. On the battlelines of the anti-Japanese resistance, the Red Army is willing to be responsible for a specific front and guarantees that it will complete its specified tasks. In battle, the Red Army is willing to submit to the direction of a unified national military command. Without the agreement of a friendly anti-Japanese resistance army, the Red Army will definitely not encroach on the territory defended by that friendly anti-Japanese resistance army.

The national crisis has already reached its final moment, and the crucial decision between civil war and the war of resistance lies in your hands. It is the hope of the people of all China that you gentlemen will be national heroes and rise up in a war of resistance. They do not want you gentlemen to continue the civil war and become national criminals. They especially hope that Mr. Chiang will quickly and resolutely stop the last attacks of the civil war on the Red Army and will lead the armed forces of all China in carrying out the war of resistance, and thus revive the revolutionary spirit of the Huangpu Academy and recover the courage of the anti-imperialist struggle of the period of the cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party. An early mobilization for the war of resistance would be a great blessing for the Chinese nation. If by chance you gentlemen do not accept this, we shall still have to carry on against all obstacles, never resting until the objective is reached. We sincerely hope that you gentlemen will give us a satisfactory reply. Whether you gentlemen send representatives here or we send representatives there, or perhaps we hold talks at the front—we are willing to accept any of these. As soon as the civil war stops, and the door of cooperation is opened, all negotiations can reach a solution on the basis of the very highest principles of the resistance.

We are deeply convinced that as soon as the eastern Suiyuan war of resistance begins, the many hundreds of thousands of valiant men of the Northwest will join hands together and fight to defend the Northwest, fight to defend North China, fight to defend the whole of China, fight to recover the lost lands of the Northeast. We hereby offer a national revolutionary salute!

Deployment for the Campaign Against Hu Zongnan’s Forces

(October 29, 1936)

Peng [Dehuai):

To fight a decisive battle against the enemy forces in the south is of the utmost importance. At present, the enemy troops are treating us lightly and advancing rapidly. Moreover, Hu’s vanguard troops are the two divisions under Zhou and Kong of Guo Huazong’s old forces, and a big victory can be won if we fight well. I have the following suggestions:

1. Control of the entire campaign should be kept in your hands alone.
2. Use the whole of the field army as the main force, select half of the troops from the Second Front Army to assist you, and fight only the two divisions of Zhou and Kong. The Fourth Front Army will pin down the enemy on the right wing, or it may be responsible for the assault on part of the right wing, concentrating on Hu’s western column and the two columns of Mao [Bingwen] and Wang [Jun].
3. Have half of the troops of the Second Front Army take over the tasks in Qying and Tongxincheng so that the entire First Front Army will be able to concentrate its forces.
4. It is necessary to have adequate preparations, and to call He [Long] and Ren [Bishi], Zuo [Quan] and Nie [Rongzhen], and Xu [Haidong] and Cheng [Zihua] to a meeting. The troops must have ample rest and encouragement.
5. In carrying out the battle, there must be favorable topographical conditions, and the first campaign should be limited to attacking two divisions only, and to wiping out one of them first. If these conditions cannot be met, take a step backward, with the overall goal of winning the fight.

Mao

First Strike at Hu Zongnan, Then Attack Ningxia

(October 30, 1936, 4:00 P.M.)

Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao]:

The current policy is to strike first at Hu Zongnan and then to attack Ningxia; otherwise, it will be impossible to attack Ningxia. You two elder brothers should please base your leadership on this crucial theme. Apart from the Ninth Army and the Thirtieth Army, which have crossed the river, the rest—that is, the entire First and Second front armies and the three armies of the Fourth Front Army—should all be used according to Dehuai’s arrangements of the 29th,¹ to fight one battle and win it. Then the entire situation will take a turn for the better.

Mao [Zedong]  Zhou [Enlai]

¹We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 636–37, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

¹The reference is to the forces under Zhou Xiangchu (1900–?), a native of Gansu, and Kong Lingxun (1898–?), a native of Shandong, respectively, commanders of the Forty-third and Ninety-seventh divisions of the Second Column of the First Route of the Northwest Bandit-Suppression General Headquarters.

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 638–39, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

¹For a summary of Peng Dehuai’s telegram of October 29, see note 3 to this text in Mao Zedong junshi wenji.
To Xu Deheng and Others

(November 2, 1936)

To the various professors, sirs:

I am deeply grateful to have received the various gifts you so graciously sent me (hams, watches, and so on), and greatly honored as well! You and we are of one and the same mind. We have only one enemy, Japanese imperialism. We are just now making everything ready to unite the whole nation quickly and take the field to resist Japan. The time is not far distant when we will meet with you face to face. To struggle to drive out Japanese imperialism, and fight for a Democratic Republic of China—such is the banner for the people of the whole country, as well as the banner which we share with you! Offering you a national revolutionary salute!

Mao Zedong

Operations of the Forces Crossing the River

(November 3, 1936, 10:00 P.M.)

Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao]:

The main forces of the units under your command are advancing westward to take the line from Yongdeng to Gulang, but you should leave one unit behind, equipped with transmitter, to defend Yitaoshan and Wufosi, so as to facilitate communications as well as operations in the rear.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]

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We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 84–85, where it is reproduced from a manuscript copy.

1. Xu Deheng (1890–1990) was a native of Jiujiang, Jiangxi. He took part in the 1911 Revolution and the May Fourth Movement, and became a professor at Beijing University in 1931. Together with Professors Mao Xulu, Yang Xiufeng, Zhang Shenu, and others, he was a founder of the “Beijing Cultural Association for National Salvation.”

2. Xu Deheng and his wife, Lao Junzhan, had managed to send to Mao and his forces in northern Shaanxi more than thirty pairs of cloth shoes, twelve pocket watches, and more than a dozen hams.

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, p. 643.
Operations in the Guanqiaobao Area Should Be Determined by Objective Circumstances

(November 3, 1936)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. The situation as it stands today:
a. Ding Delong’s division\(^1\) is still in Zhongtiangou and Wujiazhuang, and will advance toward Ganyanchi tomorrow (the 4th).
b. Guan Linzheng and Ma Hongbin are under orders to move toward Shizuizi.
c. The First Division is gathering around Xining and Wangjiahe.
d. The two divisions of Liu Handong and Xiong Zhengping\(^2\) are under orders to defend communications between Haiyuan \(xian\) and Zhengqiao, and one division is stationed in Tuoliebao.
f. There is no clear information on the ten cavalry divisions.
g. Zhou Xiangchu is moving from Haiyuan towards Guanqiaobao. Kong Lingxun’s division is moving from Xi’anzhou towards Guanqiaobao. The rear echelon of Kong’s division originally belonged to Li [Zhengxian]’s brigade\(^3\) in the First Division, and today it seems to have arrived at Xi’anzhou and points south of there. These three forces total nine regiments and are relatively isolated.

2. It is a very good deployment to lure the enemy deep into the area east and west of Guanqiaobao so as to engage all forces in warfare with it, but it is best to count on the possibility that Zhou’s and Kong’s two divisions will heighten their vigilance after reaching Guanqiaobao and wait a day or two for reinforcements from the First Division or Ding’s division. Therefore, I wonder whether or not it would be advantageous to have a portion of our forces guarantee that Guanqiaobao not be lost tomorrow (the 4th), continue to safeguard that spot the day after (the 5th), draw an attack on it by Zhou, and then have the whole army mobilize before dawn on the 5th to attack Zhou and Kong from three different sides. If Guanqiaobao is not lost, and the topography of the area surrounding it is advantageous for our operations, then it would be good to attack in that direction on the 5th. Otherwise, it would be best to let the enemy take a further step in his attack. Please investigate and make a decision according to the actual circumstances, with the overall goal in mind of fighting in the most appropriate way.

Mao

\[^1\] The reference is to the Seventy-eighth Division of the Second Column of the First Front Army under the Northwest Bandit-Suppression General Headquarters, commanded by Ding Delong.

\[^2\] Under the Northwest Bandit-Suppression General Headquarters, Liu Handong was the commander of the 107th Division of the Sixth Column of the Second Route, and Xiong Zhengping was the commander of the 115th Division of the Seventh Column of the Second Route.

\[^3\] Li Zhengxian commanded the First Brigade of the First Division of the Second Column of the First Route, under the Northwest Bandit-Suppression General Headquarters.
Concentrate All Our Strength to Wipe Out the Hungry and Exhausted Enemy

(October 3, 1936)

To all commanders:

Guan Linzheng has made such statements as: During the past few days I have been leading my division in pursuing and suppressing night and day; it has been very difficult to raise supplies in the areas we have passed through; the officers and soldiers are unable to eat even one meal a day; we have now already lost the zone from Jingyuan to Dalachi, and we still do not have enough food to eat, and so on. According to observations of conditions, this is not a problem of Guan’s division alone; all units of the pursuing enemy have similar difficulties, and at the moment the enemy’s exhaustion has reached its peak. It would be good to use this special circumstance to encourage the morale of our men, concentrate all our strength to wipe out the enemy, and strive for victory in the entire campaign.

Mao [Zedong]  Zhou [Enlai]  

To Chen Gongpei

(October 4, 1936)

For the perusal of my esteemed elder brother, Gongpei:

For several years we have not met. My colleagues and I have learned with great admiration about your continuous and unremitting struggle. The great distance between us makes a face-to-face meeting impossible. I hope that we will often write to keep each other informed. We count on your personal involvement in promoting the united front of all parties. Toward our countrymen, we must turn hostility into friendship; toward our external enemy, we must seek to fight a united war of resistance; we must strive to link the national revolutionary war and the democratic republic, and achieve a completely victorious future for both of them. One’s strength of character is tested in a crisis. I hope we will struggle together!

Wishing you success in all your endeavors!

Mao Zedong

Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong xuan xuanji, p. 86, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Chen Gongpei (1901–1968) was a native of Changsha, Hunan. He joined the Communist Party in his early years. During the period of the People’s Revolutionary Government of Fujian, he was the liaison for the Nineteenth Route Army with the Red Army.
The New Battle Plan

(November 8, 1936)

To the five comrades Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Peng [Dehuai], and He [Long] and Ren [Bishi]:

1. Since all units under Hu [Zongnan], Mao [Bingwen], Wang [Jun], and Guan [Linzeng] are advancing northward, it is impossible to continue to carry out our Ningxia plan for the time being.

2. We have decided to make the following new plan:
   a. The main forces of the three front armies will be conducting operations in the area from Guanqiaobao to Jinji and Lingwu in November, hoping to wipe out one unit of the enemy forces in one or two campaigns. Try to get some rest and make preparations, and let the enemy believe that we are going to cross the river, thus luring Hu’s division to move northward, and inducing Guan’s division to advance to Shizui, and Wang Yizhe to advance to Yuwang.
   b. Set out in two groups after the first ten days of December.
   c. The First and Second Front armies will form the southern group. The first step is to take the area of Zhenyuan, Xifeng, Heshui, Zhengning, and Ningxian; the second step is to take the area of Tongguan, Yanzhou, Chunhua, Zhongbo, Nijun, Luochuan, and Fuxian; the third step is to take the area of Hancheng, Nichuan, and Yanchang. Try to extend the time for these three steps as much as you possibly can. We estimate that this will allow us to maneuver for about three months. The task is not to wipe out Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng but, rather, to expand the soviet areas, expand the Red Army, and solve the problem of supplies.
   d. The two armies of the Fourth Front Army will constitute the Northern Route Army, wait in the Lingwu and Yanchi area for the opportunity, and set out after the resistance war in eastern Suiyuan has begun. The first step is in the Anbian area, where we must find a way to take Anbian City. The second step is in the Hengshan-Yulin area, and we should act as though we were feigning an attack on these two cities to lure the two Gaos1 as well as

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Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 652–55, where it is reproduced from a manuscript copy in the Central Archives.

1. The “two Gaos” were Gao Guizi and Gao Shuangcheng, respectively, commanders of the Eighty-fourth and Eighty-sixth divisions of the Shaanxi-Suiyuan-Ningxia Bandit-Suppression Headquarters.

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The Twenty-first Division to come north for reinforcement, so that we can regain the Washi and Yanchuan area, and lure the remaining shattered enemy troops in Shenyu to the west. The third step is in the Shenyu area, and we should arrive at the banks of the Yellow River at the same time as the Southern Route Army.

e. Choose an appropriate time to start building boats in the three different places of the two Yans,2 Qingsui, and Shenyu, and prepare to cross the river and enter Shanxi.

f. If by then we have succeeded in reaching a compromise with Chiang [Kaishke] and Yan [Xishan], then we will act according to the agreement.

g. If by then a compromise has not been reached, we will launch the eastern expedition.

h. After entering Shanxi, if we can participate in the resistance against Japan on the basis of an agreement, we will begin to resist Japan.

i. If we are unable to resist Japan, then our first step is to take the Tongpu Railway3 to launch a campaign and expand the Red Army. As our second step, if there is still no hope that Chiang and Yan will compromise and there are too many difficulties in the eastern expedition, but, on the other hand, Chiang’s troops in Shaanxi and Gansu have been moved to the east, we can still come back to Shaanxi and Gansu. If it is advantageous to go toward the east, we will advance to the point where Hebei, Henan, and Shanxi intersect. Moreover, according to the plan, our third step is to march to the point where Hebei, Shandong, and Henan meet, and cross the Yellow River there. The fourth step is to go to [the intersection of] Anhui, Henan, and Shandong. The fifth step is to go to [the intersection of] Hubei, Henan, and Anhui. The sixth step is to go to [the intersection of] Hubei, Henan, and Shaanxi. After that we can come back again to the Northwest, and we plan to accomplish this in one to two years.

j. The purpose of the second through the sixth steps is to expand our political influence, expand the Red Army, strive for the victory of the united front in the whole country, strive to reach an agreement with Nanjing, and strive for a war of resistance.

k. Xu [Xianggian]’s and Chen [Changhao]’s troops will constitute the Western Route Army, whose task is to set up base areas on the western bank of the river and fight through to create a direct passage to the distant place.4 We plan to accomplish this in one year.

3. The preceding new plan has not yet been finally decided upon, and we

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2. The two Yans refers to Yan and Yang in Shaanxi Province.

3. The Tongpu Railway was a narrow-gauge line, running from Datong in northern Shanxi to Puzhou Village in the southeastern corner of the province, which was just in the process of completion at this time.

4. The term “the distant place” (yuanfang) is a coded reference to the Soviet Union.
The New Battle Plan
(November 8, 1936)

To the five comrades Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Peng [Dehui], and He [Long] and Ren [Bishi]:

1. Since all units under Hu [Zongnan], Mao [Bingwen], Wang [Jun], and Guan [Linzheng] are advancing northward, it is impossible to continue to carry out our Ningxia plan for the time being.

2. We have decided to make the following new plan:
   a. The main forces of the three front armies will be conducting operations in the area from Guanqiaobao to Jinji and Lingwu in November, hoping to wipe out one unit of the enemy forces in one or two campaigns. Try to get some rest and make preparations, and let the enemy believe that we are going to cross the river, thus luring Hu's division to move northward, and inducing Guan's division to advance to Shizui, and Wang Yizhe to advance to Yuwang.
   b. Set out in two groups after the first ten days of December.
   c. The First and Second Front armies will form the southern group. The first step is to take the area of Zhenyuan, Xifeng, Heshui, Zhengning, and Ningxian; the second step is to take the area of Tongguan, Yanzhou, Chunhua, Zhongbu, Nijun, Luochuan, and Fuxian; the third step is to take the area of Hancheng, Nichuan, and Yanhuang. Try to extend the time for these three steps as much as you possibly can. We estimate that this will allow us to maneuver for about three months. The task is not to wipe out Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng but, rather, to expand the soviet areas, expand the Red Army, and solve the problem of supplies.
   d. The two armies of the Fourth Front Army will constitute the Northern Route Army, wait in the Lingwu and Yanchi area for the opportunity, and set out after the resistance war in eastern Suiyuan has begun. The first step is in the Anbian area, where we must find a way to take Anbian City. The second step is in the Hengshan-Yulin area, and we should act as though we were feigning an attack on these two cities to lure the two Gaos\(^1\) as well as the Twenty-first Division to come north for reinforcement, so that we can regain the Washi and Yanchuan area, and lure the remaining shattered enemy troops in Shenfu to the west. The third step is in the Shenfu area, and we should arrive at the banks of the Yellow River at the same time as the Southern Route Army.
   e. Choose an appropriate time to start building boats in the three different places of the two Yans,\(^2\) Qingsui, and Shenfu, and prepare to cross the river and enter Shanxi.
   f. If by then we have succeeded in reaching a compromise with Chiang [Kaishek] and Yan [Xishan], then we will act according to the agreement.
   g. If by then a compromise has not been reached, we will launch the eastern expedition.
   h. After entering Shanxi, if we can participate in the resistance against Japan on the basis of an agreement, we will begin to resist Japan.
   i. If we are unable to resist Japan, then our first step is to take the Tongpu Railway\(^3\) to launch a campaign and expand the Red Army. As our second step, if there is still no hope that Chiang and Yan will compromise and there are too many difficulties in the eastern expedition, but, on the other hand, Chiang's troops in Shaanxi and Gansu have been moved to the east, we can still come back to Shaanxi and Gansu. If it is advantageous to go toward the east, we will advance to the point where Hebei, Henan, and Shanxi intersect. Moreover, according to the plan, our third step is to march to the point where Hebei, Shandong, and Henan meet, and cross the Yellow River there. The fourth step is to go to [the intersection of] Anhui, Henan, and Shandong. The fifth step is to go to [the intersection of] Hubei, Henan, and Anhui. The sixth step is to go to [the intersection of] Hubei, Henan, and Shaanxi. After that we can come back again to the Northwest, and we plan to accomplish this in one to two years.
   j. The purpose of the second through the sixth steps is to expand our political influence, expand the Red Army, strive for the victory of the united front in the whole country, strive to reach an agreement with Nanjing, and strive for a war of resistance.
   k. Xu [Xiangqian]'s and Chen [Changhao]'s troops will constitute the Western Route Army, whose task is to set up base areas on the western bank of the river and fight through to create a direct passage to the distant place.\(^4\) We plan to accomplish this in one year.

3. The preceding new plan has not yet been finally decided upon, and we

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Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 652–55, where it is reproduced from a manuscript copy in the Central Archives.

1. The "two Gaos" were Gao Guizi and Gao Shuangcheng, respectively, commanders of the Eighty-fourth and Eighty-sixth divisions of the Shaanxi-Suiyuan-Ningxia Bandit-Suppression Headquarters.

2. The two Yans refers to Yanchang and Yanchuan in Shaanxi Province.

3. The Tongpu Railway was a narrow-gauge line, running from Datong in northern Shanxi to Puzhou Village in the southeastern corner of the province, which was just in the process of completion at this time.

4. The term "the distant place" (yuanfang) is a coded reference to the Soviet Union.
The New Battle Plan
(November 8, 1936)

To the five comrades Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Peng [Deshuai], and He [Long] and Ren [Bishi]:

1. Since all units under Hu [Zongnan], Mao [Bingwen], Wang [Jun], and Guan [Linzeng] are advancing northward, it is impossible to continue to carry out our Ningxia plan for the time being.

2. We have decided to make the following new plan:
   a. The main forces of the three front armies will be conducting operations in the area from Guanqiaobao to Jini and Lingwu in November, hoping to wipe out one unit of the enemy forces in one or two campaigns. Try to get some rest and make preparations, and let the enemy believe that we are going to cross the river, thus luring Hu’s division to move northward, and inducing Guan’s division to advance to Shizuizi, and Wang Yizhe to advance to Yuwang.
   b. Set out in two groups after the first ten days of December.
   c. The First and Second Front armies will form the southern group. The first step is to take the area of Zhenyuan, Xifeng, Heshui, Zhengning, and Ningxian; the second step is to take the area of Tongguan, Yazoohou, Chunhua, Zhongbu, Nijun, Luochuan, and Fuxian; the third step is to take the area of Hancheng, Niehuan, and Yanchang. Try to extend the time for these three steps as much as you possibly can. We estimate that this will allow us to maneuver for about three months. The task is not to wipe out Zhang Xucliang and Yang Hucheng but, rather, to expand the soviet areas, expand the Red Army, and solve the problem of supplies.
   d. The two armies of the Fourth Front Army will constitute the Northern Route Army, wait in the Lingwu and Yanchi area for the opportunity, and set out after the resistance war in eastern Suiyuan has begun. The first step is in the Anbian area, where we must find a way to take Anbian City. The second step is in the Hengshan-Yulin area, and we should act as though we were feigning an attack on these two cities to lure the two Gaos\(^1\) as well as the Twenty-first Division to come north for reinforcement, so that we can regain the Washi and Yanchuan area, and lure the remaining shattered enemy troops in Shenfu to the west. The third step is in the Shenfu area, and we should arrive at the banks of the Yellow River at the same time as the Southern Route Army.
   e. Choose an appropriate time to start building boats in the three different places of the two Yans,\(^2\) Qingsui, and Shenfu, and prepare to cross the river and enter Shanxi.
   f. If by then we have succeeded in reaching a compromise with Chiang [Kaishek] and Yan [Xishan], then we will act according to the agreement.
   g. If by then a compromise has not been reached, we will launch the eastern expedition.
   h. After entering Shanxi, if we can participate in the resistance against Japan on the basis of an agreement, we will begin to resist Japan.
   i. If we are unable to resist Japan, then our first step is to take the Tongpu Railway\(^3\) to launch a campaign and expand the Red Army. As our second step, if there is still no hope that Chiang and Yan will compromise and there are too many difficulties in the eastern expedition, but, on the other hand, Chiang’s troops in Shaanxi and Gansu have been moved to the east, we can still come back to Shaanxi and Gansu. If it is advantageous to go toward the east, we will advance to the point where Hebei, Henan, and Shanxi intersect. Moreover, according to the plan, our third step is to march to the point where Hebei, Shandong, and Henan meet, and cross the Yellow River there. The fourth step is to go to [the intersection of] Anhui, Henan, and Shandong. The fifth step is to go to [the intersection of] Hebei, Henan, and Anhui. The sixth step is to go to [the intersection of] Hebei, Henan, and Shaanxi. After that we can come back again to the Northwest, and we plan to accomplish this in one to two years.
   j. The purpose of the second through the sixth steps is to expand our political influence, expand the Red Army, strive for the victory of the united front in the whole country, strive to reach an agreement with Nanjing, and strive for a war of resistance.
   k. Xu [Xiangqian]’s and Chen [Changhao]’s troops will constitute the Western Route Army, whose task is to set up base areas on the western bank of the river and fight through to create a direct passage to the distant place.\(^4\) We plan to accomplish this in one year.

3. The preceding new plan has not yet been finally decided upon, and we

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\(^1\) The two Gaos refer to Gao Guizhi and Gao Shuangcheng, respectively, commanders of the Eighty-fourth and Eighty-sixth divisions of the Shaanxi-Suiyuan-Ningxia Bandit-Suppression Headquarters.

\(^2\) The Tongpu Railway was a narrow-gauge line, running from Datong in northern Shanxi to Puzhou Village in the southeastern corner of the province, which was just in the process of completion at this time.

\(^3\) The term "the distant place" (yuanfang) is a coded reference to the Soviet Union.
want to hear the opinion of you five brothers, with a view to making a final
decision in two weeks. This plan cannot be carried out too soon, so during the
month of November the objective of the entire army is to seek battle and lead the
enemy into Ningxia.

4. We suggest that you five brothers hold a secret meeting, discuss this very
carefully, and then let us know. [Lin] Yuying is to participate.

Bo [Gu]              Lin [Yuying]

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Strive to Attack One Enemy Division
While You Are On the Move

(November 8, 1936, 12:00 noon)

To Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Peng [Dehuai], He [Long] and Ren [Bishi]:

1. During the next seven days, continue seeking to attack one division, either
   Zhou’s or Kong’s, while you are on the move.
2. If this is not possible, then set out toward Jinji, Lingwu, and Yuwang to
   lure the enemy deep so as to provide flexibility in your operations.
3. Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao] are to advance to Liangzhou and
during the battle should concentrate all their forces to attack one enemy brigade
and destroy them one by one.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]

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We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 648–49,
where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. I.e., Zhou Xiangchu’s Forty-third Division and Kong Lingxun’s Ninety-seventh
   Division of the Second Column of the First Route of the Northwest Bandit-Suppression
   General Headquarters.
Strive to Destroy One Unit of the Enemy's Forces
(November 8, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

To Peng [Dehuai], and for transmission to Zhang [Guotao] and Zhu [De], He [Long] and Ren [Bishi]:

1. In the area in which you are now located you should strive to wipe out one unit of the enemy's forces, even if it is only one or two regiments. There are two advantages in striking such a blow. The first is to incite the First Division under Hu [Zongnan] to reinforce Ningxia, so as to enhance our subsequent mobility. The second is to delay the enemy's advance somewhat, so that we will have additional time to raise food supplies and rest in Jin[ji] and Ling[wu].

2. The best tactic remains that of waiting for their advance, but it is not necessary to wait for both Zhou [Xiangchu]'s division and Kong [Lingxun]'s division, as it would be satisfactory to attack one of them. Please consider this matter.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]

Calling the Forces on the West Bank of the River the Western Route Army, as Well as Problems Concerning the Title of, and Selection of Persons for, Its Leadership Organ
(November 8, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

To seven comrades, including Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Xu [Xiangqian], Chen [Changhao], and Li [Te]:

1. We basically agree with the suggestion that our troops on the west bank of the river should form a front committee and a branch of the Military Affairs Commission. The forces on the west bank of the river should be called the Western Route Army. Its leadership organ should be called the Military and Political Commission of the Western Route Army and is to handle military, political, and Party affairs. Changhao is to be chairman and Xiangqian vice-chairman. The rest of the names on the list are approved as given in their telegram.

2. If you two elder brothers have any thoughts on the matter, please reply.

Zhang [Wentian]    Mao [Zedong]

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 650–51, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. On November 7, Chen Changhao, Li Te, and others had sent a telegram to the Central Committee, summarized in note 2 to the present text in Mao Zedong junshi wenji, proposing these measures.
On the Problem of Suspending Attacks and Holding Negotiations

(November 9, 1936, 4:00 P.M.)

Comrade [Zhang] Zihu:

We received your telegram of the 28th yesterday; our response is as follows:

1. Please inform Commissioner Chen [Lifu] and Mayor Zeng [Yangfu] that a massive new attack by the Japanese is imminent. We urgently hope that the Nanjing authorities will firmly maintain our national position and immediately make preparations to fight a war of resistance. We are willing to do everything possible to support you. You must under no circumstances make any concessions that spell the loss of our territory or sovereignty and once again disappoint the whole nation. You must fulfill Mr. Chiang Kaisheng’s promise made in his July declaration to the people of the whole country.

2. At this critical moment of national crisis we formally declare: Provided only that the Guomindang does not block the Red Army on its route to resist the Japanese or invade the anti-Japanese rear of the Red Army, the Red Army is willing to suspend its attacks against the troops of the Guomindang first as a demonstration of our sincerity about ending the civil war and uniting to fight Japan. We are calmly waiting for the Nanjing authorities to reply. Only if Guomindang troops attack us will we be forced to take measures for self-defense and launch necessary counterattacks.

3. We suggest that the Guomindang immediately order its various forces in the Northwest to stop attacking the Red Army. Both sides will remain in their previous positions so that they may send representatives to hold talks. As for Enlai’s flying to Guangzhou for talks, this is feasible on the condition that his safety be fully guaranteed.

4. Before the Guomindang issues its order to suspend all attacks and the chief representatives of both sides hold talks, we plan to authorize Comrade Pan Hannian, who is in Shanghai, to hold talks with Chen and Zeng first. We hope you will agree to this.

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]

Enquiry About the Situation of the Western Route Army

(November 11, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

To Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao]:

1. Where are you now and what is the situation?
2. Since we have not been able to defeat any of the forces of Hu [Zongnan], Mao [Bingwen], or Wang [Jun], east of the river, the application of the Ningxia plan is greatly hindered. We are in the process of thinking about a new plan, but, for the time being, the main forces east of the river will be separated from the Western Route Army.
3. Please think about the following points, and inform us by telegram of your views:
   a. Based on the situation on both the enemy’s side and your side, is there any assurance that you could advance westward all alone, approach Xinjiang, and get assistance?
   b. What difficulties would there be if you were to go back across the river to the east?
   c. Are you able to solve the problem of uniforms?

Mao [Zedong]    Zhou [Enlai]

Our source for this telegram is the 1985 annual compendium of Wenshan he yanjiu, pp. 196–97.

We have translated this document from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 658–59, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Regarding all three of these commanders, see the notes earlier in the present volume. Wang Jun had, in fact, just been killed in an airplane accident, as Mao learned on the following day (see “Dispositions for Attacking Zeng Wanzhong,” November 12, 1936).
The Principles of the Agreement to Negotiate with Nanjing
(November 12, 1936)\textsuperscript{1}

Comrade [Pan] Hannian:

1. We have taken note of your telegram of the 11th; also, Zhang Zihua has arrived.
2. It is hoped that you will find out precisely and notify us by telegram to what extent Nanjing will tolerate the Red Army. If there are any conditions unacceptable to the Red Army, there is no point in having Enlai go there. Mr. Chiang's recent fierce attacks cannot but raise doubts among Red Army commanders.
3. According to Zhang Zihua, Zeng Yangfu\textsuperscript{2} said:
   a. The Party can operate openly;
   b. The government may continue to exist;
   c. Participation in the national congress;
   d. The Red Army would change its name and be placed under the command of Chiang, in accordance with the establishment of the National Revolutionary Army and its treatment, but the original organization and command structure of the Red Army would remain unchanged. In order to unite against Japan, we do not insist on excessive demands and may come to an agreement on the basis of principles previously discussed.
   e. You remain in Nanjing, the site of the negotiations, and await further orders.

Ziren\textsuperscript{3}

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We have translated this document from the 1985 annual compendium of Wenshan he yanjiu, pp. 197–98.
1. The time at which this telegram was sent is indicated by a conventional character meaning between 9:00 and 11:00 P.M.
2. Zeng Yangfu (1898–1969), a native of Guangdong, took a Ph.D. in engineering at the University of Pittsburgh. Returning to China in 1926, he occupied various responsible party and government posts under the Guomindang. He was elected to the Fifth Central Executive Committee in November 1935, and became mayor of Guangzhou in May 1937. Regarding his contacts with the Communists, including an invitation to Zhou Enlai, see above, the Introduction.
3. One of Mao's pseudonyms.

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Dispositions for Attacking Zeng Wanzhong
(November 12, 1936, 9:00 P.M.)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. Wang Jun is dead.\textsuperscript{1} Of the three brigades commanded by Zeng Wanzhong, Ma [Kun]'s brigade is far away in Ning'anbao, Shen [Yuanzen]'s brigade was obliged to set out today (the 12th) from the pass and is advancing in the direction of the Dingjijiang main road, and Li [Shilong]'s brigade set out from Sanbulu and is advancing in the direction of Majiatang. If our troops are properly deployed we have a chance of beating them.
2. After we have attacked Enemy Zeng's forces and rested for a while, it seems appropriate to send out the First Front Army first, and to march southward by way of Maojuiju or the area to its southwest. The Thirty-first Army and the Fourth Army should follow, and the Second Front Army should set out last, to avoid being crowded and being discovered. Please consider and decide what to do according to the actual circumstances. But right now the Second Front Army should place one unit in the way of Wang Yizhe's right column's advance, to delay and halt the enemy's advance as well as to cover the First and Fourth Front Armies.

Mao

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We have translated this document from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 660–61, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
1. Wang Jun, commander of the First Column and of the Third Army under the Northwest Bandit Suppression Headquarters, was killed on November 9, 1936, in an airplane accident. Following his death, Zeng Wanzhong was appointed to these two posts.
About the Methods for Attacking the Enemy

(November 14, 1936)\(^1\)

Peng [Dehuai]:

As regards the method of attacking the enemy, if it is impossible to ambush the enemy from both flanks, he may be ambushed from one flank. As far as the enemy troops directly ahead are concerned, you can march forward to confront them and then wipe them out. Please consider and make decisions according to the situation.

Mao

Hu Zongnan’s Attack on Dingbian and Yanchi, and Our Troops’ Deployment

(November 17, 1936, 6:00 P.M.)

Peng [Dehuai]:

1. Hu Zongnan is attacking and pursuing toward Dingbian and Yan[chi]. On the 17th the First Brigade is advancing from Hui’anbao, Zhan [Zhongyan]’s brigade is advancing toward Mengcheng, Ding [Delong]’s division is advancing from Xijiayuan, and the two brigades commanded by Zhou [Xiangchu] and Kong [Linxun] await further orders in Yuyuang.

2. We should have the Twenty-eighth Army pin down the First Brigade, the Fourth Army pin down Zhan’s brigade, and concentrate the First Army Group, the Fifteenth Army Group, and the Thirty-first Army to wipe out Ding’s division first before attacking Zhan’s brigade and sweeping across in the direction of the Northwest.

3. Quickly send one powerful unit of the Second Front Army, or the greater part of it, to stop Wang Yizhe’s eastward advance.

4. The Twenty-eighth Army and the cavalry regiment should be ordered to await further orders in Yanchi; they are under your command. Xie [Song]’s and Gan [Weihan]’s forces of the Twenty-ninth Army are responsible for the security of Dingbian.

5. When can the troops reach the concentration site?

Mao

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We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, p. 662, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The time at which this telegram was sent is indicated by a conventional character signifying between 9:00 and 11:00 P.M.

We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 663–64, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Mobilization Order for the Decisive Battle

(November 18, 1936)

For the perusal of all military commanders and political officers of all units of the First, Second, and Fourth front armies:

All commanders must display the most resolute determination, the most responsible loyalty, and the most enduring and patient resolve in the decisive battle, to be launched tomorrow, against Chiang Kaishek’s attack. Moreover, subordinate commanders must also be earnestly asked to transmit this to all fighters so that everyone may, with the same determination, loyalty, and resolve as you have, obey orders, fight bravely, overcome any difficulties, and be prepared to fight continuously. This is because this one particular battle facing us is of extremely critical importance to the soviets and to China. The enemy’s weaknesses and our strengths are both numerous. We must definitely not be afraid of fatigue; we must charge forward bravely, and capture more prisoners of war, rifles, and guns to smash this attack; we must create a new overall situation as the first gift to the victorious people of the entire soviet area from the three front armies that are about to join forces in the soviet area in the Northwest.

Long live the victory of the Red Army!
Long live the victory of the soviets!
Long live the national war of resistance against Japan!

Mao Zedong
Ren Bishi
He Long

Zhang Guotao
Zhu De
Zhou Enlai

We have translated this telegram from Nie Rongzhen huiyi lu (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1984), p. 328. It is also reproduced in Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, vol. 5, pp. 21–22.
Attack Ding Delong First, and Then Attack Zhou Xiangchu and Kong Lingxun

(November 19, 1936)

Peng [Dehusai]:

Our troops should first hit Ding [Delong]'s division on their right route. As for Zhou [Xiangchu] and Kong [Lingxun], it seems best to let them advance northward several dozen li and then firmly throttle them so that, after wiping out Ding’s division, our forces can strike at the rear flanks of Zhou and Kong. In addition, the Second Front Army’s main forces should follow along as reserve troops, and one of its units should firmly throttle Wang [Yizhe]'s forces. Please decide how to proceed according to the circumstances.

Mao

The Operations of Hu Zongnan’s Forces, and the Deployment of Our Troops

(November 20, 1936, 5:00 a.m.)

Peng [Dehusai]:

1. The enemy has now fallen into difficulty. On orders from Chiang, he is turning towards Ding[bian] and Yan[chi] from Baoningshao, and, to solve the problem of supplies and control villages of strategic importance, his main forces must advance by way of Hongliugou. But it is possible that Ding [Delong]'s division may go to Ding[bian] by way of Shanchengbao and Qinggangxia.

2. It would be best for us to concentrate four armies and attack them from the rear of the right flank and for the Fourth Army to draw their attention from the front.

3. Our principle should be to wipe out one division first and achieve an assured victory, before launching a second campaign.

4. The enemy thinks that our First and Second Front Armies are fleeing to Huanxian; Hu’s troops are completely unaware of our present intentions. When the enemy reinforcing division reaches Shanchengbao, they are sure to find out, so it is crucial to be on the alert.

5. The third section of the Red Army University in Quzi and the Twentyninth Army in Ding[bian] and Yan[chi] are under your unified command.

Mao Zedong

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 669–70, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Regarding the Red Army University, see above, the invitation to enroll dated February 1936. The Third Section, devoted to training cadres for guerrilla warfare, was also called, in communications with those outside the Party, the “Central Instructional Division.”
After Achieving Victory over Ding Delong, Immediately Attack Zhou Xiangchu and Kong Lingxun

(November 21, 1936, 3:00 A.M.)

As of yesterday, the situation on the enemy's side was fairly clear. The First Brigade and Kong Lingxun are in the Dashui area, Zhou Xiangchu is in the Panjiaogou and Baoningbao area, one unit went to Shanchengbao yesterday, and its main forces should be advancing to the area about 30 to 40 li north of Shanchengbao on the 21st. Ding Delong is in the Shanchengbao area. It seems that the Second Brigade is regrouping in Yuyang and Hu's army headquarters has arrived at Yuyang. If we attack Ding's division today, then apart from Zhou's division, which may arrive in the afternoon, the rest will not be able to arrive until the third day, and, if so, they will be too tired and exhausted to fight. After defeating Ding's division we should reorganize our troops right away to attack Zhou's division.

Mao

Commanders of the Red Army Congratulate the Defenders of Suiyuan on Their Victory Against Japan

(November 21, 1936)

For the perusal of the honorable General Fu Cunhuai of Suiyuan:

Although fighting alone, you and your army have won one battle after another, pinning down the Japanese forces and their puppet army. The whole country rejoiced when this news came. Your brave resistance against Japan has won honor and dignity for the Chinese nation and for the soldiers of China, thus greatly outshining the Nineteenth Route Army. They amassed heavy forces, and their only enterprise was to slaughter their own countrymen, a shameful stigma only death can remove! Lately it has been reported that a few Chinese traitors selling out their country are trying to use a certain powerful man who, falsely invoking the cause of resistance against Japan, wants to impose control, in effect, on your patriotic action. We deeply trust that you will be more influenced by the dignity of the whole nation and make it impossible for the Chinese traitors selling out their country to perpetrate their tricks and, rather, increase the unity of the anti-Japanese forces. The Red Army has long since made up its mind to fight Japan and come to the assistance of Suiyuan, despite the fact that a few Chinese traitors selling out their country insist on loudly singing their old refrain that the Communists must be exterminated first before resisting Japan, forcing the patriots to attack the Red Army so as to weaken the nation's self-defense and meet the demands of Japanese imperialism to root out the anti-Japanese movement in China. The People's Red Army, which is fighting Japan, pledges that it will exert its utmost strength to deal with such shameless creatures, to promote the great cause of national liberation, so that those highly respected by the people of the whole country and all full-blooded soldiers may not fall from grace, but remain forever in even greater glory. We deeply believe that our current endeavors to stop the civil war, resist Japan, and save our country will certainly be of moral support to your courageous resistance against Japan. We sincerely wish you great victories and hope you will relate this to all the officers and soldiers of your army.

Mao Zedong and Zhu De kowtow

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We have translated this telegram from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 671–72, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Mao addressed this telegram to the Red Army's Front Headquarters, of which Peng Dehuai was commander-in-chief and political commissar.

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 5, pp. 25–26, where it is reproduced from Hongse Zhonghua, no. 312 (November 23, 1936). We have supplied a few of the missing characters in the former source from the latter.
If We Want to Resist Japan, the Civil War Must Be Stopped; If the Civil War Is to Be Stopped, Both Military and Nonmilitary Means Must Be Used

(November 22, 1936)

...1 It has been quite some time since the establishment of the soviets in China, and they have already done many great and awe-inspiring things. But we have done very little in the way of literary and artistic creation. The establishment today of the Chinese Association of Literature and the Arts is an innovation in the soviet movement of the past ten years. In the past we did indeed have many comrades who loved literature and the arts, but we did not organize them or carry out specialized and planned studies. Engaging in the creation of popular literature and arts for workers and peasants means that, although in the past we were all occupied with military affairs, now we need not only military skills but also talents in literature and the arts. We must possess both military and literary skills2 in full measure. For now there are two fronts in China: one is the front of the war of resistance against Japan and the other is that of the civil war. We must first stop the civil war if we want to form an anti-Japanese national united front, drive out Japanese imperialism, and seek the independence and liberation of the Chinese nation. But now there are people unwilling to stop the civil war, who instead attack the People’s Red Army, which is the main force in the resistance against Japan, who want to destroy the soviets, which constitute the leadership and the core of the resistance against Japan, and who want to wipe out all anti-Japanese forces as well as anti-Japanese literature and arts. Therefore, we must first stop the civil war if we want to resist Japan. How can the civil war be stopped? We must approach this from both the military aspect and the nonmilitary aspect. In terms of nonmilitary means, we must persuade those who are unwilling to stop the civil war, and use propaganda to educate the people of the whole country to unite and resist Japan. If literary and artistic methods cannot persuade those unwilling to stop the civil war, then we will use military means to force them to stop it. You writers and artists should also go to the front and encourage the soldiers to defeat those who are unwilling to stop the civil war. Therefore, in the movement of promoting an end to the civil war and united efforts to resist Japan, even those inside the Association of Literature and the Arts have great tasks to fulfill—promoting popular literature and arts for workers and peasants, as well as the anti-Japanese literature and arts of the national revolutionary war. This is your great and glorious mission.

This is an extract from Mao’s address at a meeting of the Chinese Association of Literature and the Arts. Our source is Mao Zedong ji. Biju, Vol. 5, pp. 27–28, where it is reproduced from the Supplement (no. 1) to Hongse Zhonghua, dated November 30, 1936. See also Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 612.

1. The ellipses appear in the Chinese text.

2. In this text, Mao uses the character wen in two contexts. On the one hand, as in the title of the association he was addressing on this occasion, it appears in the expression wenyi (literature and the arts) and refers to the need for a popular literature. It also appears, however, in the traditional contrast between wen (literary or civilian) and wu (military). Here, it is translated "literary"; below, and in the title of this document, it is also rendered as "nonmilitary."
Forcing Chiang to End His Annihilation of the Communists Is the Key at the Moment
(November 22, 1936)\(^1\)

Xiaokai:\(^2\)

1. The two telegrams from Nanjing and the two telegrams from Shanghai have all been received. At present it is hard to know where to begin with this matter. Enlai is too busy to leave here for the time being.

2. We can negotiate with them only on the basis of preserving all the organizational strength of the Red Army and designating lines of defense against Japan.

3. Create from all sides a movement for halting the attacks against the Red Army. First nurture and then mobilize. Once it is launched in one place, there will be a response on every hand, forcing Chiang to end his extermination of the Communists. This is the central crux of the current anti-Japanese united front. Details to follow separately.


Resolutely Stop the Enemy's First Brigade from Taking Yanchi
(November 22, 1936, 5:00 P.M.)

To Peng [Dehuai], and for the information of Song [Shilun] and Song [Renqiong], and of Xie [Song] and Gan [Weihan]:

Hu [Zongnan] has ordered the Forty-third Division to reinforce Mengcheng and Tianshui, and the First Brigade yesterday reached Qingshanjie, not far from Yanchi. The entire Twenty-eighth Army as well as the cavalry regiment should go at once to Qingshanjie. Use one small unit in the front and the main forces from the rear flank to block the First Brigade resolutely, so that Yanchi will not fall into the enemy's hands, and await the arrival of our main forces. Apart from the small unit used for keeping a watch on Anbian, the main forces of Xie's and Gan's troops should immediately concentrate in and defend Yanchi.

Mao

Our source for this document is the 1985 annual compendium of Wenxian he yanjiu, pp. 198–99.

1. The time of day is indicated by a conventional character which means between 9:00 and 11:00 P.M.

2. Mao here addresses Pan Hannian by his pen name, Xiaokai.

We have translated this text from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 673–74, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Organize into Southern and Northern Columns to Attack the Enemy

(November 22, 1936)

Peng [Dehuai]:

It seems best that you personally lead the one division of the First Front Army that was not used in yesterday’s campaign and the two armies of the Fourth Front Army. Organize them into the northern column, move to Qingshanjie tonight or tomorrow morning, and, in cooperation with the Twenty-eighth and Twenty-ninth armies, wipe out the First Brigade as well as Ma Quanliang’s forces. If Zhou [Xiangchu] and Kong [Lingxun] continue to march toward Shanchengbao, we can organize a southern column, with the First Front Army as the main force, under the command of He [Long] and Ren [Bishi] of the Second Front Army, and we will be assured of wiping out one of their divisions. Or, after destroying or driving away the First Brigade, you may march toward and attack the rear of Zhou and Kong in Mengcheng and Tianshuibao from Qingshanjie, so that Zhou and Kong will be trapped and will not know whether to advance or retreat. So far as the topographical conditions in the Mengcheng area are concerned, it is very difficult to maneuver if we concentrate all our troops, and besides, after the fiasco of Ding’s division,1 Zhou and Kong should be more cautious while advancing. If our main forces can strike from one wing while the enemy troops are moving away from Shanchengbao, it will be what the enemy least expects, and in this way we may win one or two battles, while at the same time letting the enemy know that he does not have much hope. If the enemy later shifts to a defensive position, our northern column may maneuver in the east of Jinling so that the overall situation will change. Please work out how this can be done.

Mao

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Grasp the Contradictions of the Enemy Forces, and Thoroughly Smash Hu Zongnan

(November 23, 1936, 12:00 noon)

Zhu [De] and Zhang [Guotao], Peng [Dehuai], He [Long] and Ren [Bishi]:

There are currently four kinds of contradictions developing among the enemy forces. The first kind is the contradiction between resisting the Japanese and “suppressing the Communists.” The second kind is the contradiction between Chiang’s forces and the Northeastern Army. The third kind is the contradiction between the stern order to attack the Red Army from the higher levels and the fear of the Red Army at the lower levels; such contradictions are developing greatly at present. The fourth is the contradiction between the officers and the soldiers; this last kind of contradiction is becoming more acute because of the recent material difficulties and exhaustion. Our task is to grasp these contradictions, to unite as one even more closely, to unify our command, to endure and overcome every difficulty, not to lose a single favorable opportunity, move our troops around flexibly, be prepared to fight continuously, resolutely shatter every attacking enemy, and, above all, to smash Hu Zongnan thoroughly.

Mao

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1. Regarding the attack on Ding Delong’s division, see above, the text of November 21 entitled “After Achieving Victory over Ding Delong, Immediately Attack Zhou Xiangchu and Kong Lingxun.”

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 677–78, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
It Is Better to Destroy One Enemy Regiment Completely Than to Rout Many Enemy Regiments

(November 25, 1936, at midnight)

Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao]:

1. We are in receipt of the Notice to Officers and Men and the telegram on deployments dated the 25th,¹ for which we are most grateful.

2. Maobingwen’s eastward withdrawal is beneficial for your development. After you have defeated Enemy Ma [Bufang], your main forces should prepare to advance a step eastward and offer support by coordinated action east of the river.

3. Within the next three months, do not count on support from the distant place.² For the present we must be completely self-reliant, unite, and struggle to accomplish a breakthrough.

4. As regards operations:
   a. Concentrate two armies of our main forces, and use favorable terrain to attack Ma’s forces. This method should be used regardless of whether there are two or three enemy regiments, or five or six.
   b. When the enemy is numerically inferior, our main forces should encircle him from both flanks and use part of our force to cut off the enemy in his rear.
   c. When the enemy is numerically superior, use part of our force to pin down one of his flanks, but use our main forces to encircle the other flank.
   d. No matter whether the enemy is numerically superior or inferior, do not use our main forces frontally.
   e. When encircling the enemy from both flanks, do not divide our forces equally. A larger force should be deployed to encircle one of the enemy flanks.
   f. Whenever you are attacking two or more enemy regiments, you two elder

brothers should personally take command and inspect the terrain and give instructions directly to the officers. You must pay great attention to using concealment. Educate all senior cadres in the use of concealment, in order to avoid useless sacrifices.

g. Do not fight a battle that you do not expect to be able to win.
h. In sum, it is all right not to fight. If you fight, you must capture booty. It is better to destroy one enemy regiment completely than to rout many enemy regiments. Please act accordingly.

Zedong

We have translated this document from *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 679–80, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. For brief summaries of the notice of November 22 to commanders and the telegram of November 25 from Xu Xiangqian and others to the central leadership, see notes 2 and 3 in *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, p. 680.

2. As indicated in a note to the battle plan of November 8, 1936, “the distant place” is a coded reference to the Soviet Union.
To Chiang Kaishek
(December 1, 1936)

For the perusal of the honorable Mr. Kaishek:

The Communist Party, the Soviet, and the Red Army have, since August of last year, repeatedly asked you to end the civil war and unite to resist Japan. Since the publication of this proposal, all social groups, regardless of party affiliation, have responded favorably. Yet you, sir, have insisted on your own views from beginning to end, first ordering a campaign of “Encirclement and Suppression,” which led to the battle of Zhaluozen last winter. This spring the Red Army crossed the Yellow River in the east for the purpose of going to the Hebei-Chahar front, but again you stopped us in the valley of the Fen River. Since we were unwilling to see our national defense forces make meaningless sacrifices, we commanded our army to cross the river to the west to seek alternate routes to fighting the Japanese while, at the same time, issuing a declaration calling on you to come to your senses. In the past few months, the situation in the eastern parts of Suiyuan has grown increasingly critical. No sooner had we suggested that you make a sudden change in your strategy and dispatch a huge force to fight the Japanese than you decided to send only eight regiments, commanded by Tang Enbo, to go to the aid of Suiyuan, which was really a drop in the bucket. On the other hand, you concentrated 260 regiments from the forces of Hu Zongnan, Guan Linzheng, Mao Bingwen, Wang Jun, He Zhuguo, Wang Yizhe, Dong Yingbin, Sun Zheng, Wan Yaohuang, Yang Hucheng, Ma Hongbin, Ma Bufang, Gao Guizi, Gao Shuangcheng, and Li Xianzhuo¹ in a ferocious move intended to accomplish nothing short of the complete annihilation of the Red Army and the destruction of the anti-Japanese soviet base areas. Although we have ordered our forces to suspend any attacks against your forces and continue to retreat step by step, even this failed to modify your longstanding sentiments of hostility. For the sake of our self-defense and the preservation of the armed forces fighting the Japanese and the anti-Japanese base areas, we had no choice but to fight the battle of Shanchengbao in Dingbian on November 21. Now the people of the whole country have demonstrated their utmost fury toward the Japanese bandits and their keenest support for the officers and soldiers fighting the Japanese in Suiyuan, but you, sir, devote all your energies to a civil war of mutual slaughter. As we face them on the battlefield, we know full well the emotions of the officers and soldiers of your forces in the Northwest. Their feelings are no different from ours; they urgently want to end the suicidal civil war and go to the front to fight the Japanese as soon as possible. Even your own renowned crack units could not escape the tragic fate of the battle of Shanchengbao; it was not because these units were not capable of fighting, but because they were unwilling to see Chinese kill Chinese. They would rather surrender their guns to the Red Army. The will of the people and the will of the army are so much opposed to yours; why don’t you, sir, meditate on a clear night about why this is so? The situation in Suiyuan today is deteriorating rapidly. The number of troops defending the frontlines is so small. One must remember the lessons of the battles fought along the Great Wall and in Shanghai on December 8. Only you, sir, alone can influence the course of events. At the moment, the determination of the national strategy needs only one word from you. If the civil war is ended today, the Red Army and your massive force sent here to destroy the Communists will leave the battlefield of mutual butchery tomorrow to go to the front to fight the Japanese. The forces defending our country in Suiyuan will increase by ten times instantly. All it requires is a change of mind and a change of heart on your part, and our country can be avenged; our country’s territory can be defended; our lost land can be recovered. You will also become a glorious hero in the resistance against Japan, respected by all and honored forever by history. What reasons can hold you from making such a decision? We once again sincerely beg you to be decisive, accede to our demands that our country be saved, turn enemies into friends, and fight Japan together. This will not be simply our great happiness; it is really the only way out for the whole country and the whole nation. In the pressing matters of today, the choice is between resistance and capitulation, and we can choose only one of these. Waivering in between will destroy our nation and enslave our people—this will lose you the support of the people and subject you to condemnation by all the generations to come. We are genuinely reluctant to see our future generations tell one another that it was Chiang Kaishek and no one else who destroyed China. Instead, we want to see our future generations look upon you, sir, as a hero, who, after amending his errors in time, saved the country and its people. It is often said that those who have sinned should not try to make amends by praying. It is also said that one must put down the butcher’s knife to become a Buddha. We hope that you, sir, understand clearly which alternative to choose. The enemy has driven deep into our country and brought the most devastating calamity upon us. Our words are strong as our hearts are heavy. Having made this appeal, we eagerly await your instructions.


¹ Li Xianzhuo (1894–1988) was a native of Shandong. At this time he commanded the Twenty-first Division.

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 87–90, where it is reproduced from a lithographic copy in the Central Archives.
To Feng Yuxiang

(December 5, 1936)

Mr. Huanzhang:

I have learned from the newspapers, from broadcasts, and from friends in Shanghai and Nanjing that your breast is filled with righteous anger directed toward resisting Japan and national salvation. Although I have never met you, sir, I feel as if I had.

Faced with the tragic disaster of losing our country, the great crisis falls on people of all parties, factions, and beliefs alike. Thus, cooperation to save the nation is in harmony with the principles of heaven and earth.

To this day, however, Mr. Chiang Kaishek insists upon acting alone on his own ideas, has shown no determination to resist Japan, and instead is mobilizing for a large-scale domestic campaign of three hundred regiments to “suppress the Communists.” Most recently the military policy of our humble army has been to return fire when attacked, and one brigade of Hu Zongnan’s army has been defeated, while another brigade has been destroyed. The core of his army is already badly shaken, but he himself seems unaware of this.

In the present emergency there is nothing more urgent than to bring a halt to the civil war. If you, sir, will but give one shout from on high, all the mountains will reply together. The war will stop today, and tomorrow the Red Army and the “Communist suppression” armies of the Northwest can immediately move toward the Suiyuan battlefield. Otherwise, the precedents of the Great Wall and Shanghai campaigns show us that Japan will drive deep into the country, and it will be too late to do anything about it! Although you and I stand in different places, our hearts are not really separated. It would be greatly appreciated if you, sir, would be so kind as to give your advice and offer your suggestions! Our program for resisting Japan and national salvation appeared in a letter of August 15 sent to the Chinese Guomindang. We previously sent someone to deliver it to you. We would be honored if you would look it over and offer any criticisms or suggestions.

It gives us great pleasure to report that your former subordinate, Dong Zhentang, and the other gentlemen have made great progress. I have much more to say than I can write in this letter.

Respectfully wishing you well-deserved good fortune,

Mao Zedong, by his own hand

We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 91–92, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Feng Yuxiang (1882–1948), zi Huanzhang, was a native of Anhui. Regarding his early career, see the note on p. 241 of Volume II. After cooperating with Chiang Kaishek in 1927–1929, and rebelling against him in 1930, he was reinstated as a member of the Guomindang Central Executive Committee in December 1931, though he never subsequently enjoyed real power in the National Government. In May 1933 he appointed himself commander-in-chief of the People’s Allied Anti-Japanese Army, but was forced to retire in August of the same year and went into seclusion for two years. In January 1936 he became vice chairman of the Military Affairs Commission in Nanjing and made many speeches urging resistance to Japan.

2. Dong Zhentang (1895–1937), a native of Hebei, had been a divisional commander under Feng Yuxiang. In 1931, having been sent to Jiangxi by Chiang Kaishek in the context of the First “Encirclement and Suppression,” he rebelled at Ningdu and went over to the Red Army. As indicated above, in a note to the text of December 27, 1935, he was at this time commander of the Fifth Army; he was killed in combat with the Guomindang forces in January 1937.
To Yang Hucheng
(December 5, 1936)

His Excellency Commissioner Huchen, commander-in-chief:

It is reported that you, sir, issued an announcement to the popular masses reiterating your revolutionary purposes, which date back to fifteen years ago. I was very happy to learn this. In the past several months we, for our humble parts, have been the honored recipients of much assistance from your respected selves, for which we are grateful beyond expression. Since then both sides have become all the closer, and the foundation for the united front has become all the more solid. Our long-term, larger ambitions are based on this. Chiang Kaishek is determined to go it alone. At the battles of Mengcheng and Shanchengbao he learned something of a lesson. In the past half-month he has been wanting to advance, yet afraid to do so. His disenchantment makes one want to laugh. He is like a pewter spear-head made to look like silver; hateful, yet rather comical.

Mr. Zhang Wenbin has another engagement, so I am sending Mr. Li Tao to visit you and appreciate your receiving him. There are several matters we wish to discuss with Your Excellency:

First, concerning the great policy of uniting for national salvation, there should be a concrete plan of collaboration for the five or six provinces and districts of which Chang’an1 is the center. We count on your making a major effort to provide your good offices regarding this matter. As long as it is conducive to resisting Japan and saving the country, there is nothing your younger brother’s side will not be delighted to comply with. Mr. Chiang is waverin on a sidetrack, outwardly striving for a compromise, and inwardly continuing the civil war. Unless all the various sides fighting Japan unite their forces, it will be insufficient to force him onto the road of resistance against Japan and national salvation. This grand plan for saving the nation from peril is the first matter on which it would be desirable to consult with you.

Next, on our humble side, since the three front armies converged, unity has been consolidated and morale has been very high. Our present policy is to defend the soviet areas resolutely, and if there should be any invaders we shall certainly wipe them out. Nevertheless, we have large forces, there is difficulty with provisions, and we also need more ammunition. As we have the privilege of being among the ranks of the anti-Japanese friendly armed forces, we would like to borrow 300,000 yuan temporarily from you, our elder brothers. Of this amount, we ask that our elder brother use 100,000 yuan to help us purchase ammunition. The remaining 200,000 yuan is to cover the expenses for food, bedding, and uniforms. If our elder brother should be so generous as to agree, please disburse this amount in several batches. Our forces have expanded very rapidly, and without grain supplies we will be hard-pressed to continue, so we cannot but make an appeal regarding our situation of shortages to Your Excellency, our elder brother. As Your Excellency proceeds from utter sincerity in his friendships, we trust that you will not turn down our request. The loan will be repaid by March of next year; this is a firm promise. In addition, we are in possession of one hundred light machine guns, and if our elder brothers have a need for them, we would respectfully present them to you as a gift. We are in urgent need of the money and ammunition, and this is the second matter on which we would like to consult with you.

Next, although at present it remains difficult to be certain about the future direction of the operations of our humble forces, whether we go east, west, north, or south, we are always as lips and teeth in relation to your honorable forces, sharing weal and woe. Before we agree to cooperate with Nanjing, we still need to beg for our elder brother’s assistance regarding Japan as well as Chiang. We will notify you as soon as a decision is made on this policy and would be most grateful to have the fortune of receiving in secret our wise elder brother’s counsel on the matter. This is the third matter regarding the operations of both sides on which we seek your assistance.

Next, correspondence via the airwaves can no longer be put off. We are grateful that you agree it should be carried out immediately. A certain gentleman has another task to perform, so someone else has been delegated to travel with Mr. Li to where you are, bringing with him a classified code book. From December 15 on, all important secrets will be discussed through an exchange of telegrams. In addition, there often occur cases of robbery on the Ganquan-Pushi [Yan’an] road, even involving casualties and seizures of vehicles. If some cases have occurred because of undisciplined local guerrilla forces from the soviet areas, our humble side would like to express its profound apologies and is willing to pay compensations once such cases are verifed. At the same time, we have issued strict injunctions against such activities, hoping that such phenomena will not recur. There are also cases involving bandits and scattered soldiers coming from the eastern mountains. We also request that your honorable side send forces to eliminate and deal with them, so as to keep transportation absolutely unobstructed. The urgent need to establish and reorganize communications and transportation is the fourth matter.

On these four matters, whether it be the great policy for resisting Japan, the urgent need for military supplies, the operations of the two forces, or correspondence and liaison, with due respect we are humbly submitting our views to you.

Our source for this letter is Dangde wenxian, no. 2 (1992), p. 25.

1. The former imperial capital of Chang’an was located just south of the modern city of Xi’an, where Yang Hucheng was pacification commissioner at this time.
so as to engage in a thorough consultation with you. We hope that you will
close your views and send us a reply. The cold north wind blows harder and
harder; for the sake of the nation, take care of yourself.
With respectful compliments, I wish you much fortune.

Your younger brother, Mao Zedong,
submits this letter in his own hand

Problems of Strategy
in China’s Revolutionary War

(December 1936) \(^1\)

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strategic change, political work, and a number of other questions. I did not have
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opposition to another line and is still useful in the present anti-Japanese War.

The Author
February 23, 1941 \(^3\)

Chapter 1
HOW TO STUDY WAR

1. The Laws of War Are Developmental

The laws of war are a problem which anyone directing a war must study and solve.

The laws of revolutionary war are a problem which anyone directing a revolu-
tionary war must study and solve.

The laws of China’s revolutionary war are a problem which anyone directing
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As indicated above in Mao’s preface, this work was first published in printed form in 1941
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1. The publisher’s note to the 1941 edition of this work states that it was completed
“before the Xi’an Incident” of December 12. We have therefore placed it here in the
present volume.

2. According to Nianpu, Vol. 1, p. 635, the first mimeographed edition was issued in
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3. This preface is wrongly dated February 2, instead of February 23, 1941, in the
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We are now engaged in a war; our war is a revolutionary war; and our revolutionary war is being waged in this semicolonial and semi-feudal country of China. Therefore, we study not only the laws of war in general, but the specific laws of revolutionary war, and the even more specific laws of revolutionary war in China.

It is well known that when you do anything, unless you understand its circumstances, its nature, and its relations to other things, you will not know the laws of that thing or know how to do it or be able to do it well.

War has been used, ever since the beginning of class society, as one of the highest forms of struggle for resolving contradictions between classes, nations, states, and political groups when they have developed to a certain stage. If you do not understand its circumstances, its nature, or its relations to other things, you will not know the laws of war, or how to direct a war, and will not be able to win victory.

Revolutionary war, whether a revolutionary class war or a revolutionary national war, has its own specific circumstances and nature, in addition to the circumstances and nature of war in general. Therefore, apart from the general laws of war, it has its specific laws. Those who do not understand its specific laws will not be able to direct a revolutionary war, and will not be able to win a revolutionary war.

China’s revolutionary war, whether civil war or national, is waged in the specific environment of China, and has its own specific circumstances and nature distinguishing it from war in general and from revolutionary war in general. Therefore, besides the laws of war in general and of revolutionary war in general, it has specific laws of its own. Those who do not understand these cannot be victorious in China’s revolutionary war.

Therefore, we must study the laws of war in general, and we must also study the laws of revolutionary war in general, and finally we must study the laws of China’s revolutionary war.

There is one kind of view that is wrong, and which we refuted long ago. It is that it suffices to study the laws of war in general, or, to put it more concretely, it is enough merely to follow those regulations issued by the Chinese government or the military academy. They do not realize that these regulations cover simply the laws of war in general and are, moreover, wholly copied from abroad, or that if we copy and apply them without the slightest change in form or content, we shall be cutting the feet to fit the shoes and be defeated. Their argument is: How can something that has been acquired at the cost of blood be worthless? They do not understand that, although we should respect past experience acquired at the cost of blood, we should also respect experience acquired at the cost of our own blood.

There is also another kind of view that is wrong, which we also refuted long ago. It is that it is enough merely to study the experience of the Russian revolutionary war, or, to put it concretely, that it is enough merely to follow the laws by which the civil war in the Soviet Union was directed and the regulations they issued. They do not realize that the laws and regulations of the Soviet Union include the specific characteristics of the civil war of the Soviet Union and of the Soviet Union’s Red Army and that if we copy and apply them without the slightest alteration, without allowing any changes, we shall likewise be cutting the feet to fit the shoes and be defeated. Their argument is: The Soviet Union’s was a revolutionary war, and ours is also a revolutionary war, and since the Soviet Union was victorious, why should we make any changes? They do not realize that while we should respect the experience of the Soviet Union and furthermore should have somewhat greater respect for it than for historical or other foreign things, because it is the most modern experience of revolutionary war, we especially should, however, have respect for China’s revolutionary war experience because a great many factors are specific to the Chinese revolution and the Chinese Red Army.

There is yet another wrong view which we also refuted long ago, which is that the most valuable experience is that of the Northern Expedition of 1926–1927 and that we must learn from it, or, to put it more concretely, we must imitate the Northern Expedition and drive straight ahead to seize the big cities. They do not realize that, while the experience of the Northern Expedition should be studied, it cannot be copied and applied rigidly because the circumstances of our present war have already changed. We should take from the Northern Expedition only those things that apply today, and we should determine things ourselves in accordance with present conditions.

Thus the differing circumstances of war determine the different laws for directing war—differences in their time, place, and nature. As regards the time factor, both war and the laws of directing war develop; each historical stage has its own characteristics, and thus the laws of war at each historical stage have their own characteristics and cannot be rigidly applied to another stage. As for the nature of war, since revolutionary war and counter-revolutionary war, revolutionary class war, and revolutionary national war each

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4. We study → We must study
5. Class society → Private property and classes
6. Chinese government → Reactionary Chinese government
7. Military academy → Reactionary military academy
8. We should respect the experience → We should indeed especially respect the war experience
9. Revolutionary war, → Revolutionary war, and was acquired under the guidance of Lenin and Stalin,
10. Cannot → Should not
has its own special characteristics, the laws governing them consequently also have their own special characteristics and cannot be rigidly applied interchangeably. As for the conditions of location, since each country or nation\(^{11}\) has its own characteristics, the laws of war for each country or nation also have their own characteristics which likewise cannot be rigidly applied interchangeably. When we study the laws for directing wars that take place in different historical stages, that differ in nature, that are waged in different places and by different nations, we should focus our attention on the special characteristics and development of each, and oppose a mechanical approach to the problem of war.

Nor is this all. For the person directing a war, commanding a small army unit is different from commanding a large army unit, and he has made progress and developed it after being able initially to command a small army unit he is later able to command a large unit. There is also a difference between operating in one locality and in many. He has also made progress and developed if after being able initially to fight in a familiar location he is later able to fight in a great many places. With technical, organizational, tactical, and strategic developments both on the enemy’s side and on our own, the circumstances also differ from one stage to another of a given war. He has made even greater progress and developed even more if, after being able to command the lower stages of a war, he is also able to command its higher stages. To stagnate at\(^{12}\) one certain specific kind of army unit, specific location, or specific stage\(^{13}\) is called making no progress and not developing. There are some people who, content with a single skill or a peep-hole view, never make any progress. They have a role to play in a particular place at a particular time in the revolution, but it is not a large role. We demand directors of war who can play a large role. All the laws for directing war develop as history develops and as war develops; nothing is changeless.

2. The Aim of War Is to Eliminate War

War, this monster of mutual slaughter among men, will eventually be eliminated as human society develops, and, furthermore, it will be eliminated in the very near\(^{14}\) future. But there is only one way to eliminate it, and that is to oppose war with war, to oppose counterrevolutionary war with revolutionary war, to oppose national counterrevolutionary war with national revolutionary war, and to oppose counterrevolutionary class war with revolutionary class war. There are only two kinds of war in history, revolutionary and counterrevolutionary.\(^{15}\) We support revolutionary\(^{16}\) wars and oppose counterrevolutionary\(^{17}\) wars.\(^{18}\) All sacred wars belong to the category of revolutionary wars, and we support sacred national revolutionary wars and sacred class revolutionary wars. The life of humanity is formed of three great eras—a peaceful era of human life, a warring era of human life, and again a peaceful era of human life. We now stand at the juncture of the second and the third eras. Humanity’s era of war will be brought to an end by our hands, and beyond a doubt the war we wage is the final war.\(^{19}\) Our war\(^{20}\) will be the last, but beyond a doubt it will also be the biggest and most terrible.\(^{21}\) The biggest and most terrible of counterrevolutionary wars\(^ {22}\) is hanging over our heads, and the vast majority of the human race will perish\(^ {23}\) unless we raise the banner of revolutionary war. The banner of humanity’s revolutionary war is the banner of humanity’s salvation. The banner of China’s revolutionary war is the banner of China’s salvation. A war waged by the great majority of the human race, by the great majority of the Chinese people, is beyond doubt a sacred war, a just war, the most lofty and glorious enterprise to save humanity and save China from perishing, the bridge that will lead all history\(^ {24}\) into a new era, a lighthouse that will turn the entire earth into a new world.\(^ {25}\) Our study of the laws of revolutionary war springs from our desire to eliminate all wars.\(^ {26}\)

3. The Problem of Strategy Is to Study the Laws of a War Situation as a Whole

The\(^ {27}\) world or a country may constitute the war situation as a whole; an independent guerrilla zone, an independent soviet district, or a large independent

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11. Country or nation, \(\rightarrow\) Country or nation, especially a large country or nation,
12. To stagnate at \(\rightarrow\) To be suitable only for
13. Specific stage \(\rightarrow\) Specific stage in the development of a war
14. Very near future \(\rightarrow\) Not too distant future
15. Revolutionary and counterrevolutionary \(\rightarrow\) Just and unjust
16. Revolutionary \(\rightarrow\) Just. (In the passage that follows, this change in terminology is made systematically, but will not be further noted.)
17. Counterrevolutionary \(\rightarrow\) Unjust
18. Here the current official version inserts the sentence: “All counterrevolutionary wars are unjust, all revolutionary wars are just.”
19. The final war \(\rightarrow\) A part of the final war
20. Our war \(\rightarrow\) But the war we are facing
21. The biggest and most terrible \(\rightarrow\) Part of the biggest and most terrible war
22. Counterrevolutionary wars \(\rightarrow\) Unjust counterrevolutionary wars
23. Perish \(\rightarrow\) Be ravaged
24. All history \(\rightarrow\) The history of the entire world
25. Here the following sentence has been inserted in the Selected Works: “When human society advances to the point where classes and states are eliminated, there will be no more wars, counterrevolutionary or revolutionary, unjust or just; that will be the era of everlasting peace for the human race.”
26. Here the Selected Works version adds the following sentence: “Herein lies the distinction between us Communists and all the exploiting classes.”
27. In the Selected Works version, this sentence is preceded by the following: “Wherever there is war, there is a war situation as a whole.”
battle front may also constitute the war situation as a whole. Any situation that by its nature requires considering all its various aspects and stages constitutes a war situation as a whole.

The task of the study of strategy is to study the laws that pertain to directing a war situation as a whole. It is the task of the study of campaigns and the study of tactics to study the laws that pertain to the component parts of a war.

Why is it necessary for the commander of a campaign or tactical operation to understand to some degree the laws of strategy? Because understanding a thing as a whole makes it possible to apply its parts better, because the parts are subordinate to the whole. The view that says that strategic victory is determined by tactical victories we have refuted, because this view overlooks the fact that victory or defeat in a war is first and foremost a question of whether or not the situation as a whole and its various stages are properly dealt with. If there are serious defects or mistakes in handling the situation as a whole and its various stages, the war will surely be lost. “One careless move loses the whole game” refers to a move that affects the situation as a whole, one that has decisive significance for the situation as a whole, and not to those moves that are partial in nature and have no decisive significance for the situation as a whole. This is true in chess, and also in war.

But the situation as a whole cannot be detached from or made independent of its parts, for the whole is composed of all its parts. Some particular parts may be destroyed or lost without seriously affecting the situation as a whole because these parts do not have decisive significance for the situation as a whole. In war, some particular tactic or campaign may be defeated or unsuccessful without leading to a deterioration of the war situation as a whole, precisely because these defeats are not of decisive significance. But if most of the campaigns that compose the war situation as a whole are lost, or if one or two campaigns of decisive significance are lost, the situation as a whole will immediately change. Here, “most of the campaigns” or “one or two campaigns” are decisive. In the history of warfare, there have been cases in which a succession of victories has been completely wiped out by a single defeat, and there have been times when a single victory following a number of defeats has opened up a whole new situation. Here, the “succession of victories” and the “number of defeats” were partial in nature and not decisive for the whole, while the “single defeat” and “single victory” were the decisive things. These all show the importance of taking the whole situation into account. For the person in overall command, the most important thing is to concentrate his attention on the handling of the war situation as a whole. The main thing is that, according to the circumstances, he should concern himself with the questions of the grouping of the troop units and formations, the relationship between two separate campaigns, the relations among the various stages of the war, and the relationship between our actions as a whole and the enemy’s actions as a whole. All these are the most demanding areas, the most demanding occasions. If he ignores them and spends his time on secondary problems, it will be hard to avoid losses.

This relationship between the situation as a whole and its parts holds not only for the relationship between strategy and campaigns but also for the relationship between strategy and tactics. The relationship between the actions of a division and the actions of its regiments and battalions, and the relationship between the actions of a company and those of its platoons and squads, are good examples. Commanders at all levels should focus their attention on those problems or actions that have the most important and most decisive significance for the whole of their command, rather than focusing their attention primarily on other problems or actions.

What is important or decisive cannot be determined by general or abstract circumstances, but must be determined by the concrete situation. During battle, the direction and objective of an assault must be determined according to the disposition of the enemy, the terrain, and one’s own troop strength at that time. When supplies are plentiful, see to it that the troops do not overeat, and, when supplies are short, see to it that they do not go hungry. In the White areas, a leak of a single piece of information could lead to defeat in battle, but in the Red areas the problem of information leaks is usually not very important. It is necessary for the higher commanders to participate personally in some battles, but not in others. For a military school, the most important question is the selection of the director and instructors and the adoption of a training program. For a meeting of the popular masses, the main thing is mobilization to attend the meeting and raising the proper slogans. And so on and so forth. The main principle is to pay attention to those important links that affect the situation as a whole.

The only way to study the laws governing a war situation as a whole is to do some hard thinking, because the whole of something is not visible to the eye and can be apprehended only by thinking about it carefully. Without careful thought it cannot be understood. But the situation as a whole is composed of its parts, so those who have experience with the parts, who have experience with campaigns and tactics, if they are willing to think it out carefully, will be able to understand those things of a higher order. Strategic questions include the following: Considering the relationship between the enemy and ourselves; considering the relationship among various campaigns and among the various stages of battle; considering those parts that affect (are decisive for) the situation as a whole; considering the special characteristics of the overall situation; considering the relations between the front and the rear; considering the question of the differences and connections between losses and replacements, between fighting and resting, between concentration and dispersion, between offense and defense, between advancing and retreating, between concealment and exposure, between the main attack and supplementary attacks, between assault and containment,
between centralized command and decentralized command, between protracted war and quick wars, between positional warfare and mobile warfare, between one's own forces and friendly forces, between one military arm and another, between higher and lower levels, between cadres and the rank and file, between old and new soldiers, between high-ranking cadres and low-ranking cadres, between old cadres and new cadres, between soviet areas and White areas, between old and new soviet areas, between central and border areas, between hot weather and cold, between victory and defeat, between large and small troop formations, between regular and guerrilla forces, between eliminating the enemy and winning over the masses, between expanding and consolidating the Red Army, between military work and political work, between military and political tasks, between past and present tasks, between present and future tasks, between the tasks under those circumstances and the tasks under these circumstances, between a fixed front and a mobile front, between civil war and national war, between this historical stage and that historical stage, and so on, and so forth. None of these problems is visible, and yet, if we think about them carefully, we can understand, grasp, learn well, and satisfactorily direct all of them. In other words, we can raise all important and necessary problems concerning war and military actions to a higher level of principle and solve them. This is the task of studying the problems of strategy, and the task of studying the laws of war as a whole.

4. The Important Thing Is to Be Good at Learning

Why was the Red Army organized? So that it could be used to defeat the enemy. Why study the laws of war? So that they can be used in war.

To learn is no easy matter, and to apply [what one has learned] is even harder. Although, in their classroom lectures and books, many people may discuss the study of war very logically, when it comes to actual fighting, some win battles and some lose. Both the history of warfare and our experience have proved this point.

Where then is the key?

In real life, we cannot ask for the ever-victorious general, for there has never been one since ancient times. We ask for generals who are brave and intelligent, who in the course of a war will normally win—generals who combine wisdom with courage. If we want to achieve this, there is a method that must be learned. This is a method for studying and for application. This method is used when studying and when applying what one has learned.

What method? The method of familiarizing ourselves with all aspects both of the enemy's circumstances and of our own, discovering the laws governing the actions of both sides and applying these laws in our own actions.

The manuals of military regulations issued in many countries point both to a "flexible application of principles according to the circumstances" and to the measures to be taken in case of defeat. They point to the former so that a commander will not commit subjective mistakes through too rigid an application of principles and to the latter to tell us how to deal with the situation when subjective mistakes have been committed or when unexpected or unavoidable changes have occurred in the objective circumstances.

Why are subjective mistakes made? Because the disposition and direction of forces in a war or battle does not fit the circumstances of that time and place, because the subjective direction is not in harmony with, does not correspond to, or does not match, the objective real circumstances, or what is called the contradiction between the subjective and the objective has not been resolved. It is hard for people to avoid such situations in whatever they are doing, but some are more able to do so than others. As in other things that require someone who is more able to do them, military affairs require someone who is able to win more victories or, conversely, someone who will have fewer defeats. The key here is that the subjective and the objective be in close harmony.

Take an example in tactics. If the point chosen for attack is on one of the enemy's flanks and is located precisely where his weak spot is, and consequently the assault succeeds, this is what is meant by the subjective being in harmony with the objective. The commander's reconnaissance, his judgment, and decision were in harmony with the actual circumstances of the enemy and his disposition. If the point chosen for attack had been on another flank or in the center, with the result that it ran into an enemy snag and the assault was stopped, this would be called a failure to harmonize [the subjective and the objective]. If the assault is properly timed and if the reserves are brought up neither too late nor too early, and if all the other dispositions and actions in the battle are such as to favor us and not the enemy, then the subjective direction throughout the battle is in complete harmony with the objective situation. In a war or battle, such complete harmony is extremely rare because both sides in a war or battle are composed of living human beings who are in groups and armed, each of which is keeping its secrets from the other, which makes it very different from handling inanimate objects or everyday affairs. But provided only that it is generally suitable to the circumstances, that is, if those parts that have decisive significance match, then there is a basis for victory.

The source of a commander's correct dispositions is correct decisions, the

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30. Soviet → Red
31. Satisfactorily direct → Master
32. This is the task → This is the objective of the task
33. Never → Seldom
34. Be in harmony → Correspond. (This change in wording is repeated throughout the ensuing paragraph, and is not further noted.)
35. It → The direction
36. Match → Are suitable to the circumstances
source of correct decisions is correct judgments, and the source of correct judgments is full and necessary reconnaissance and a careful and systematic study of the reconnaissance data. Here the various aspects of the enemy’s situation appear, and the commander uses all possible and necessary reconnaissance techniques, sifts and sorts out the reconnaissance data, discarding what is false from what is true, carefully considering all angles and possibilities. Then, adding in the situation on his own side, he compares them, looking for their interrelationships, and thereupon forms a judgment, makes up his mind, and formulates a plan. This is the complete process of knowing that a military person goes through before he formulates each strategic plan, campaign plan, or battle plan. A lack and careless military person, instead of doing it this way, bases his military plans on his own wishful thinking. Such plans are pure fantasy and do not correspond to reality. The reason a rash and reckless military person, relying solely on enthusiasm, cannot avoid being tricked by the enemy or taken in by some superficial or partial aspect of the enemy’s situation, or is swayed by irresponsible unrealistic suggestions of his own subordinates and so runs into a brick wall, is that he does not know or does not want to know that every military plan must be based on the necessary reconnaissance and thorough consideration of the enemy's situation, his own situation, and their mutual relationships.

The process of understanding a situation goes not only before the formulation of a military plan but also after a military plan has been formulated. Carrying out a plan, from its beginning to the end of the operation, also constitutes a process, the new process of application. This time, a brand new problem arises that needs to be investigated, namely whether or not the things observed during the first process correspond to the real situation. If the plan does not correspond to reality, or does not fully correspond, then it is necessary, in accordance with the new knowledge, to form new judgments, make new decisions, and change the original plan so that it fits the new situation. Plans are changed partially in nearly every battle, and sometimes they are changed totally. A rash and reckless person does not understand or is not willing to understand the need for changes, but acts blindly with the result that he inevitably runs into a brick wall.

The above applies to a strategic action, a campaign, or a battle. Provided he is open-minded and willing to learn, an experienced military man will be familiar with the temper of his own troops (the leaders, fighters, arms, supplies, etc., and their sum total), and will also be familiar with the temper of the enemy's forces (likewise, the leaders, fighters, arms, supplies, etc., and their sum total), and will be familiar too with the rest of the war's environment (political, economic, geographic, weather, etc.). Such a military man will have a better grasp of directing a war or battle, and will be more likely to win victories. This is the result of the fact that, over a long period of war, he has come to know the situation on both the enemy's side and his own, has discovered the laws of action, and resolved the problems of contradictions between the subjective and the objective. This process of knowing is extremely important; without this long period of experience, it would be difficult to understand and grasp the laws of an entire war. Neither a person who is good at moving troops around only on paper nor a beginner can be a truly capable high-ranking commander; only one who has learned through actual fighting in war can do so.

All military laws and military theories that have become basic principles are a synthesis of past wars by our predecessors or our contemporaries. We should seriously study these lessons, paid for in blood, which have been passed down to us from past wars. This is one thing, but there is another, which is that we should put these conclusions to the test of our own experience, absorbing those that are useful and rejecting those that are useless, and creating those things that are specific to oneself. This last point is very important because unless this is done, we will not be able to direct a war.

Reading is learning, but applying is also learning and is the most important kind of learning. Our main method is learning about war from war. A person who has not had the opportunity to go to school may still learn about war; he may learn in war. A revolutionary war is an undertaking of the masses; it is often not a matter of first learning and then doing, but of doing and then learning, for doing is itself learning. There is a gap between the ordinary civilian and the soldier, but it is not a Great Wall, and it can be quickly closed. The way to close this gap is to take part in revolution, to take part in war. By saying that it is not easy to learn something and to apply it, we mean that it is not easy to learn fully and apply skillfully. By saying that civilians can quickly become soldiers, we mean that it is not difficult to cross the threshold. To put these two statements together, we may borrow an old Chinese saying: "Nothing in the world is difficult, for one who puts his mind to it." To cross the threshold is not difficult, and mastery, too, is possible provided one sets one's mind to it and is good at learning.

The laws of war, like the laws governing all other things, are reflections in our minds of objective realities; everything apart from our minds is objective reality. Consequently, what has to be learned and known includes the enemy's side and our own side, both of which should be regarded as objects of study, for it is only our minds (thinking) that are the subjects performing the study. Some people are good at knowing themselves and poor at knowing others; while some people are good at knowing others but poor at knowing themselves; neither are able to solve the problem of studying and applying the laws of war. There is a saying in the book of Sun Wuzi, the great student of military affairs of ancient China, "Know

37. Process → Process of knowing the situation,
38. Environment → Relevant conditions
39. Problems of contradictions between
40. Creating → Adding
41. Most → More
yourself and know the enemy, and in a hundred battles you will win a hundred victories,"\(^\text{42}\) which refers both to the stage of learning and to that of application, and includes knowing the laws of the development of objective reality and deciding on one’s own actions in accordance with these laws in order to conquer the enemy facing us. We should not take this saying lightly.

War is the highest form of struggle between nations, states, classes, or political groups, and all laws related to it are used\(^\text{43}\) for the purpose of achieving victory. Unquestionably, victory or defeat in war is determined mainly by the military, political, economic, and natural conditions of the two sides. But it is not determined by these alone. It is also determined by the subjective capacities for exercising command. In striving to win victory in a war, a military man cannot go beyond the possibilities offered by material conditions, but he can and must strive for victory in war to the limit of these possibilities. The stage of action for a military man is built upon the possibilities of objective material conditions, but on that stage he can direct the performance of many living dramas, full of sound and color, power and grandeur. Given the objective material foundations, that is, the military, political, economic, and natural conditions, Red Army commanders must display their might and marshal all their forces to overthrow the national and class enemies and to transform this evil world. It is here that we can and must exercise our subjective abilities in directing war. We do not permit any of our Red Army commanders to become reckless irresponsible adventurers; we must encourage every Red Army commander to become a brave and wise hero who has not only the courage to conquer all but also the ability to master the changing developments of the entire war. Swimming in the great sea of war, commanders must see to it not only that they do not drown but that step by step they reach the opposite shore. The laws for directing war are the art of swimming in a war.

The above constitutes our methodology.

**Chapter 2**

**THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY AND CHINA’S REVOLUTIONARY WAR**

China’s revolutionary war, which began in 1925,\(^\text{44}\) has already passed through two stages: the stage of the Northern Expedition and the stage of the soviet war.\(^\text{45}\) From now on it is the stage of the national revolutionary war against Japan. These three stages\(^\text{46}\) have already been, and could not but be, led, or led

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42. Win a hundred victories → Never be defeated
43. Are used → Are used by warring nations, states, classes, or political groups
44. 1925 → 1924
45. The stage of the Northern Expedition and the stage of the soviet war → The 1924–1927 stage and the 1927–1936 stage
46. Here the Selected Works version inserts the words “of revolutionary war.”
geoisie turned traitor and, at the same time, because opportunists within the revolutionary ranks voluntarily surrendered the leadership.

The Soviet war[^65]^ of 1927 to the present has been waged under new conditions. The enemy in this war is not only imperialism, but also the rule of the alliance of the big bourgeoisie and the big landlords. The national bourgeoisie has become the tail of the big bourgeoisie. The Communist Party alone is leading the war.[^56]^ This absolute right to leadership is the most important condition for persevering in the war to its final conclusion. Without this absolute right to leadership by the Communist Party, it is inconceivable that the war could have been carried on with such perseverance.

The Chinese Communist Party has led China's revolutionary war courageously and resolutely and for fifteen long years has demonstrated to the people of the whole nation that it is the people's friend, fighting every day in the forefront of the battlefields in defense of the people's interests and for their freedom and liberation.

By its arduous struggles and at the cost of the sacrifice in blood of hundreds of thousands of its heroic Party members and tens of thousands of its heroic cadres, the Communist Party of China has played a great educative role among hundreds of millions throughout the nation. These great historic achievements of the Party, at the present critical juncture which threatens the destruction of the country and the extinction of the race, have provided the prerequisite condition for the salvation and survival of China—a political leadership that has gained the confidence of the vast majority of the people, that has been chosen by the people because it has been tested over a long period of time. Today, the people accept what the Communist Party says more readily than what any other political party says. Were it not for the arduous struggles of the Chinese Communist Party over the past fifteen years, it would be impossible to rescue the country from the new threat of destruction.

In addition to the errors of Chen Duxiuism and of Li Lisanism,[^58]^ the Chinese Communist Party has committed two other errors in the course of the revolutionary war. The first was the Left opportunism of 1932–1935,[^59]^ and it was this error that caused the serious war losses suffered by the soviets,[^60]^ which made it impossible to defeat the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression," and resulted in the loss of the Soviet areas[^61]^ and the weakening of the Red Army. This error was corrected at the meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee at Zunyi in 1935. The second was the Right opportunism of Zhang Guotao in 1935–1936, which developed to the point that it destroyed the discipline of the Party and of the Red Army and caused serious losses to part of the Red Army.[^62]^ But, thanks to the correct leadership of the Central Committee, and to the consciousness of Party members and commanders[^63]^ in the Red Army, this error was also finally corrected. Of course all these errors were extremely harmful to our Party, to our revolution and war, but[^64]^ these errors tempered and further strengthened our Party and our Red Army.

The Chinese Communist Party has led and continues to lead the stirring, magnificent, and victorious revolutionary war. This war not only is the banner of China's liberation, but has international revolutionary significance as well. The eyes of revolutionary people the world over are upon us. In the new stage, the stage of the anti-Japanese national revolutionary war, we shall lead the Chinese revolution to its completion and exert a profound influence on the revolution in the East and in the whole world. The revolutionary war has proved that we need a correct Marxist military line as well as a correct Marxist political line. Fifteen years of revolution and war have already tempered such political and military lines. We are confident that, from now on, in the new stage of the war, these lines will be further developed, filled out, and enriched in accordance with the new circumstances, and that the objective of defeating the national enemy will be achieved. History tells us that political[^65]^ and military lines do not emerge and develop naturally and peacefully, but emerge and develop through struggle, in the struggles with Left opportunism, on the one hand, and with Right opportunism, on the other. Without struggling against and thoroughly overcoming these harmful tendencies that threaten the revolutionary war,[^66]^ it would be impossible to establish a correct line and win complete victory in a revolutionary war. It is for this reason that I frequently refer to erroneous views in this pamphlet.

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[^55]: Soviet war → Agrarian revolutionary war
[^56]: Here the Selected Works version inserts the following sentence: "The Communist Party has already come to incarnate the absolute right to leadership over the revolutionary war."
[^57]: Which threatens the destruction of the country and the extinction of the race → When the national enemy has invaded
[^58]: Chen Duxiuism and of Li Lisanism → Of the Right opportunism of Chen Duxiu and the "Left" opportunism of Li Lisan. On Mao's attitude toward Chen Duxiu and Li Lisan, see, in Volume III, his letter to Li (pp. 192–93), and the passage in the Introduction, pp. xlviii–lx, regarding the carrying out of the Li Lisan Line.
[^59]: The first was the left opportunism of 1932–1935 → The first error was the "Left" opportunism of 1931–1934
[^60]: War losses suffered by the soviets → Losses suffered in the land revolution war
[^61]: Soviet areas → Base areas. (As in all other pre-1937 texts included in the Selected Works, virtually all references to "soviet" have been removed from this document. From this point on, such changes will no longer be indicated in the notes.)
[^62]: Red Army → Red Army's main forces
[^63]: Party members and commanders → Party members, commanders, and fighters
[^64]: But → But in the end we overcame them and
[^65]: Political → Correct political
[^66]: revolutionary war → revolution and revolutionary war
Chapter 3
THE CHARACTERISTICS
OF CHINA’S REVOLUTIONARY WAR

1. The Importance of This Question

People who do not admit, do not know, or do not want to know that China’s revolutionary war has its own special characteristics have equated the war waged by the Red Army against the Guomindang forces with war in general or with the civil war in the Soviet Union. Consequently, they have adopted similar military command policies and even all the same military principles. Our ten years of war have already proved that this is wrong.

Our enemies have made similar mistakes. They did not recognize that fighting against the Red Army requires a different strategy and different tactics. Relying on their superiority in a number of areas, they underestimated us and stuck to their old methods of warfare. This was the case in the Fourth “Encirclement and Suppression,” and especially in the Third “Encirclement and Suppression,” with the result that they suffered a series of defeats. The first person in the Guomindang military to raise this problem was Liu Weiyuan, and then later Tai Yue, and it was finally accepted by Chiang Kaishek. This was the process that gave birth to the Officers’ Training Corps at Lushan and the new military principles of the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.” But precisely when the enemy changed his military principles to suit the conditions of fighting against the Red Army, there appeared in our ranks those who would “return to the old ways,” return to general circumstances, or return to circumstances in other places, in other countries, those who refused to understand that there were any

67. Here the following passage is inserted in the Selected Works version of this text:

The experience of the civil war in the Soviet Union directed by Lenin and Stalin has worldwide significance. All Communist Parties, including the Chinese Communist Party, regard this experience and its theoretical summing up by Lenin and Stalin as a guide. But this does not mean that we should mechanically apply this experience to our own conditions. In many of its aspects China’s revolutionary war has characteristics of its own that differ from those of the civil war in the Soviet Union. It is, of course, wrong to take no account of these characteristics or to deny their existence.

68. This was the case... in the Third “Encirclement and Suppression” — This was the case in the 1933 Fourth “Encirclement and Suppression” and earlier

69. To raise this problem was Liu Weiyuan — To suggest a new view of this problem was the reactionary Guomindang General Liu Weiyuan.

70. The Officers’ Training Corps at Lushan and the new military principles of → Chiang Kaishek’s Officer’s Training Corps at Lushan and the new reactionary military principles applied in

special circumstances whatsoever, who rejected the experience gained from the Red Army’s history of bloody wars, who belittled the Guomindang army, and turned a blind eye to the new principles employed by the enemy. As a result, history punished them.

From this we can see that those who do not understand the characteristics of China’s revolutionary war cannot direct China’s revolutionary war. and cannot lead China’s revolutionary war onto the path to victory.

2. What Are the Characteristics of China’s Revolutionary War?

What then, are the characteristics of China’s revolutionary war?

I think there are four principal characteristics.

The first is that China is a vast, semicolonial country, which is unevenly developed politically and economically, and which has gone through the great 1925–1927 revolution.

This characteristic shows that it is possible for China’s revolutionary war to develop and attain victory. We pointed this out (at the First Party Congress of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area) when, in the winter of 1927 and spring of 1928, soon after guerrilla warfare was started in China, some comrades on the Jinggangshan raised the question “How long can we keep the Red Flag flying?” Since this was a most fundamental question, we could not have advanced a step if we had not answered the question of whether or not the Chinese Red Army would be able to survive and develop. In 1928, the Sixth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party provided a more principled answer to this question that gave the soviet movement nationwide a correct theoretical foundation and a guide to action.

71. Who belittled the Guomindang army → Who belittled the strength of imperialism and the Guomindang, and of the Guomindang army.

72. Here the Selected Works text inserts the following long passage:

As a result, all the revolutionary bases except the Shaanxi-Gansu Border Area were lost, the Red Army was reduced from 300,000 to a few tens of thousands, the membership of the Chinese Communist Party fell from 300,000 to a few tens of thousands, and the Party organizations in the Guomindang areas were almost all destroyed. In short, we paid a severe penalty, of historic proportions. They called themselves Marxist-Leninists, but actually they had not learned one iota of Marxism-Leninism. Lenin said that the most essential thing in Marxism, the living soul of Marxism, is the concrete analysis of concrete conditions. That was precisely the point that these comrades of ours forgot.

73. Chinese Red Army → China’s revolutionary base areas and the Chinese Red Army.

74. Provided a more principled answer → Again gave an answer to the question.

75. Soviet movement → Chinese revolutionary movement.
Let us now take this problem apart and look at it.

China's political and economic development is uneven—a weak capitalism coexists with a substantial semifeudal economy; a few nearly modern industrial and commercial cities coexist with a vast countryside stuck in the middle ages; several million industrial workers coexist with several hundred million peasants laboring under the old system; big warlords controlling the central government coexist with small warlords controlling the provinces; regular army forces coexist with miscellaneous troops; a few railways, steamship lines, and motor roads exist side by side with ordinary wheelbarrow paths and footpaths, many of which are difficult even on foot.

China is a semicolonial country—disunity among the imperialists makes for disunity among China's ruling groups. There is a difference between a semicolonial country controlled by several countries and a colony controlled by one country.

China is a large country—"When it is dark in the east, it is light in the west, and when the south is black there is the north." Do not worry about lack of room to maneuver.

China has gone through a great revolution—which has prepared the seeds of the Red Army, has prepared the leadership of the Red Army, namely, the Chinese Communist Party, and has prepared the masses with experience in participating in a revolution.

It is for this reason that we say that the first special characteristic of China's revolutionary war is that China is a large and diverse semicolonial country which is unevenly developed politically and economically, and which has gone through a revolution. This characteristic fundamentally determines both our political strategy and tactics and our military strategy and tactics.

The second special characteristic is that the enemy is big and powerful.

What is the situation with the Guomindang, the enemy of the Red Army? It is a party that has seized power and has more or less stabilized its political power. It has received the support of the world's main counterrevolutionary states. It has already reformed its armed forces, reformed them so that they are now different from any army in the history of China and on the whole similar to national armies in the world today. It is much better supplied with weapons and materiel than the Red Army and is much larger than any army in Chinese history, larger even than the standing army of any other country in the world. If you compare it with the Red Army, they are worlds apart. It controls the political, economic, communications, and cultural key positions and lifelines throughout the whole of China. Its political power is nationwide.

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76. Countryside stuck in the middle ages → Stagnant countryside
77. Peasants → Peasants and handicraftsmen
78. Regular army forces coexist with miscellaneous troops → Two kinds of reactionary armies, the so-called Central Army under Chiang Kai-shek and the so-called miscellaneous troops under the provincial warlords, coexist side by side

This is the second special characteristic of China's revolutionary war: that the Chinese Red army is faced with such a big and powerful enemy. This is what makes the military operations of the Red Army necessarily different from wars in general, from the civil war of the Soviet Union and from the Northern Expedition.

The third special characteristic is that the Red Army is small and weak.

The Chinese Red Army, which came into being following the defeat of the first great revolution, started out as guerrilla units, in times that were not only reactionary in China but were relatively stable politically and economically for the reactionary countries of the world.

The political power of the soviets is scattered and isolated in mountainous or remote regions that receive no outside help whatsoever. The economic and cultural conditions of the soviets are backward compared with those of the Guomindang areas. These areas were extremely small in the beginning and even subsequently have not been very large. Moreover, the soviet areas are fluid and unstable; the Red Army has no really consolidated bases.

The Red Army is numerically small, its weapons are poor, and it has great difficulty obtaining supplies such as food, bedding, and clothing.

This characteristic is in marked contrast to the previous characteristic. The strategy and tactics of the Red Army have arisen on the basis of this marked contrast.

The fourth special characteristic is Communist Party leadership and the land revolution.

This characteristic is the inevitable consequence of the first characteristic. It is because of this characteristic, on the one hand, that, although China's revolutionary war is taking place in an era that is reactionary in China and throughout the world, victory by the Red Army is possible because it is led by the Communist Party and has the support of the peasantry. Thanks to the support of the peasants, even though the soviet areas are small, they are very powerful politically and stand up firmly against the enormous political power of the Guomindang; militarily, it is very difficult for the Guomindang to attack. As a result, even though the Red Army is small, it has great fighting strength because the personnel of the Red Army came out of the land revolution and are fighting for their own interests, and because its commanders and fighters are politically united.

On the other hand, there is in this respect a marked contrast to the Guomindang. The Guomindang opposes the land revolution and therefore is not supported by the peasantry. Although its army is large, it cannot make the masses of its soldiers, and many of the lower-ranking cadres, who originally
came from the small producers, consciously risk their lives for the Guomindang. Its officers and men are politically divided, and this reduces its fighting capacity.

3. Our Strategy and Tactics as They Follow from This

A large semicolonial country which is unevenly developed politically and economically, and which has gone through a great revolution; a powerful enemy; a small and weak Red Army; and the agrarian revolution—these are the four main characteristics of China’s revolutionary war. It is first of all these special characteristics that determine the guiding line of China’s revolutionary war and also many of its strategic and tactical principles. It follows from the first and fourth characteristics that it is possible for the Chinese Red Army to grow and defeat its enemy. It follows from the second and third characteristics that it is not possible for the Chinese Red Army to grow very rapidly or defeat its enemy quickly. Thus, there is the possibility of a strategy of protracted war, and also the possibility of defeat if it is mishandled.

These are the two aspects of China’s revolutionary war, and these two aspects both exist simultaneously. In other words, when there are favorable conditions, there are also unfavorable conditions. This is the fundamental law of China’s revolutionary war, from which a number of other laws derive. The history of ten years of war has proved the correctness of this law. Whoever has eyes but fails to see these characteristics and fails to see this fundamental law of the two aspects emerging from these characteristics cannot direct China’s revolutionary war, cannot lead the Red Army to victory.

It is evident [that we must]: correctly determine the strategic orientation, oppose adventurism when on the offensive, oppose conservatism when on the defensive, and oppose flightism when moving from one place to another; oppose guerrilla-ism in the Red Army, while recognizing the guerrilla character of the Red Army; oppose protracted campaigns and the strategy of a short war, while upholding the strategy of a protracted war and short campaigns; oppose fixed battle lines and positional warfare, and favor fluid battle lines and mobile warfare; oppose fighting just to rout the enemy, and uphold fighting to annihilate the enemy; oppose the strategy of striking with two “fists”; oppose the system of having large rear areas, and uphold the system of having small rear areas; oppose an absolutely centralized command, and favor a relatively centralized command; oppose a purely military viewpoint and the ideology of roving rebels, and recognize that the Red Army is a propagandist and organizer for the soviet; oppose banditism and uphold strict political discipline; oppose warlordism, and recognize both limited democratic life and authoritative military discipline; oppose an incorrect and sectarian cadre policy, and uphold a correct cadre policy; oppose a

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82. There is the possibility of a strategy of protracted war → The war will be protracted
83. Striking with two fists → Striking with two fists, and upholding striking with one fist

policy of isolation and affirm a policy of winning over all possible allies; and finally, oppose letting the Red Army stagnate in an old stage, and strive to develop it to a new stage. All these questions of principle derive from the characteristics of China’s revolutionary war and from its fundamental law and require correct solutions, or else they derive from the characteristics of China’s revolutionary war and from its fundamental law and deserve special attention. The strategic problems we want to discuss now will better elucidate these questions in the light of the historical experience gained in China’s ten years of bloody revolutionary war.

Chapter 4

“ENCIRCLEMENT AND SUPPRESSION” AND COUNTER-CAMPAIGNS AGAINST “ENCIRCLEMENT AND SUPPRESSION”⁵⁴—THE MAIN FORM OF CHINA’S REVOLUTIONARY WAR

In the past ten years, since the day the guerrilla war began, every independent guerrilla unit or Red Army and every soviet base area has regularly been subjected by the enemy to “encirclement and suppression.” The enemy regards the Red Army as a monster and seeks to capture it wherever it appears. The enemy is forever pursuing the Red Army and forever trying to encircle the Red Army. For the past ten years this pattern has not changed, and unless the civil war gives place to a national war, this pattern will not change, until the day the enemy becomes the weaker and smaller contestant and the Red Army becomes the stronger and larger.

The actions of the Red Army take the form of countercampaigns against “encirclement and suppression.” By victory, we mean primarily victory against “encirclement and suppression,” that is, strategic victory and campaign victories. The fight against each “encirclement and suppression” is a campaign, which usually comprises from several battles to several dozen battles, big and small. Even though we may have already won a number of battles, not until an “encirclement and suppression” has been fundamentally smashed can we say that a strategic or total campaign victory has yet been won. The history of the Red Army’s decade of war is a history of countering “encirclement and suppression.”

In the enemy’s “encirclement and suppression” campaigns and the Red Army’s countercampaigns against them, both sides employ the two forms of fighting, offense and defense. This is no different from any other war, ancient or

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⁵⁴. In this title, and throughout the following chapter, the Selected Works version puts “Encirclement and Suppression” in quotation marks, while the original Chinese text does not. We have inserted quotation marks because that is the style in this edition (see Volume IV, passim).
modern, in China or abroad. The special characteristic of China's civil war, however, is the repetition of these two forms over a long period of time. In each “encirclement and suppression,” the enemy employs the offensive against the Red Army's defensive, and the Red Army employs the defensive against the enemy's offensive. This is the first stage of a countercampaign against encirclement and suppression. Then the enemy employs the defensive against the Red Army's offensive, which is the second stage of the countercampaign. Every “encirclement and suppression” includes these two stages, which have, moreover, been repeated over a long period of time.

In saying that they have been repeated over a long period of time, we mean that the pattern of warfare and fighting has been repeated. This is a fact that anyone can see at a glance. “Encirclement and suppression” and counter-encirclement and suppression has been the repeated form of the war. In each campaign the form of fighting has been repeated. In the first stage the enemy takes the offensive against our defense, and we are on the defensive against the enemy's offense, while in the second stage the enemy goes on the defensive against our offensive and we take the offensive against the enemy's defensive.

The content of a war or battle, however, is not mere repetition, but is different every time. This too is a fact, as anyone can see a glance.

It has become a rule here that each “encirclement and suppression” and counter-encirclement and suppression have been larger in scale than the one before, the situation more complicated, and the fighting more intense.

But it has not been without ups and downs. Since the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” because the Red Army was considerably weakened and the base area was relocated in the Northwest,85 and no longer holds a vital position threatening the main Chinese enemy, the scale of “encirclement and suppression” has become smaller, the situation simpler, and the fighting less intense.

What would constitute defeat for the Red Army? Strategically speaking, only the complete failure of a counter-encirclement and suppression campaign could be called a defeat, but even that could only be called a partial and temporary defeat. For only the total destruction of the Red Army would be a complete defeat in the civil war, but this has never happened to us. The loss of the soviet district and relocation of the Red Army was a temporary and partial defeat,86 which we call a continuation of the offensive while we call the enemy’s pursuit a continuation of the offensive. In other words, in the struggle between “encirclement and suppression” and counter-encirclement and suppression, we did not turn our defensive into an offensive; rather, our defensive was broken by the enemy’s offensive, and so our defensive

85. And the base area was relocated in the Northwest → All the base areas in the South were lost, and the Red Army moved to the Northwest
86. Here the Selected Works version inserts the following: “not a final and complete one, even though this partial defeat included 90 percent of the Party membership, of the armed forces, and of the base areas,”
turned into a retreat and the enemy’s offensive turned into a pursuit. But when the Red Army reached a new area,87 the repetition of “encirclement and suppression” began anew. This is why we say that the Red Army’s strategic retreat (the Long March) was a continuation of its strategic defensive, and the enemy’s strategic pursuit was a continuation of his strategic offensive.

In the Chinese civil war, as in all wars, past and present, in China or abroad, there are only two basic forms of fighting: attack and defense. The special characteristic of China's civil war is the long-term repetition of the “encirclement and suppression” and counter-encirclement and suppression campaigns, and the long-term repetition of the two forms of attack and defense, which also includes the great strategic shift.88

What would be called a defeat for the enemy would be much the same. It is a strategic defeat for the enemy when his “encirclement and suppression” is broken and our defensive becomes an offensive, when the enemy turns to the defensive and has to reorganize before launching another “encirclement and suppression.” The enemy has not been in a position of having to make a strategic shift of more than ten thousand kilometers (the Long March), such as we have, because they rule the whole country and they are much stronger and larger than we are. But there have been partial situations, when a White base located within a soviet area was surrounded and attacked by the Red Army, and the enemy broke out and retreated to the White areas to regroup for a new offensive. If the civil war is prolonged and the Red Army’s victories become more extensive, there will be more of this sort of thing. But their results cannot be compared to those of the Red Army because they do not have the support of the people, and because their officers and men are not united. If they copied the long-distance shift of the Red Army, it would be hard for them to avoid being wiped out.

Comrade Li Lisan89 did not understand the protracted nature of the Chinese civil war and for that reason did not perceive the law that the development of this war would be a long period of repeated “encirclement and suppression” campaigns and their defeat (by that time there had already been three “encirclement and suppression” campaigns against the Jinggangshan and two against Fujian). Hoping to achieve a rapid victory in the revolution, he ordered the Red Army90 to attack Wuhan, and he ordered a nationwide insurrection,91 thus committing the error of Left opportunism.

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87. Here the Selected Works version adds: “as, for example, when we moved from Jiangxi to Shaanxi,”
88. Great strategic shift → Great strategic shift of more than ten thousand kilometers (the Long March)
89. Comrade Li Lisan → In 1930, during the period of the Li Lisan line, Comrade Li Lisan
90. The Red Army → The Red Army, while it was still in its infancy,
91. Insurrection → Armed uprising. (Throughout the Selected Works, the term baoding, literally “violent action,” here translated “insurrection,” used during the Jiangxi period, has been replaced by qi, literally “righteous uprising,” which confers greater dignity on the events in question.)
The Left opportunists of 1932 also did not believe in the law of repeated "encirclement and suppression" campaigns. In the Hubei-Henan-Anhui area there was a theory of the "auxiliary force," which held that the Guomindang army had become merely an auxiliary force after the defeat of its Third "Encirclement and Suppression," and that the imperialists themselves would have to take the field as the main force in further attacks on the Red Army. The strategic orientation following from this estimate was that the Red Army should attack Wuhan. In principle, this was identical with the view of those in the Central Soviet who were calling for a Red Army attack on Nanchang, who opposed the work of linking up the Soviet areas, who opposed the "Northeast line," and the tactic of luring the enemy in deep, who thought that victory in one province should be based on seizing its capital and key cities, and who thought that the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression" would be the decisive battle between the Soviet road and the Guomindang road, and so on. This Left opportunism sowed the seeds of the wrong line adopted in the struggles against the Fourth "Encirclement and Suppression" in the Hubei-Henan-Anhui area and in those against the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression" in the Central Soviet Area; and inevitably it led to a helpless position in the face of the enemy's severe "encirclement and suppression" and caused enormous losses to the Chinese Soviet movement.

The view, directly linked to the leftist denying that there would be repeated "encirclement and suppression" campaigns, according to which the Red Army should never adopt defensive measures, was also entirely incorrect.

The proposition that a revolution or revolutionary war is an offensive is correct. A revolution or a revolutionary war, when it first emerges, when it grows from small to large, from its inception to the time when it has developed, from the absence of political power to the seizure of political power, from the absence of a Red Army to the creation of a Red Army, from the absence of Soviet areas to the establishment of Soviet areas, cannot be conservative even for a single day. Tendencies toward conservatism must be opposed.

It is more correct to say that a revolution or revolutionary war is an offensive, but that it also involves defense and retreat. To defend in order to attack, to retreat in order to advance, to move against the flanks in order to move against the front, to take a roundabout route in order to take the direct route, are phenomena that inevitably appear in the process of the development of all things. How can military movements be any different?

But the former proposition, while correct in political affairs, is not correct if transposed to military affairs. It is correct when applied to one kind of political

situation (when the revolution is advancing) and is not correct if used in another situation (when the revolution is retreating, in total retreat as in Russia in 1906 or China in 1927, or in partial retreat as in Russia in 1918 at the time of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk). Only the latter proposition is entirely correct and true. The Left opportunism of 1932, which mechanically opposed the use of defensive measures, was simply a kind of extremely infantile thinking.

When will the pattern of repeated encirclement and suppression campaigns come to an end? In my opinion, if the civil war is prolonged, that will happen when there is a fundamental change in the balance of forces between the enemy and ourselves. If some day the Soviet Red Army becomes stronger than the enemy, then this repetition will cease. When that happens, we shall be encircling and suppressing the enemy, and the enemy will then be attempting to counter our encirclement and suppression. But political and military conditions will not allow him to attain the same position as that of the Red Army in its countercampaigns. It can be said with certainty that by then the pattern of repeated "encirclement and suppression" campaigns will have largely, if not completely, come to an end.

Chapter 5

THE STRATEGIC DEFENSIVE

Under this topic, I propose to explain the following problems: (1) active defense and passive defense; (2) preparations for countering "encirclement and suppression"; (3) strategic retreat; (4) strategic counteroffensive; (5) the problem of starting a counteroffensive; (6) the problem of concentrating troops; (7) mobile warfare; (8) wars of quick decision; and (9) wars of annihilation.

1. Active defense and passive defense

Why do we begin by discussing defense? After the defeat of China's first national united front, the revolution became an intense class war. The enemy had great political power, and we were only a small force. Consequently, from the very beginning we had to fight against the enemy's "encirclement and suppression." Our offensives have been closely tied to breaking the "encirclement and suppression," and our fate has depended entirely on whether or not we were able to break the "encirclement and suppression." The process of breaking an "encirclement and suppression" is generally circuitous, and not as direct as one would wish. The primary and very serious problem has been how to conserve our strength and wait for an opportunity to defeat the enemy. Therefore, the problem of strategic defense has been the most complicated and most serious problem facing the Red Army in its operations.

92. The decisive battle between the Soviet road and the Guomindang road → The decisive battle between the revolutionary road and the colonialist road
93. Chinese Soviet movement → Chinese revolution
94. It is more correct to say → The only entirely correct proposition is
95. But the former proposition → The first of the two propositions stated above
96. 1932 → 1931 to 1934
97. The enemy had great political power → The enemy ruled the whole country
In our ten years,98 the problem of strategic defense has frequently given rise to two deviations. One was to underestimate the enemy, and the other was to be terrified of the enemy.

As a result of underestimating the enemy, we have seen the loss of a number of guerrilla units, and on several occasions the Red Army was unable to break the enemy’s “encirclement and suppression.”

When the guerrilla units first came into existence, the leaders failed99 to assess correctly the enemy’s situation and our own situation. Because they had been successful in organizing an insurrection in one place, or in calling for a mutiny among the White troops when the environment was momentarily favorable, perhaps because they failed to see the seriousness of the situation, they often underestimated the enemy. On the other hand, they did not understand their own weaknesses (lack of experience, deficiency in strength, and so on).100 Consequently, they misdirected their actions and mentally discarded the weapon of defense. Many guerrilla units were defeated for this reason.

Examples in which the Red Army, for this reason, failed to break the enemy’s “encirclement and suppression” were the underestimation of the enemy, which led to defeat in 1928 in the Haifeng-Lufeng area, and the loss of freedom of action by the Red Army in Hubei-Henan-Anhui against the 1932 Fourth “Encirclement and Suppression” because of the theory that the Guomindang was an auxiliary force.

There are many instances of setbacks resulting from being terrified of the enemy.

Those who took the opposite position from that discussed above, overestimating the enemy and underestimating themselves, and thus adopted an unwarranted policy of retreat, likewise mentally discarded the weapon of defense. As a result, their guerrilla units were defeated, or a particular campaign of the Red Army was defeated, or a soviet area was lost.

The most obvious loss of a soviet area was that of the Central Soviet Area during the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.” The mistake here arose from a rightist viewpoint.101

But this kind of mistake was usually preceded by a leftist error of underestimating the enemy. The military adventurism of attacking the key cities in 1932 inevitably became the root cause of the later passive defense line adopted during the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.”

An extreme example of being terrified of the enemy was the retreatism of the “Zhang Guotao line.” The defeat of the Western Route Army102 west of the Yellow River marked the final bankruptcy of this line.

Active defense is also known as offensive defense, or defense by decisive battles. Passive defense is also known as purely defensive defense or pure defense. Passive defense is actually a sham defense; active defense is the only real defense, the only defense for the purpose of counter-attacking and taking the offensive. As far as I know, there is no military manual of any value, nor is there any reasonably intelligent military expert, ancient or modern, Chinese or foreign, that does not oppose passive defense, whether strategically or tactically. Only the greatest fool or madman would hold up passive defense as a magic weapon. And yet there are people in this world who would do such things. This is an error in the history of warfare, a manifestation of military conservatism, which we must radically oppose.

The military experts of the newer rapidly developing imperialist countries, as represented by Germany and Japan, play up the advantages of strategic offense and oppose strategic defense. This principle is radically unsuited to the war of the Chinese soviets and is also unsuited to China’s national war. They103 point out that one of the major weaknesses of the defensive is that it cannot inspire morale but, rather, shakes it. This applies to countries in which class contradictions are acute and the war benefits only the ruling strata and the holders of political power.104 But things are fundamentally different in our soviet war and national war. Under the slogan of defending the soviet areas and of defending China, we can rally the overwhelming majority of the masses of the people to fight with one heart and one mind because we are the oppressed and the victims of aggression. The civil war in the Soviet Union105 also defeated the enemy using a defensive mode. Not only did they prosecute the war under the slogan of defending the soviets when the imperialist countries organized the White parties to attack. Even when preparing for the October insurrection, the military mobilization was carried out under the slogan of defending the capital. Not only do all wars of strategic defense have a paralyzing effect on politically alien elements; the important thing is that they are able to mobilize the backward popular masses to join the war.

98. Our ten years → Our ten years of war
99. Failed → Often failed
100. Here the Selected Works text inserts the following sentence: “It was an objective fact that the enemy was strong and we were weak, and yet some people refused to think about it, talked only of attack but never of defense or retreat, thus mentally disarming themselves in the matter of defense.”
101. Here the Selected Works text adds the following passage:

The leaders feared the enemy as if he were a tiger, set up defenses everywhere, fought defensive actions at every step, and did not dare to advance to the enemy’s rear and attack him there, which would have been to our advantage, or boldly to lure the enemy troops in deep so as to herd them together and annihilate them. As a result, the whole base area was lost and the Red Army had to undertake the Long March of over 12,000 kilometers.

102. Western Route Army → Red Army’s Fourth Front Army
103. They → The German and Japanese imperialist military experts
104. Ruling strata and the holders of political power → Reactionary ruling strata and the reactionary holders of political power
105. The civil war in the Soviet Union → The Red Army of the Soviet Union during the civil war
When Marx said that once an insurrection has begun there must not be a moment’s pause in the attack, this meant that, having caught the enemy unprepared, the masses who have risen up in a sudden insurrection must not give the rulers a chance to defend or recover political power and must seize the moment to destroy the domestic ruling forces completely. This is entirely correct. But this does not mean that, when the two sides are locked in battle, and the enemy has the superiority, we should not adopt defensive measures when pressed hard by the enemy. Only a prize idiot would think in this way.

In the past, our war as a whole has been an offensive against the Guomindang, but militarily it has assumed the form of breaking the “encirclement and suppression.”

Militarily speaking, we have used offense and defense repeatedly. It makes no difference to us whether an offensive is said to follow a defense or an offensive is said to precede a defense because the key thing is to break the “encirclement and suppression.” The defense continues until an “encirclement and suppression” is broken, and as soon as the “encirclement and suppression” is broken, the offensive begins. These are but two stages of a single affair, and one “encirclement and suppression” follows another. Of these stages, the most complicated and most important is the defensive, which involves numerous problems of how to break the “encirclement and suppression.” The basic principle is to recognize active defense and oppose passive defense.

As regards the civil war, when the Red Army’s strength surpasses that of the enemy, then in general we will not need the strategic defensive. By that time, the policy orientation will basically be just the strategic offensive. This change will depend entirely on an overall change in the balance of forces. When the defensive reaches that point, the only remaining defensive moves will be of a partial character. If the overall policy is not the equivalent of a strategic offensive, these may even occupy a relatively important position, much as this thing called strategic defense does at present.

2. Preparations for Countering “Encirclement and Suppression”

Unless we have made ample and necessary preparations against a planned enemy “encirclement and suppression,” we shall certainly be forced into a passive position. When troops are moved into battle on the spur of the moment, victory cannot be assured. Therefore, when the enemy is preparing an “encirclement and suppression,” it is absolutely essential that we carry out preparations for our countercampaign. The idea of opposing making preparations is childish and ridiculous.

There is a difficult problem here on which controversy may easily arise, namely, when should we conclude our own offensive and turn to the stage of preparing to counter an “encirclement and suppression”? Because at this time we are victoriously on the offensive and the enemy is in a defensive position, the enemy’s encirclement and suppression preparations are carried out in secret, and it is difficult to know when he will begin an offensive. If our work of preparing to counter an “encirclement and suppression” begins too early, it is bound to diminish the advantage gained from our offensive and may sometimes have a bad effect on the Red Army and on the people of the soviets. The reason is that the main steps to be taken in the preparatory phase are the military preparations for withdrawal and political mobilization. Sometimes, if we start preparing too early, this will turn into waiting for the enemy, and after waiting a long time without the enemy’s appearing, we will have to renew our offensive. Sometimes, the enemy will start his offensive just as our new offensive is beginning, thus putting us in a difficult position. Consequently, choosing the right moment to begin preparations is an important problem. The right moment should be determined taking into consideration the situation on both sides, ours and the enemy’s, and the relationship between the two. Knowing the enemy’s situation requires collecting information on various aspects, such as the enemy’s political, military, and financial position, and on public opinion. When analyzing this information, it is necessary to make an adequate estimate of the enemy’s total strength. The degree of his past failures must not be exaggerated, but neither should we fail to take into account the contradictions within the enemy’s camp, his financial difficulties, the effect of past defeats, and so on. On our own side, we must not exaggerate the extent of past victories, but we must definitely not fail to account fully for the effect of past victories on the enemy.

As regards the question of timing the beginning of preparations, it is generally better to be too early rather than too late because the former involves smaller losses than the latter and has the advantage that being prepared avoids disaster and puts us in a fundamentally invincible position.

The main problems during the preparatory stage are preparing to withdraw the Red Army, political mobilization, expanding the Red Army, finances and supplies, and dealing with politically alien elements, and so on.

By preparing for the Red Army’s withdrawal, we mean not moving it in a

106. Domestic ruling forces completely. Domestic reactionary ruling forces completely. They must not rest content with the victories already won, or underestimate the enemy, relax their attacks on the enemy, or hesitate to press forward, and so let slip the opportunity to destroy the enemy, thereby leading to the revolution’s defeat.

107. We have used Our warfare has consisted of

108. Repeatedly Alternately

109. Here the Selected Works version inserts: “which has already manifested itself among our troops,”

110. Expanding the Red Army Recruiting new troops
direction that will jeopardize the withdrawal, not letting it attack places that are too distant, and not letting it become too fatigued. These are the things that the main forces of the Red Army must deal with on the eve of a large-scale enemy offensive. At this time, the Red Army must focus its attention mainly on plans to prepare the battlefield, to acquire supplies, and to enlarge and train its own forces.

Political mobilization is the problem of first importance in the struggle against “encirclement and suppression.” This means that we should clearly, resolutely, and fully inform the Red Army and the people in the Soviet areas about the inevitability and imminence of the enemy’s offensive and the seriousness of the enemy threat to the Soviets and to the people. At the same time, we should tell them about the enemy’s weaknesses, the superior conditions of the Red Army and Soviet area, our determination to be victorious, the overall orientation of our work, and so on. We should call upon the Red Army and the entire population to fight against the enemy’s “encirclement and suppression” and to defend the Soviet areas. Except for military secrets, political mobilization must be carried out openly, and every effort must also be made to reach all personnel who might possibly defend the interests of the Soviets. The key link is the mobilization of the cadres.

Enlarging the Red Army should be based on two considerations: first, on the level of political consciousness of the people of the Soviet area and the size of the population; and, second, on the current state of the Red Army and the possible extent of its losses in the course of the entire struggle against the “encirclement and suppression.”

The problems of finance and food are, needless to say, of decisive importance in opposing an “encirclement and suppression.” We must take into account the possibility that the “encirclement and suppression” may be prolonged. Most important are the minimum material needs of the Red Army and then also those of the people of the Soviet area, during the whole course of the struggle against the “encirclement and suppression.”

In dealing with politically alien elements, we should not be caught off guard, but neither should we be unduly apprehensive of treachery on their part and adopt excessive precautionary measures. Distinctions should be made between the landlords, merchants, and rich peasants, and the main thing is to explain things to them politically and win their neutrality, and have the masses keep an eye on them. Severe measures, such as arrest, should be applied only to a very few of the most dangerous elements.

3. Strategic Retreat

A strategic retreat is a planned strategic step taken by an inferior force for the purpose of conserving its strength and biding its time to defeat the enemy, when confronted with a superior force whose attack it is not able to smash immediately. But military adventurists adamantly oppose such a step and advocate engaging the enemy outside the gates.

Everyone knows that when two boxers square off, the intelligent boxer usually retreats a step while the foolish one rushes in wildly and uses up all his resources at the very beginning, with the result that the one who had retreated usually beats the one who had rushed in wildly.

In Shihuizhuan, drill master Hong, challenging Lin Chong to a fight on Chai Jin’s estate, shouts, “Come on! Come on! Come on!” The result is that it is the retreatng Lin Chong who spots Hong’s weak point and floors him with a single kick.

During the Spring and Autumn period, when the states of Lu and Qi were at war, the ruler of Lu wanted to attack before the Qi troops had tired themselves out, but his general, Cao Gui, stopped him. Adopting the tactic of “the enemy tires, we attack,” he defeated the Qi army. This became a famous actual example in China’s military history of a weak force defeating a strong force. The entire account of this campaign as recounted by Zuquiu Ming is reproduced below:

In the spring, the army of Qi invaded our state, and the duke was about to fight when Cao Gui requested an audience. His fellow townsman said, “This is a scheme of the flesh-eaters, why get involved?” Cao Gui replied, “The flesh-eaters are fools who cannot plan ahead.” So he saw the duke, and asked, “What will you rely on when you fight?” The duke answered, “I never dare keep my food and clothing for my enjoyment alone. I must share with others.” Cao said, “Petty charity does not go far. The people will not follow you.” The duke said, “I never inflate the amounts of the sacrificial offerings

116. Immediately → Quickly
117. In the Selected Works version, the expression “engaging the enemy outside the gates” is put in quotation marks to underscore the fact that this was the slogan of the Moscow-oriented faction during the Jiangxi period.
118. This tale of rebellion in traditional China, translated by Pearl Buck under the title All Men Are Brothers, and more generally called Outlaws of the Marshes or Water Margin, was one of Mao’s favorite books, from which he repeatedly drew illustrations.
119. This name was written incorrectly as “Wang” in the 1941 edition; in the Selected Works it has been corrected to read “Hong.”
120. The ruler of Lu → Duke Zhuang of Lu
121. Zuquiu Ming was the author of the Zuo zhuan. The passage quoted appears in the account of the Tenth Year of Duke Zhuang (684 B.C.). We follow here in large part the translation in the English edition of the Selected Works, modified after comparison with the version of Legge, Vol. V, p. 86.
122. Flesh-eaters was a derogatory term for officials.
of animals, jade, and silk. One must keep good faith.” Cao replied, “Petty faith
wins no trust. The gods will not bless you.” The duke said, “Although all cases, big and small, cannot be investigated in detail, one must look at the circum-
stances.” Cao replied, “One who is devoted to his people may go into battle.
When you go into battle, I beg to go with you.” The duke and he rode in the same
chariot. The battle was joined at Changshao. The duke was about to sound the
drum (the ancients beat the drum for the army to advance). Cao said, “Not yet.”
When the men of Qi had drummed three times, Cao said, “Now is the time.” The
army of Qi was routed. The duke was about to pursue and attack them. Cao said,
“Not yet.” He got down to examine the enemy’s wheel tracks, climbed up on the
armrest to look into the distance, and then said, “Pursue.” They pursued the Qi
troops. After the victory, the duke asked his reasons, to which Cao replied, “A
battle depends upon courage. At the first drum, courage is aroused, at the second it
declines, and with the third it is exhausted. When the enemy’s courage was ex-
hausted, ours was still high, so we won. It is hard to guess the moves of a great
state, and I feared an ambush. When I saw that their wheel tracks were in disarray
and that their banners were drooping, we pursued.”

That was a case of a strong state attacking a weak state. The text points to
political preparations before battle—winning the confidence of the people; it
describes a battlefield favorable for turning to the counterattack—Changshao; it
describes the timing favorable to a counterattack—when their courage is ex-
hausted and ours is high; and it describes the timing for beginning pursuit—
when the enemy’s tracks are in disarray and their banners are drooping. Although
the campaign was not a big one, it nonetheless illustrates the principles of
strategic defense. China’s military history contains numerous instances of
victories won in accordance with these principles. In such famous battles as the
battle of Chenggao between the states of Chu and Han, the battle of Kunyang
between the Xin and the Han, the battle of Guandu between Yuan Shao and Cao
Cao, the battle of the Red Cliff between the states of Wu and Wei, the battle of
Yiling between the states of Wu and Shu, and the battle of Feishui between the
states of Qin and Jin,123 and countless others, in each case the two sides were
unequal in strength, and the weaker side, yielding ground at first, gained control
through yielding, and thus won the battle.

When Napoleon raised a great army of 300,000 to attack Russia, the
Russian government accepted the view of those military experts who pro-
posed, “Abandon and burn the capital city of Moscow and then strike,”

and rejected the views of a number of common military figures and politi-
cians who asked, “How can we abandon the capital, much less burn it
down?” Threatened with starvation and exhaustion, and with disarray in
his rear lines, Napoleon’s troops were finally surrounded, and he had no
choice but to retreat. Seizing the opportunity, the Russian army counterat-
underestimated the enemy, Liu Xiu, with only 3,000 picked troops, put Wang
Mang’s main forces to rout. He followed up this victory by crushing the rest of
the enemy troops.

Battle of Guandu. Guandu was in the northeast of the present Zhongmou xian,
Henan Province, and the scene of the battle between the armies of Cao Cao and
Yuan Shao in A.D. 200. Yuan Shao had an army of 100,000, while Cao Cao had
only a meager force and was short of supplies. Taking advantage of lack of
vigilance on the part of Yuan Shao’s troops, who belittled the enemy, Cao
Cao dispatched his light-footed soldiers to spring a surprise attack on them and
set their supplies on fire. Yuan Shao’s army was thrown into confusion and its
main force wiped out.

Battle of the Red Cliff (Chibi). The state of Wu was ruled by Sun Quan
and the state of Wei by Cao Cao. The Red Cliff is situated on the south bank
of the Yangzi River, to the northeast of Jiayu, Hubei Province. In A.D. 208, Cao
Cao led an army of 500,000 men, which he proclaimed to be 800,000, to
launch an attack on Sun Quan. The latter, in alliance with Cao Cao’s antagonist
Liu Bei, mustered a force of 30,000. Knowing that Cao Cao’s army was plagued
by epidemics and was unaccustomed to action afloat, the allied forces of Sun
Quan and Liu Bei set fire to Cao Cao’s fleet and crushed his army.

Battle of Yiling. Yiling, to the east of the present Yichang, Hubei Province,
was the place where Lu Xun, a general of the state of Wu, defeated the army of Liu
Bei, ruler of Shu, in A.D. 222. Liu Bei’s troops scored successive victories at the
beginning of the war and penetrated 500 or 600 li into the territory of Wu as far as
Yiling. Lu Xun, who was defending Yiling, avoided battle for more than seven
months until Liu Bei “was at his wits” end and his troops were exhausted and
demoralized.” Then he crushed Liu Bei’s troops by taking advantage of a
favorable wind to set fire to their tents.

Battle of the Feishui River. Xie Xuan, a general of the Eastern Jin dynasty,
defeated Fu Jian, ruler of the state of Jin, in A.D. 383, at the Feishui River in
Anhui Province. Fu Jian had an infantry force of more than 600,000, a cavalry
of 270,000, and a guards corps of more than 30,000, while the land and river forces
of Eastern Jin numbered only 80,000. When the armies lined up on opposite banks
of the Feishui River, Xie Xuan, taking advantage of the overconfidence and
conceit of the enemy troops, asked Fu Jian to move his troops back so as to leave
room for the Eastern Jin troops to cross the river and fight it out. Fu Jian complied,
but when he ordered withdrawal, his troops got into a panic and could not be stopped.
Seizing the opportunity, the Eastern Jin troops crossed the river, launched an
offensive, and crushed the enemy.
tacked, and Napoleon fled with only 50,000 of his troops intact. This was the greatest defeat in Napoleon’s entire career and is one of the famous great defeats in the history of world warfare.

In August 1914, at the time of the first European war, France began by planning to engage the enemy outside the nation’s gates and concentrated a great army on the border between Germany and France. When they saw that the German army was not taking this route, they shifted their troops to the Franco-Belgian border. It was only after they were defeated in battle that they really changed plans. In a great retreat toward Paris, they totally abandoned the northern industrial and agricultural regions. But this great strategic retreat was entirely correct. To do this required enormous determination and courage. Although Germany, in less than one week, moved a large army of nearly 100,000 men all the way to the very outskirts of Paris, the German army was exhausted, its troop strength had been diminished, its morale was lax, and the battalines were greatly extended. The defense lines of the French army had contracted, its troop strength increased, and the hearts of the people were filled with anger. For this reason the comparative strengths of the two armies began to change. At this point France concentrated her main forces to the northwest of Paris, surrounded the right flank of the German army, and won in a single battle. The German army, which had been called the bravest in the world, retreated to northern France and was forced to go on the defensive. This had a decisive influence upon the whole course of the war. This was a very recent and extremely famous great battle.

It was in this same European war, and, furthermore, at the same time as the fighting on the Western Front described above, that another German army won a campaign against the Russian army, which was also a very famous battle. This was the East Prussian campaign. Just at the time that the German army was engaged on the Western front, the Russian army brought together a large army much faster than Germany had expected, took advantage of an opening, and struck into East Prussia. It marched straight ahead for a long distance. Berlin was shaken. Hindenburg gathered a force of less than 100,000, including a portion transferred back from the Western front. When the two Russian columns were advancing along separate routes and had entered difficult terrain (a swampy region), although greatly outnumbered, the Germans concentrated their forces, attacked, and destroyed the Russian left flank, capturing more than 90,000 men. The right flank of the Russian army retreated in fear and trembling, and Hindenburg shook the world with this news.

The several examples described above from ancient, medieval, and modern history prove that a weak army that is attacked by a strong army has no choice but to adopt a strategically defensive policy in the opening phase of a war or campaign, and wait for an advantageous time to mount its counteraffensive. Since this is the only policy that can possibly win, any other is doomed to defeat.

Our war began in the autumn of 1927, and we then had no experience at all. The Nanchang Uprising and the Guangdong Uprising failed, and in the Autumn Harvest Uprising the troops in the Hunan-Hubei-Jiangxi border area also suffered several defeats and moved to the Jinggangshan. In May the following year, the units which had survived the defeat of the Nanchang Uprising also moved to the Jinggangshan by way of southern Hunan, engaging in guerrilla fighting along the way. By May 1928, however, basic principles of guerrilla warfare, simple in nature and suited to the conditions of the time had already emerged. This was the sixteen-character formula: “The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue.” This sixteen-character formulation of military principles was accepted by the Central Committee as constituted before the Li Lisan line, and was moreover proclaimed to the whole country. Later we made some further developments. At the time of the First “Encirclement and Suppression” in the Central Soviet, the principle of “luring the enemy in deep” was put forward, and, moreover, was successfully applied. By the time the enemy’s Third “Encirclement and Suppression” had been defeated, a complete set of Red Army fighting principles had taken shape. This marked a new stage in the development of our military principles, which were greatly enriched in content and underwent many changes in form, mainly in the sense that, while the basic principles remained those of the sixteen-character formula, they were not so simple in nature as before. The sixteen-character formula covered the basic principles for combating “encirclement and suppression,” including the two stages of strategic defense and strategic offense, and it also included, while on the defensive, the two stages of strategic retreat and strategic counterattack. What came later was nothing but a development of this formula.

But, beginning in January 1932, after the publication of the Party’s resolution entitled “Struggle for Victory First in One or More Provinces After Smashing the Third ‘Encirclement and Suppression,’” which contained serious errors of principle, those who attacked the correct principles totally dismissed these correct principles and set up a whole set of opposite “new principles” or “regular principles.” From then on, the old principles were no longer to be considered as regular, but were to be rejected as “guerrilla-ism.” The anti-“guerrilla-ism” atmosphere reigned for three whole years. Its first stage was military adventurism, which in the second stage turned into military conservatism and, finally, in the third stage turned into flightism. It was not until the Party’s Political meeting held at Zunyi, Guizhou, in January 1935, that these erroneous principles

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124. Troops → Red Army
125. May → April
126. The First “Encirclement and Suppression” → Our first campaign against “encirclement and suppression”
127. Central Soviet → Jiangxi Base Area
128. Those → The “Left” opportunists
129. These erroneous principles → This erroneous line

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were declared bankrupt and the correctness of the old principles reaffirmed. But at what a cost!

Those who opposed guerrilla-ism said: It is wrong to lure the enemy in deep because we have to abandon so much soviet territory. Although battles were won this way in the past, isn’t the situation different now? Besides, wouldn’t it be better to defeat the enemy without giving up territory? And wouldn’t it be better to defeat the enemy in the White areas or on the border between the soviet and White areas? There is nothing regular about this, they are the methods used by guerrilla units. Now a soviet state has been established and the Red Army has become a regular army. Our fight against Chiang Kaishek has become a war between two states, between two great armies. History should not be repeated, and everything having to do with guerrilla-ism should be totally discarded. The new principles are completely Marxist, while the old were created by guerrilla units in the mountains, and there was no Marxism in the mountains. The new principles are quite the opposite: “Pit one against ten, pit ten against a hundred, fight bravely and daringly, exploit victories by hot pursuit.” “Attack on all fronts.” “Seize key cities.” “Strike with two fists.” When the enemy attacks, the methods of dealing with him are, “Engage the enemy outside the gates,” “Get control by striking first,” “Don’t let our pots and pans be smashed,” “Don’t give up an inch of territory,” and “Divide our forces into six routes.” “This opposition to the Fifth ‘Encirclement and Suppression’ is the decisive battle between the soviet road and the colonial road.” “A war of blockhouses,” “a war of attrition,” “a protracted war,” “a war having a large rear area,” a war of “absolutely centralized command,” a war of “short sudden thrusts.” In the end, there was a large-scale “house moving.” And anyone who did not accept these new principles was to be punished and labeled an opportunist, and so on and so forth.

Unquestionably, these theories were all wrong. This was mechanistic. Under favorable circumstances this manifested itself as petty bourgeois revolutionary fanaticism and revolutionary impetuosity, but, in times of adversity, as the situation worsened, it changed successively into desperate recklessness, conservatism, and flightism. These were the theories and practices of hotheads and ignoramuses. They did not have the slightest flavor of Marxism at all, and indeed were anti-Marxist.

Let us talk here exclusively about strategic retreat, which in the Central Soviet District was called “luring the enemy in deep,” and in the Sichuan soviet district was called “contracting the front.” Every previous military theorist and practitioner has recognized that this is the principle that must be adopted by a weak army fighting against a strong army in the beginning stages of a war. European, American, and Japanese military experts have put it this way: “Strategically defensive fighting usually avoids unfavorable decisive battles in the beginning, and seeks decisive battles only when the circumstances are favorable.” This is entirely correct and we have nothing to add to it.

The object of strategic retreat is to conserve military strength and prepare for the counteroffensive. Conserving military strength is necessary because a failure to retreat when faced with the offensive of a strong enemy will inevitably jeopardize the preservation of one’s military forces. In the past, there were a number of people who were adamantly opposed to retreat, who thought this was an “opportunist purely defensive line.” Our history has already proved that this opposition was totally wrong.

In preparing for a counteroffensive, we must select or create conditions favorable to ourselves and unfavorable to the enemy, so as to bring about a change in the balance of forces, before we go on to the stage of the counteroffensive.

In the light of our past experience, during the stage of retreat we should in general secure at least two of the following conditions before we can consider the situation favorable to us and unfavorable to the enemy, and go over to the counteroffensive. The conditions are:

1. The people actively support the Red Army.
2. The terrain is favorable for operations.
3. The main forces of the Red Army are completely concentrated.
4. The enemy’s weak points have been discovered.
5. The enemy has become exhausted and demoralized.
6. The enemy has been forced to make mistakes.

The condition of [support by] the people is the most important condition for the Red Army. This is the condition of having a soviet area. Moreover, given this condition, conditions 4, 5, and 6 can easily emerge or be created. Thus, when the enemy mounts a large offensive against the Red Army, the Red Army generally retreats from the White area into the soviet area because the people of the soviet area will provide the most active support for the Red Army against the White army. There is also a difference between the border and central areas of a soviet area. In a central area, the people are better at sealing off information, reconnaissance, transportation, joining in the fighting, and so on. Thus, during the first, second, and third “Encirclement and Suppression” campaigns of the past in the Central Soviet Area, all the places selected as the “terminal points for the retreat” were places where the people were well disposed or relatively well

130. This → These things from the past
131. Soviet → Revolutionary
132. In the Selected Works text, the reference to a war of “short sudden thrusts” appears here instead of at the end of this sentence.
133. These theories → These theories and this practice
134. Mechanistic → Subjectivist
135. The Central Soviet district → Jiangxi
136. European, American, and Japanese → Foreign
137. Conserving military strength → Retreat
disposed. This special characteristic of the Soviet area made for great changes in the battles of the Red Army, compared to its ordinary battles, and was the major reason that later forced the enemy to resort to a policy of blockhouse warfare.

One advantage of fighting behind our own lines is that the retreating army is able to select for itself a favorable battleground and force the attacking army to fight on our terms. In order to defeat a strong army, a weak army must be very demanding about meeting this condition. But this requirement alone is not enough and must be accompanied by others. First of all is popular support. The next is that the enemy must be vulnerable—for example, the enemy is exhausted, or has made a mistake, or the advancing enemy column is one that is relatively lacking in combat capacity. If these conditions have not been fulfilled, then even if the position is excellent, this aspect must be ignored, and the retreat continued until the conditions we want are secured. In the White areas there is no lack of excellent terrain, but the condition of strong popular support is absent. If other conditions have not been created or emerged, then it is necessary to retreat to the Soviet area. This is also largely true of the difference between the border areas and the central district of a Soviet area.

Except for local units and containing forces, all our assault troops should follow the principle of total concentration. But when attacking an enemy who is on the defensive strategically, the Red Army is usually dispersed. Once the enemy mounts a major offensive against us, the Red Army adopts what is called a "retreat toward the center," the selected terminus of which is usually within the central part of the Soviet area. But sometimes it is in the forward part and sometimes in the rear part. This is determined according to the circumstances. Such a retreat toward the center allows all the main forces of the Red Army to become fully concentrated.

Another essential condition for a weak army fighting a strong army is hitting his weak points. But when the enemy's offensive begins, we usually do not know which of the enemy's advancing columns is the strongest, which is the next strongest, which is the weakest, or which is the next weakest, so a process of reconnaissance is necessary. It usually takes a good deal of time to achieve this objective, and this is also one of the reasons why a strategic retreat is necessary.

If an attacking enemy is far more numerous and far stronger than our army, we can achieve a change in the balance of forces only by forcing him to penetrate deeply into the Soviet area and fully taste the pain it will inflict on him. As the chief of staff of one of Chiang Kai-shek's brigades remarked during the Third "Encirclement and Suppression," "The fat were worn thin and the thin were worn to death." Or, in the words of Chen Mingshu, commander-in-chief of the Western Route of the Guomindang's Encirclement and Suppression Army, "Everywhere the National Army gropes in the dark, while the Red Army walks in broad daylight." Only then can the objective be attained. By this time, even a strong enemy army has been greatly weakened, its troops are exhausted, its morale is flagging, and many of its weak points have been revealed. The Red Army, though weak, has conserved its strength and stored up energy and is waiting at ease for the exhausted enemy. At this time, it is usually possible to achieve a certain parity between the two sides or to change the enemy's absolute superiority to relative superiority and our absolute inferiority to relative inferiority. In some cases we can even render the enemy army inferior to our army and make our army superior to the enemy army. During the Third "Encirclement and Suppression" against the Central Soviet Area, the Red Army carried out an extreme kind of retreat (concentrating in the rear area of the Soviet district), but if it had not done so, it would not have been able to defeat the enemy, because the Encirclement and Suppression Army was more than ten times the size of the Red Army. When Sunzi said, "Avoid the enemy when his spirit is keen; attack him when he is sluggish and inclined to retreat," he was referring to tiring and demoralizing the enemy in an attempt to reduce or eliminate his superiority.

The final requisite condition of retreating to seek a favorable situation is to force the enemy to make mistakes and to discover his mistakes. One must realize that no enemy commander, however brilliant, can avoid making some mistakes over a relatively long period of time, so it is possible to take advantage of the openings he leaves. This is just the same as the fact that we ourselves sometimes make mistakes, and the enemy is able to take advantage of them. In addition, we can artificially bring about mistakes by the enemy, for instance, by what Sunzi called "creating appearances" (a feint to the east while attacking in the west, what he called "Create an uproar in the east and strike in the west"). To do this, the terminal point of a retreat cannot be limited to a particular area. Sometimes a retreat to the area in question still does not reveal an opening that can be exploited, so there is no choice but to retreat farther and wait for the enemy to give us an "opening."

The favorable conditions sought by retreating are in general those stated above. But this is not to say that we must wait for all these conditions to be fulfilled before a counteroffensive can be launched. Fulfilling all these conditions at the same time is neither possible nor necessary. But, on the basis of the enemy's situation at the time, a weak force fighting behind its own lines against a strong enemy must strive to obtain certain necessary conditions. The contrary views that have been expressed are incorrect.

The decision on where the terminal point for a retreat will finally be located should start from the situation as a whole. It is not correct to decide upon the place to start a counteroffensive, and consequently to end a retreat, that appears

138. The Central Soviet Area → Jiangxi
140. This famous quotation is actually not from Sunzi's own text, but from the commentary to it by Zhang Yu. See Griffith, Sun Tzu, pp. 79–80.
to be favorable in relation to a part of the situation, if it is not at the same time
favorable from the point of view of the situation as a whole. For at the start of
our counteroffensive, we must take into account later changes, and our coun-
teroffensive always begins on a partial scale. Sometimes the terminal point for
retreat should be set in the forward part of the soviet area as, for example, in the
Central Soviet Area during the second and fourth “Encirclement and Suppres-
sion” campaigns, and in the Shaanxi-Gansu area during the Third “En-
circlement and Suppression.” Sometimes it is set in the central part of the soviet
area, as it was in the Central Area during the First “Encirclement and Suppres-
sion,” and sometimes in the rear area of the soviet, as in the Central Area during
the Third “Encirclement and Suppression.” In all these cases, the decisions were
made by relating the partial situation to the overall situation. In the Central Area
during the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” our army gave no thought
whatsoever to retreat, because it did not pay any attention to either the partial or
the overall situation. This was indeed a rash and destructive way of doing things.
A situation is created by various factors. In examining the relationship between a
partial situation and the situation as a whole, our judgments should be based on
whether the factors both on the enemy’s side and on our own, as manifested both
in the partial situation and in the whole situation, are to a certain extent favorable
for us to start a counteroffensive.

Broadly speaking, the terminal points for retreat in a soviet area can be
divided into three types: those in the forward area, those in the middle area, and
those in the rear area of a soviet district. But does this fundamentally rule out
fighting in the White areas? No. It is only when we have to deal with a large-
scale “encirclement and suppression” by the enemy army that we refuse to fight
in the White areas. It is only when there is a great disparity between the enemy’s
forces and our own that, acting on the principle of conserving our strength and
waiting for an opportunity to defeat the enemy, we advocate retreating into the
soviet areas and luring the enemy in deep because this is the only way that we
can create or discover conditions favorable to our counteroffensive. If the situa-
tion is not that serious, or if the situation is so serious that the Red Army
cannot begin a counteroffensive even in the soviet areas, or if a counteroffensive
is not going well and a further retreat is necessary to bring about a partial change
in the situation, then it should be recognized, at least in theory, that the terminal
point of the retreat may be fixed in the White areas, even though we have had
very little experience of this kind.

In general, the terminal points for retreat in a White area can also be divided
into three types: first, those in front of a soviet area; second, those on the sides of
a soviet area; and third, those behind a soviet area. An example of the first kind
of terminal point can be found in the Central Soviet Area during the First “En-
circlement and Suppression.” When, if it had not been for internal disunity
within the Red Army and the split in the local Party (that is, for the existence of
two difficult problems, the Li Lisan Line and the AB Corps), it is conceivable
that we might have concentrated our forces and carried out a counteroffensive
within the triangle formed by Ji’an, Nanfeng, and Changshu. For at that time the
enemy force advancing from the area between the Gan and Fu rivers was not very
greatly superior to the Red Army in strength (100,000 to 40,000), and
although popular support was not as great as in the soviet area, the terrain was
advantageous, and, moreover, it would have been possible, taking advantage of
the fact that the enemy forces were advancing along separate routes, to destroy
them one by one. An example of the second kind of terminal point was in the
Central Soviet Area during the Third “Encirclement and Suppression,” when, if
the enemy’s offensive had not been on so large a scale, if one of the enemy’s
columns had advanced from Jianning, Lichuan, and Taining on the Fujian-
Jiangxi border, and if the strength of this column had been such that we could
attack it, the Red Army might conceivably have first concentrated its forces in
the White area of western Fujian and crushed that column first, without having to
make a thousand-li detour through Ruijin to Xingguo. An example of the third
type of terminal point might similarly have occurred in the Central District
during the Third “Encirclement and Suppression,” if the enemy’s main force
had headed south instead of west. In that case, we might have been compelled to
withdraw to the Huichang-Xunwu-Anyuan area (a White area), leading the
enemy even farther south, after which the Red Army could then have struck
northward toward the interior of the soviet area, by which time the enemy force
within the northern part of the soviet area would not have been very large. The
above, however, are hypothetical examples not based on experience and should
be regarded as special cases, not as general principles. For us, when facing the
enemy’s large-scale “encirclement and suppression” campaigns, the general
principle is to lure him in deep and retreat to fight in the soviet area because this
provides us with the greatest certainty of smashing the enemy’s offensive.

Those who advocate engaging the enemy outside the gates oppose strategic
retreat, arguing that to retreat means losing territory and harming the people
(what they call “smashing the pots and pans”) and will also have bad repercus-
sions outside. During the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” they said that
if we retreated one step, the enemy’s blockhouses would be pushed forward a
step, so that the soviet areas would shrink day by day, and it would be impossible
to recover the lost ground. Even though luring the enemy in deep might have
been useful in the past, it would have been useless against the blockhouse philos-
ofy of the enemy’s Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.” The only way to
deal with this campaign, they said, was to divide up our forces for resistance and
direct short swift thrusts at the enemy.

It is easy to answer these views, and our history has already done so. As for
the question of losing territory, it is only by loss that loss can be avoided. This is
the principle of “Give in order to take.” If what we lose is territory, and what
we gain is victory over the enemy, as well as recovery and expansion of our
territory, this is a profitable investment. In a business transaction, if a buyer does
to be favorable in relation to a part of the situation, if it is not at the same time favorable from the point of view of the situation as a whole. For at the start of our counteroffensive, we must take into account later changes, and our counteroffensive always begins on a partial scale. Sometimes the terminal point for retreat should be set in the forward part of the Soviet area as, for example, in the Central Soviet Area during the second and fourth “Encirclement and Suppression” campaigns, and in the Shaanxi-Gansu area during the Third “Encirclement and Suppression.” Sometimes it is set in the central part of the Soviet area, as it was in the Central Area during the First “Encirclement and Suppression,” and sometimes in the rear area of the Soviet, as in the Central Area during the Third “Encirclement and Suppression.” In all these cases, the decisions were made by relating the partial situation to the overall situation. In the Central Area during the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” our army gave no thought whatsoever to retreat, because it did not pay any attention to either the partial or the overall situation. This was indeed a rash and destructive way of doing things. A situation is created by various factors. In examining the relationship between a partial situation and the situation as a whole, our judgments should be based on whether the factors both on the enemy’s side and on our own, as manifested both in the partial situation and in the whole situation, are to a certain extent favorable for us to start a counteroffensive.

Broadly speaking, the terminal points for retreat in a Soviet area can be divided into three types: those in the forward area, those in the middle area, and those in the rear area of a Soviet district. But does this fundamentally rule out fighting in the White areas? No. It is only when we have to deal with a large-scale “encirclement and suppression” by the enemy army that we refuse to fight in the White areas. It is only when there is a great disparity between the enemy’s forces and our own that, acting on the principle of conserving our strength and waiting for an opportunity to defeat the enemy, we advocate retreating into the Soviet areas and luring the enemy in deep because this is the only way that we can create or discover conditions favorable to our counteroffensive. If the situation is not as serious, or if the situation is so serious that the Red Army cannot begin a counteroffensive even in the Soviet areas, or if a counteroffensive is not going well and a further retreat is necessary to bring about a partial change in the situation, then it should be recognized, at least in theory, that the terminal point of the retreat may be fixed in the White areas, even though we have had very little experience of this kind.

In general, the terminal points for retreat in a White area can also be divided into three types: first, those in front of a Soviet area; second, those on the sides of a Soviet area; and third, those behind a Soviet area. An example of the first kind of terminal point can be found in the Central Soviet Area during the First “Encirclement and Suppression,” when, if it had not been for internal disunity within the Red Army and the split in the local Party (that is, for the existence of two difficult problems, the Li Lisan Line and the AB Corps), it is conceivable that we might have concentrated our forces and carried out a counteroffensive within the triangle formed by Ji’an, Nanfeng, and Changshu. For at that time the enemy force advancing from the area between the Gan and Fu rivers was not very greatly superior to the Red Army in strength (100,000 to 40,000), and although popular support was not as great as in the Soviet area, the terrain was advantageous, and, moreover, it would have been possible, taking advantage of the fact that the enemy forces were advancing along separate routes, to destroy them one by one. An example of the second kind of terminal point was in the Central Soviet Area during the Third “Encirclement and Suppression,” when, if the enemy’s offensive had not been on so large a scale, if one of the enemy’s columns had advanced from Jianning, Lichuan, and Taining on the Fujian-Jiangxi border, and if the strength of this column had been such that we could attack it, the Red Army might conceivably have first concentrated its forces in the White area of western Fujian and crushed that column first, without having to make a thousand-li detour through Ruijin to Xingguo. An example of the third type of terminal point might similarly have occurred in the Central District during the Third “Encirclement and Suppression,” if the enemy’s main force had headed south instead of west. In that case, we might have been compelled to withdraw to the Huichang-Xunwu-Anyuan area (a White area), leading the enemy even farther south, after which the Red Army could then have struck northward toward the interior of the Soviet area, by which time the enemy force within the northern part of the Soviet area would not have been very large. The above, however, are hypothetical examples not based on experience and should be regarded as special cases, not as general principles. For us, when facing the enemy’s large-scale “encirclement and suppression” campaigns, the general principle is to lure him in deep and retreat to fight in the Soviet area because this provides us with the greatest certainty of smashing the enemy’s offensive.

Those who advocate engaging the enemy outside the gates oppose strategic retreat, arguing that to retreat means losing territory and harming the people (what they call “smashing the pots and pans”) and will also have bad repercussions outside. During the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” they said that if we retreated one step, the enemy’s blockhouses would be pushed forward a step, so that the Soviet areas would shrink day by day, and it would be impossible to recover the lost ground. Even though luring the enemy in deep might have been useful in the past, it would have been useless against the blockhouse philosophy of the enemy’s Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.” The only way to deal with this campaign, they said, was to divide up our forces for resistance and direct short swift thrusts at the enemy.

It is easy to answer these views, and our history has already done so. As for the question of losing territory, it is only by loss that loss can be avoided. This is the principle of “Give in order to take.” If what we lose is territory, and what we gain is victory over the enemy, as well as recovery and expansion of our territory, this is a profitable investment. In a business transaction, if a buyer does
not lose some money, he cannot obtain the goods, and if a seller does not lose his goods, he cannot make any money. The losses in a revolutionary movement take the form of destruction; what is gained is progressive construction. Sleep and rest involve a loss of time, but energy for tomorrow’s work is gained. If there is any fool who does not understand this principle and refuses to sleep, he will have no energy tomorrow, and that is a losing proposition. The Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression” was a losing affair precisely for this reason. Because we were unwilling to give up a portion of our territory, we lost all of it. Abyssinia, too, fought unyieldingly and, as a result, lost the whole country, though this was not the only reason for its defeat.

The same principle also applies to the question of bringing harm to the people. If the pots and pans of a portion of the households are not smashed temporarily, then the pots and pans of all the people will be smashed permanently. Those who are afraid of temporary political bad effects will pay the price in terms of permanent political bad effects. If, in accordance with the views of the Left-wing Russian Communists, they had held out from beginning to end against signing the peace treaty with Germany, there would be no Soviet Union today.141

These seemingly revolutionary leftist views come from the revolutionary impetuosity of the petty bourgeoisie142 and also from the partly conservative nature of the peasant small producers. They proceed from a one-sided view of the problem and are unable to take a comprehensive view of the situation as a whole. They are unwilling to make the connection between today’s interests and tomorrow’s interests or between the interests of the part and those of the whole. They cling like grim death to something that is partial and temporary. It is true that, when any one part or any one moment, given the concrete the circumstances at that time, is advantageous to the interests of the whole situation and whole period, and especially when it is of decisive importance, we should hold on to it and not let go. Otherwise, we would become proponents of letting things take their natural course, or laissez-faire-ism. This is the reason a retreat must have a terminal point. But this is certainly not143 the short-sightedness of the small producer. We should learn from the wisdom of the Bolsheviks. The naked eye is not enough—we must have the aid of the telescope and the microscope. The Marxist methodology is a microscope and a telescope in political and military affairs.

Of course, strategic retreat has its difficulties. To pick the opportune moment for beginning a retreat, to select the terminal point, to persuade the cadres and the people politically—these are all difficult problems, and yet problems that must be solved.

The problem of the opportune moment for beginning a retreat is very important. Not only was the timing of the retreat of the French army beginning on August 21, 1914, exactly right, but it afterward became the first precondition for the later counterattack and victory: it was a brave and admirable decision. If, during the First “Encirclement and Suppression” against our Central Soviet, our retreat had not been carried out precisely at that time, that is, if it had been delayed any further, the extent of our victory, at the very least, would have been affected. Both a premature and a belated retreat do, of course, bring losses, but generally speaking a belated retreat will bring about greater losses than a premature retreat. A well-timed retreat144 will have a great effect after the terminal point is reached, when we regroup our forces and turn to the counterattack, rested and waiting for the exhausted enemy. The first, second, and fourth campaigns in the Central Soviet Area all145 dealt with the enemy confidently and without haste. It was only in the Third Campaign, because we had not expected the enemy to launch a new offensive so quickly after suffering such a crushing defeat in the Second Campaign (we brought an end to the Second “Encirclement and Suppression” on May 29, 1931, and Chiang Kaisheng began the Third “Encirclement and Suppression” on July 1), that the Red Army had to make a hasty detour and reassemble, and was as a result extremely exhausted. The choice of the opportune moment for a retreat depends entirely upon gathering the requisite information and appraising the general situation on both sides, using just the same methods as those described above for selecting the timing of the preparatory phase of a countercampaign.

It is more difficult to persuade the cadres and the people when they have never experienced a strategic retreat. Difficulties arise when the military leadership has not yet reached the point where this question of strategic retreat can and should be concentrated in the hands of a few persons or of a single person and be accepted by the cadres.146 Because the cadres lacked experience and had no faith in strategic retreat, great difficulties were encountered in the early part of the first and also of the fourth “Encirclement and Suppression” campaign and

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141. If, in accordance with the views ... Soviet Union today. → After the October Revolution, if the Russian Bolsheviks had followed the views of the “Left Communists” and refused to sign the peace treaty with Germany, the new-born Soviets would have been in danger of a premature death.
142. Petty bourgeoisie → Petty-bourgeois intellectuals
143. But this is certainly not → But we certainly must not rely upon
144. Here the Selected Works text inserts the words “which enable us to keep the entire initiative in our own hands”
145. The first, second, and fourth campaigns in the Central Soviet Area all → When smashing the enemy’s first, second, and fourth “Encirclement and Suppression” campaigns in Jiangxi, we
146. Difficulties arise ... single person → The question of persuading the cadres and the people is an extremely difficult problem when the prestige of the military leadership has not reached the point where the decision for a strategic retreat can be concentrated in the hands of a very few persons, or of a single person, who enjoy the confidence of the cadres.
throughout the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.” During the First “Encirclement and Suppression” the influence of the Li Lisan line prevailed, and the view of the cadres, before they were won over, was that we should not retreat but attack. During the Fourth “Encirclement and Suppression” the cadres, under the influence of military adventurism, opposed making preparations for retreat. At the beginning of the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” the adventurist point of view and opposition to luring the enemy in deep prevailed, but afterward it changed to conservatism. Another concrete example is that of the Zhang Guotao line, whose adherents did not believe that it was impossible to set up our bases in regions inhabited by foreign or Muslim peoples, until they ran into a brick wall. Experience is essential for the cadres, and failure is indeed the mother of success. But it is also necessary to accept with an open mind the experience of others who have gone before us. To insist on one’s own personal experience in everything, or in its absence to adhere stubbornly to one’s own opinions and reject those of others, is sheer “narrow empiricism.” The soviet war has suffered from this in no small measure.

The people’s lack of faith in the need for strategic retreat, resulting from their lack of experience, was never greater than in the Central Area during the First “Encirclement and Suppression.” At the time, the local Party and the popular masses in the xian of Ji’an, Xingguo, and Yongfeng all opposed a Red Army retreat. But after this one experience, during the several later “Encirclement and Suppression” campaigns, this was no longer a problem at all. Everyone was convinced that the loss of the soviet areas and the suffering of the people were only temporary and was confident that the Red Army could smash the “Encirclement and Suppression.” Whether or not the people have faith is intimately linked to the cadres, and so the major and primary problem is to persuade the cadres.

The sole function of strategic retreat is to go over to the counterattack, and strategic retreat is simply the first stage of a strategic defensive. What follows after this, and constitutes the decisive key to the entire strategy, is whether or not victory can be won in the stage of the counteroffensive.

4. Strategic Counteroffensive

Defeating the offensive of an enemy who enjoys absolute superiority depends upon creating a situation during the stage of strategic retreat which is favorable to ourselves and unfavorable to the enemy, and has undergone a change from what it was at the beginning of the enemy’s offensive. Such a situation is created by many different factors, as has been explained above.

But the presence of factors and of a situation favorable to ourselves and unfavorable to the enemy does not mean that the enemy is already defeated. These factors and this situation bring about certain characteristics that decide victory and defeat, but are not the fundamental thing that decides victory and defeat. It is the decisive battle between the two armies that ultimately determines victory and defeat. It is only a decisive battle that can fundamentally, ultimately, decide the question as to which of the two armies is the victor and the vanquished. This is the entire task of the stage of the strategic counteroffensive. A counteroffensive is a long process, the most fascinating, most dynamic stage of a defensive campaign, and also the final stage of a defensive campaign. What is called active defense refers primarily to this kind of strategic counteroffensive, which constitutes the decisive battle.

The conditions and situation are created and take shape not only during the stage of strategic retreat; they continue to be created and formed during the stage of the counteroffensive. At this time, the form and nature of the conditions and situation are not entirely the same as those of the previous stage.

Some may be the same in form and nature—for example, the enemy’s troops are even more tired and depleted, but this is simply a continuation of their exhaustion and depletion during the previous stage.

But it is also inevitable that totally new conditions and situations will arise, as, for example, when the enemy has suffered one or more defeats, at which point the conditions which are favorable to us and unfavorable to the enemy are not limited to just the enemy’s exhaustion, and so on, but now include the additional new condition of the enemy having suffered a defeat. A situation will also undergo new changes. When the enemy maneuvers his troops hurriedly and chaotically and makes inappropriate moves, the relative strength of the two armies will also be different from what it was.

If it is our army rather than the enemy’s that suffers one or more defeats, then whether the conditions and situation are favorable or not will change in the opposite direction. In other words, the enemy’s disadvantages will be reduced and our disadvantages will begin to emerge, and even grow. This too will be something totally new and different from what it was before.

A defeat on either side will lead directly and speedily to a renewed effort by the defeated side to rescue itself from a dangerous position, to extricate itself from these new conditions and situation that are unfavorable to it and favorable to its enemy, and to put pressure on its opponent by creating once again condi-

147. Adventurism . . . conservatism → Military adventurism . . . military conservatism
148. Foreign → Tibetan
149. The soviet → Our
150. The central area → Jiangxi
151. To the cadres → To whether the cadres have faith or not

152. Certain characteristics → The possibilities
153. But are not the fundamental thing that decides victory and defeat. → But do not constitute the reality of victory and defeat and have not yet brought actual victory or defeat to either army.
tions and a situation favorable to itself and unfavorable to its

ty. The efforts of the winning side will be exactly the opposite. It will attempt to
exploit its victory and to inflict even heavier losses on the enemy. It will also
seek to increase or develop the conditions and situation favorable to itself, and to
prevent its opponent from succeeding in its attempts to extricate itself from its
dangerous position.

Thus, for either side, the struggle at the stage of the decisive battle is the most
intense, the most complicated, and most fraught with changes, of the whole war
or campaign, and also the most difficult and most trying stage; from the point of
view of command, it is the most exacting period.

During the stage of counteroffensive, there are many problems, primarily
those of beginning the counteroffensive, of concentrating troop strength, of mo-
bile warfare, of battles of quick decision, and of battles of annihilation.

Whether in the case of a counteroffensive or of an offensive, the basic nature
of the principles governing these problems is the same. In their basic nature, the
principles of these problems are similar, whether they are applied to counterof-
fensives or to offensives. In this sense, we may say that a counteroffensive is an
offensive.

A counteroffensive is not, however, entirely the same as an offensive. The
principles of counteroffence are applied when the enemy is on the offensive. The
principles of offense are applied when the enemy is on the defensive. In this
sense, there are also some differences.

It is for this reason that, although I am discussing all the various operational
problems under the heading of the counteroffensive in the context of the strategic
defensive, and will deal only with some other problems under the heading of the
strategic offensive, when we apply them, we cannot overlook their similarities,
nor can we overlook their differences. In order to avoid repetition, what has
already been discussed here will not be included under the heading of the stra-
getic offensive.

5. The Problem of Starting a Counteroffensive

The problem of starting a counteroffensive is the problem of what is called the
"first battle" or "initial battle."

Many military experts advise caution in the initial battle, whether on the
strategic defensive or the strategic offensive, but especially on the defensive. In
the past, we have strongly emphasized this problem. The first through fifth
"Encirclement and Suppression" campaigns against the Central Area have
given us a rich body of experience, the study of which is not without benefit.

In the First "Encirclement and Suppression," the enemy employed a mass of
about 100,000 men, divided into eight columns, to advance southward from the Ji'an-Jianning line toward the Soviet Area. At the time, the Red
Army had about 40,000 men concentrated in the Huangpi-Xiaobu area, as shown in map 1. 155

The situation at the time was as follows: 156 (1) Ji'an was on the other side of
the Gan River, to the west, and was defended by Commander Luo Lin. (2) In the
Futian-Donggu area, the people, having been deceived by the AB Corps, did not trust the Red Army for a time, and were even opposed to the Red Army.
(3) Jianning was far away in Fujian, in a White area, and Commander Liu
Heding would not necessarily cross over into Jiangxi. (4) Toupi was a White
area and Dongshao had AB Corps problems, so information could easily leak
out. Furthermore, if we were to attack Mao [Bingwen] and Xu [Kexiang] and
drive farther westward, the three enemy divisions in the west under Commanders
Zhang [Huizan], Tan [Daoyuan], and Gong [Bingfan] would join forces, making
it difficult for us to win victory, and impossible to bring the issue to a final
solution. (5) The two divisions under Commanders Zhang and Tan, which were
the main forces of the "Encirclement and Suppression" army, belonged to Lu

155. The five maps illustrating the first through fifth "Encirclement and
Suppression" campaigns do not appear in either the Chinese or the English versions of
the current official edition of the Selected Works. Since they are an integral part of Mao's
argument as he presented it in the original 1936 and 1941 versions of this text, we have
included them here. The maps which follow have been redrawn on the basis of those in
the 1941 Yan'an edition of this work, and the 1947 and 1948 editions of Mao's Selected
Works. The maps in the 1948 edition are the clearest, and have served as the basis for
those in Vol. 5 of the Mao Zedong Ji, and also for the maps in this edition. They differ,
however, in some respects from the 1941 Yan'an edition as regards the designations of
the opposing Guomindang forces. We have checked these points against the official
Nationalist account of the campaigns in Jiaofei zhanshi (History of the Bandit-
Suppression Wars) (Taipei: Guofangbu shizhengbu, 1967), Vols. 1 and 2, pp. 79-445,
which confirms that the information in the 1941 Yan'an edition is generally accurate.
We have therefore taken this as the basis for the legends accompanying the five maps,
while noting in a few instances divergences from the Nationalist tables of organization.

156. Here, the following sentence is inserted in the Selected Works: "(1) The
"Encirclement and Suppression" forces did not exceed 100,000 men, none of whom were
Chiang Kaishek's own troops, and the situation was not very grave." In consequence, the
following points are renumbered. There are also numerous other changes, indicated below
in the notes.

157. (2) In the Futian-Donggu area → (3) The three enemy divisions under Gong
Bingfan, Zhang Huizan, and Tan Daoyuan had advanced to and occupied the
Futian-Donggu-Longgang-Yuantou sector southeast of Ji'an and northwest of Ningdu.
The main body of Zhang's division was in Longgang, and the main body of Tan's
division was in Yuantou. In the Futian-Donggu area

158. Here the Selected Works adds: "and so it was not a suitable selection for a
battleground."

159. (4) Toupi → (5) The two enemy divisions under Mao Bingwen and Xu Kexiang
had advanced to the Toupi-Luokou-Dongshao sector, lying between Guangchang and
Ningdu. Toupi was a White area, Luokou was a guerrilla zone.
could serve to conceal our approach. (8) Longgang provided a battleground that would be favorable to us. Yuantou was not easy to attack. But if the enemy were to come to Xiaobu to attack us, that would also be a good battleground. (9) Zhang and Tan were close to our area of concentration. (10) After a breakthrough in the center, breaching the enemy’s front, his eastern and western columns would be split into two widely separated groups. (11) We could concentrate the largest number of troops in Longgang, and in Xingguo, less than a hundred li to the southwest, we also had one independent division of over a thousand men which could move around to the enemy’s rear. For the above reasons, we decided that our first battle should be directed against Zhang Huizan’s main forces, and we captured the entire 9,000 men together, including the division commander, down to the last man and horse. Just one victory, and Tan’s division fled toward Dongshao while Xu’s division fled toward Toupi. Our army also pursued Tan’s division and wiped out half of it. We fought two battles in five days (December 27, 1930, to January 1 of the new year), whereupon all the enemy forces in Futian, Donggu, and Toupi, afraid that we would attack, fled in disarray, thus ending the First “Encirclement and Suppression.”

The enemy offensive and our concentrations for the Second “Encirclement and Suppression” are shown in map 2. The suppression forces numbered 200,000 men, with He Yingqin as commander-in-chief and headquarters at Nanchang. (2) As in the First “Encirclement and Suppression,” none of the forces were Chiang Kai-shek’s own forces. The

Diping, who was the commander-in-chief of the “Encirclement and Suppression” army and governor of Jiangxi, and Zhang was also the field commander. Wiping out these two divisions would virtually smash the “Encirclement and Suppression.” Each division had about 14,000 men, and if we struck each division separately we would enjoy absolute superiority. Moreover, Zhang’s division was divided between two locations. (6) The entire advancing “Suppression” army numbered no more than 100,000 men, and the overall situation was not terribly serious. (7) There was good popular support in the Longgang-Yuantou area

160. Regarding Lu Diping, referred to by Mao as “Fatty Lu,” see Volume IV, p. 492.
161. There was good popular support in the Longgang-Yuantou area → The Longgang-Yuantou area, where the main forces of the Zhang and Tan divisions were located, was close to our concentrations, and popular support was very good.
Map 2. The Second Encirclement and Suppression: The Enemy’s Attack and Our Concentration

GUOMINDANG FORCES:

1. Luo Lin’s 77th Division
   Under the Fifth Route Army, commanded by Wang Jinyu:
   2. Gong Bingfan’s 28th Division
   3. Wang Jinyu’s 47th Division
   4. Guo Huazong’s 43rd Division
   5. Hao Mengling’s 54th Division

Under the Twenty-sixth Route Army, commanded by Sun Lianzhong:
   Sun Lianzhong’s 25th Division, Gao Shuxun’s 27th Division

Under the Sixth Route Army, commanded by Zhu Shaoliang:
   Mao Bingwen’s 8th Division, Xu Kexiang’s 24th Division;
   6. The Nineteenth Route Army, commanded by Cai Tingkai
   7. Liu Heting’s 6th Division

The circumstances at the time were as follows: (1) Chiang Kai-shek personally took the field as commander-in-chief. Under him were three field commanders of the left, right, and center, respectively. The center was He Yingqin, based with

- strongest among them were the Nineteenth Route Army, and Zhu Shaoliang’s army. All the rest were rather weak. (3) The AB Corps had been cleaned up, and the people of the soviet area supported the Red Army. (4) Wang Jinyu, newly arrived from the north, was afraid of us, and the same was generally true of the two divisions of Guo [Huazong] and Hao [Mengling] on its left flank. (5) If we attacked Futian first and then swept across to the east, we could expand the soviet area to the Jianning-Lichuan-Taining district of the Fujian-Jiangxi border and acquire supplies to help smash the next “Encirclement and Suppression.” But if we were to strike west, we would come up against the Gan River and would have no room for expansion after the battle. To turn east again after the battle would tire our troops and waste time. (6) Although our army was somewhat smaller (something over 30,000 men), it had had four months to recuperate and build up its energy. For these reasons, we decided, for the first battle, to seek out and engage Wang Jinyu and Gong Bingfan (a total of eleven regiments). After winning this battle, we attacked successively Guo [Huazong], Sun [Lianzhong], Zhu [Shaoliang], and Liu [Heding]. In fifteen days (from May 16 to May 30, 1931), we marched 700 li, fought five battles, and captured more than 20,000 rifles, easily and roundly smashing the enemy’s “Encirclement and Suppression.” When we attacked Wang, we were situated between the two enemy forces of Cai and Guo, 10 or so li from Guo and some 40 li from Cai. Some said that we were “threading the bull’s horns,” but we got through all the same, thanks mainly to the conditions in the soviet area and to the lack of coordination among the enemy units. After Guo’s division was defeated, Hao’s division fled by night back to Yongfeng and so avoided disaster.

The situation of the enemy and ourselves during the Third “Encirclement and Suppression” was as shown in map 3.

The Chinese maps show a third commander, named Li, in the same area as Chen Cheng and Luo Zhuoying, but since it is not possible to identify him with any certainty, we have omitted him from the legend.

166. The Selected Works adds: “of Cai Tingkai”.
167. Sun Lianzhong’s army → Sun Lianzhong’s Twenty-sixth Route Army
168. Zhu Shaoliang’s army → Zhu Shaoliang’s Eighth Route Army
169. Wang Jinyu → The Fifth Route Army of Wang Jinyu
170. Here the Selected Works inserts “in the Futian area”.
171. The metaphor zuan niujiao (threading the bull’s horns) has more than one meaning in Chinese, including to undertake a hopeless task and to get oneself into an impasse, but the sense Mao appears to have in mind here is to fall into a trap.
172. This map, in all the Chinese versions, shows only the surnames (xing) of the various commanders, followed by the letter D (for division) or A (for army). In the legend we have included the given names (ming), on the basis of indications in Mao’s text and the table of organization in jiaofei zhanshi, together with the numbers of the units they commanded on the basis of the latter source. The Chinese maps show a third commander, named Li, in the same area as Chen Cheng and Luo Zhuoying, but since it is not possible to identify him with any certainty, we have omitted him from the legend.
Map 3. The Deployment of the Enemy’s Forces and of Our Own in the Liangcun Campaign During the Third Encirclement and Suppression

Chiang Kaishek at Nanchang; the right was Chen Mingshu, with headquarters at Ji’an; and the left was Zhu Shaoliang, with headquarters at Nanfeng. (2) The suppression forces numbered 300,000. The main forces, totaling about 100,000 men, were Chiang Kaishek’s own troops, consisting of five divisions, each made up of nine regiments, commanded by Chen Cheng, Luo Zhuoying, Zhao Guantao, Wei Lihuang, and Jiang Dingwen. Next came the three divisions of Jiang Guangnai, Cai Tingkai, and Han Deqin, totaling 40,000 men, and then the 20,000 men of Sun Lianzhong’s army. The rest were not Chiang Kaishek’s own troops and were relatively weak. (3) The strategy of this suppression campaign was “to drive straight in,” which was vastly different from the strategy of “consolidate at every step” used in the second campaign. The plan was to press the Red Army up against the Gan River and to annihilate it there. (4) There was an interval of only one month between the conclusion of the Second “Encirclement and Suppression” and the beginning of the Third “Encirclement and Suppression.” The Red Army had had neither rest nor reinforcements after much hard fighting (it was about 30,000 strong), and had just made a detour of a thousand li to regroup at Xingguo in the western part of the Soviet area, when the enemy pressed it hard from several directions. In this situation, the plan we first decided upon was to move from Xingguo via Wan’an, make a breakthrough at Futian, and then sweep from west to east, cutting across the enemy’s rear communications lines and letting the enemy’s main forces make a deep but useless penetration of the Soviet area. This was to be the first phase of our operation. Then when the enemy turned back toward the north, he would inevitably be very fatigued, and we would seize the opportunity to strike at his vulnerable units. That was to be the second phase of our operation. The heart of this plan was to tire the enemy’s main forces, while striking at his weak ones. But as our troops were approaching Futian, we were detected by the enemy, and the two divisions of Chen Cheng and Luo Zhuoying rushed to the scene. We had no choice but to change our plan and fall back to Gaoxingxu in the western part of Xingguo xian. At the time, this was the only town, with its environs, in which we could regroup for a day. We then decided on a plan to advance toward Liangtang, Liangcun, and Huangqi. The next night, under cover of darkness, we passed through the 40-li gap between Jiang Dingwen’s division and the forces of Jiang, Cai, and Han, and turned toward Liangtang. On the second day we came into contact with the forward units of Shangguan Yunxiang (who was commanding his own division and the division of Hao [Mengling]). The first battle was fought on the third day with Shangguan’s division, and the second battle was fought on the fourth day with Hao Mengling’s division. After a three-day march we reached Huangqi and fought our third battle against Mao Bingwen’s division. We won all three battles and captured over

173. The Selected Works version adds here that this area comprised “some tens of square li.” A figure in the middle of the range thus indicated, i.e., 50 or 60 square li, would correspond to roughly six square miles.
Map 3. The Deployment of the Enemy’s Forces and of Our Own in the Liangcun Campaign During the Third Encirclement and Suppression

GUOMINDANG FORCES:
1. Hao Mengling’s 54th Division; Shangguan Yunxiang’s 47th Division
2. Five weaker divisions
3. Mao Bingwen’s 8th Division
4. Xu Xianxiang’s 24th Division
5. Chen Cheng’s 14th Division; Luo Zhouying’s 11th Division
6. Sun Lianzhong’s Second Army Group, including his 25th Division
7. Jiang Guanqiao, commander of First Army Group; Cai Tingcai’s 60th Division in that group
8. Jiang Dingwen’s 9th Division

Chiang Kai-shek at Nanchang; the right was Chen Mingshu, with headquarters at Ji’an; and the left was Zhu Shaoliang, with headquarters at Nanfeng. (2) The suppression forces numbered 300,000. The main forces, totaling about 100,000 men, were Chiang Kai-shek’s own troops, consisting of five divisions, each made up of nine regiments, commanded by Chen Cheng, Luo Zhouying, Zhao Guantao, Wei Lihuang, and Jiang Dingwen. Next came the three divisions of Jiang Guangnai, Cai Tingcai, and Han Deqin, totaling 40,000 men, and then the 20,000 men of Sun Lianzhong’s army. The rest were not Chiang Kai-shek’s own troops and were relatively weak. (3) The strategy of this suppression campaign was “to drive straight in,” which was vastly different from the strategy of “consolidate at every step” used in the second campaign. The plan was to press the Red Army up against the Gan River and to annihilate it there. (4) There was an interval of only one month between the conclusion of the Second “Encirclement and Suppression” and the beginning of the Third “Encirclement and Suppression.” The Red Army had had neither rest nor reinforcements after much hard fighting (it was about 30,000 strong), and had just made a detour of a thousand li to regroup at Xingguo in the western part of the Soviet area, when the enemy pressed it hard from several directions. In this situation, the plan we first decided upon was to move from Xingguo via Wan’an, make a breakthrough at Futian, and then sweep from west to east, cutting across the enemy’s rear communications lines and letting the enemy’s main forces make a deep but useless penetration of the Soviet area. This was to be the first phase of our operation. Then when the enemy turned back toward the north, he would inevitably be very fatigued, and we would seize the opportunity to strike at his vulnerable units. That was to be the second phase of our operation. The heart of this plan was to tire the enemy’s main forces, while striking at his weak ones. But as our troops were approaching Futian, we were detected by the enemy, and the two divisions of Chen Cheng and Luo Zhouying rushed to the scene. We had no choice but to change our plan and fall back to Gaoxingxu in the western part of Xingguo xian. At the time, this was the only town, with its environs, in which we could regroup for a day. We then decided on a plan to advance toward Liantang, Liangcun, and Huangpi. The next night, under cover of darkness, we passed through the 40-li gap between Jiang Dingwen’s division and the forces of Jiang, Cai, and Han, and turned toward Liantang. On the second day we came into contact with the forward units of Shangguan Yunxiang (who was commanding his own division and the division of Hao [Mengling]). The first battle was fought on the third day with Shangguan’s division, and the second battle was fought on the fourth day with Hao Mengling’s division. After a three-day march we reached Huangpi and fought our third battle against Mao Bingwen’s division. We won all three battles and captured over

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10,000 rifles. At this point, all the main forces of the enemy that had been advancing westward and southward turned east. Focusing on Huangpi, they advanced furiously to engage us in battle and closed in on us in a large compact encirclement. We slipped through the high mountains that lay in the 20-li gap between the forces of Jiang and Han and those of Chen and Luo, and returned to regroup within the borders of western Xingguo xian. By the time the enemy discovered us and once again turned toward the west, we had already rested for half a month, while the enemy was hungry, tired, and demoralized, had no strength for fighting, and so decided to retreat. Taking advantage of their retreat, we attacked the forces of Jiang Guangnai, Cai Tingkai, Jiang Dingwen, and Han Deqin, wiping out one of Jiang Dingwen's brigades and Han Deqin's entire division. The fighting with the two divisions of Jiang Guangnai and Cai Tingkai resulted in a standoff, and they got away.

The situation of the enemy and of ourselves during the Fourth “Encirclement and Suppression” is shown in map 4. The circumstances at the time were as follows. The enemy was advancing on Guangchang in three columns; his main force was the eastern column, while the two divisions of the western columns were exposed to our front and were also very close to where we were concentrated. Thus we had the opportunity to attack his western column west of Huangpi first, and in one blow we annihilated the two divisions under Li Ming and Chen Shiji. When the enemy then sent two divisions from the left column to support his central route and advanced farther, we were again able to wipe out one of his divisions at Caotaigang. In these two battles we captured more than 10,000 rifles, and this “Encirclement and Suppression” was basically smashed.

In the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” the enemy advanced using a new strategy of building blockhouses, first occupying Lichuan. But in attempting to retake Lichuan and engage the enemy outside the soviet area, we struck at Xiaoshi, north of Lichuan, which was an enemy stronghold, and was moreover situated in a White area. Failing to win the battle, we then struck at Zixiqiao to the northeast which was also a stronghold located in a White area,

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174. Jiang and Han → Jiang, Cai, and Han
175. The indications on this map regarding the opposing Guomindang forces are limited to the surnames of three commanders. It can be assumed, on the basis of Mao's account, that one of the divisions in the area marked by the figure 1 is that of Chen Shiji, which was annihilated at one blow early in the campaign. There is insufficient information in Mao's text, or in the Guomindang history of "bandit suppression," to justify speculation as to the identity of the other two generals, so we are obliged to let them remain simply "Chen" and "Luo."
176. West of Huangpi → In southern Yihuang xian
177. At Caotaigang → In the southern part of Yihuang xian
178. Literally, "blockhouse-ism."
and again failed to win. After this we milled around between the enemy’s main forces and his blockhouses seeking a battle and fell into a totally passive position. Throughout the entire Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” which lasted a whole year, we showed not the slightest initiative or dynamism. In the end we had no alternative but to withdraw from the soviet area. The situation before the first battle is shown in map 5.  

Our experience during the first through fifth “Encirclement and Suppression” campaigns described above proves that when the Red Army, finding itself in a defensive position, seeks to smash a large and powerful army advancing to suppress it, the first battle of a counteroffensive is of enormous importance. Victory or defeat in the first battle has tremendous influence upon the entire situation, all the way down to the final battle. Thus we arrive at the following conclusions.

First, the battle must be won. We should make our move only when positively certain that factors such as the enemy’s situation, the terrain, and popular support all favor us and not the enemy. Otherwise, it is better to withdraw and carefully wait for an opportunity. There will always be opportunities. We should not join battle rashly. In the First “Encirclement and Suppression,” we originally planned to attack Tan Daoyuan, but, simply because he would not budge from his commanding position on the Yuantou heights, our army twice advanced and twice was obliged to exercise restraint and pull back. A few days later, we sought out the more vulnerable Zhang Huizan. In the Second “Encirclement and Suppression,” our army advanced to Donggu, where, for the sole purpose of waiting for Wang Jinyu to leave his consolidated position at Futian, we encamped close to the enemy for 25 whole days, even at the risk of information leaks, rejected all impatient suggestions for a quick attack, and finally achieved our objective. In the Third “Encirclement and Suppression,” even though a storm was breaking all around us and we had made a detour of a thousand li, and despite the fact that the enemy had discovered our plan to outflank him, we exercised patience, turned back, changed our tactics to a breakthrough in the center, and finally fought a successful first battle at Liantang. In the Fourth “Encirclement and Suppression,” when our attack on Nancheng failed, we did not hesitate to withdraw, finally wheeled around to the enemy’s right flank, regrouped in the Dongshao area, and launched a great and victorious battle east of Huangpi. It was only in the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression” that the importance of the first battle was totally ignored. Alarmed at the loss of the single town of Lichuan, we started out with the idea of attempting to recover it. The unexpected encounter and victory at Xunkou (in which an enemy division was annihilated) was not treated as the first

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180. None of the published versions of Map 5 give any indication regarding the identity or the commanders of the divisions shown.
181. East of Huangpi → In the southern part of Yihuang xian
182. Here the Selected Works text adds the words “and marched northward to meet the enemy”

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Map 5. Disposition of the Enemy and of Our Own Forces During the Initial Period of the Fifth Encirclement and Suppression

GUOMINDANG FORCES:
The figure 1 in a circle indicates the presence of one Guomindang division.

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battle, nor were the changes it was bound to bring about considered. Instead, Xiaoshi was rashly attacked with no assurance of success. Thus the initiative was lost at the very first move, and that is truly the stupidest and worst way to fight.

Second, another reason for emphasizing the importance of the first battle is that the plan for the first battle must be a prelude, organically linked to the plan for the whole campaign. Without a good plan for the whole campaign, it is quite impossible to fight a really good first battle. In other words, even if the
first battle represents a victory, if it is not only not advantageous but actually harmful to the campaign as a whole, then although the battle has been won, it must be accounted a defeat (as was the battle at Xunkou during the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression”). Consequently, before fighting the first battle, it is necessary to have a general idea of how the second, third, fourth, and even the final battle will be fought, and of what kind of changes each successive victory will make in the enemy’s overall situation, and also what changes will occur if we lose. Even though the results may not necessarily be, and will certainly not be, exactly the same as expected, it is still necessary to think everything out carefully and realistically in the light of the overall situation on both sides. Unless you have the overall situation clearly in mind, it is impossible to make a really good chess move.

Third, it is also necessary to consider the plot for the next strategic stage. Whoever thinks only about the counteroffensive, and does not think about how he will proceed in the next chapter, after the counteroffensive has succeeded, or conceivably failed, will not have fulfilled his duties as a director of strategy. At any particular stage, the director of strategy should take account of several succeeding stages, or at the very least of the next stage. Although future changes are difficult to foresee, and the more distant they are the more indistinct they appear, it is possible to make a rough calculation, and an appraisal of distant prospects is necessary. The style of direction that sees only one step at a time is good neither in politics nor in war. With each step, it is necessary to see what concrete changes have occurred during that step and to modify or develop one’s strategic and battle plans accordingly. If this is not done, one can make the mistake of rushing headlong into a dangerous situation. And yet it is absolutely essential to have a long-term policy, covering an entire strategic stage, or even several strategic stages, which has been well thought out in its general outline. If this is not done, one can make the mistake of hesitating and allowing oneself to be tied down, which in fact serves the strategic objectives of the enemy and reduces us to a passive position. We must be aware that the enemy’s highest commanders have long-range strategic vision. Only when we have trained ourselves to be a cut above them will strategic victories be possible. During the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” the main error committed by the strategic leadership of the Zhang Guotao line lay precisely here. Consequently, during the stage of retreat we must look ahead to the stage of the counteroffensive, during the stage of the counteroffensive we must look ahead to the stage of the offensive, and during the stage of the offensive we must look ahead to the stage of retreat. To fail to look ahead, to confine one’s vision to considerations of the moment, is extremely disadvantageous in war.

The battle must be won, the plan for the entire campaign must be taken into account, and the next strategic stage must be considered. These are the three principles that must never be forgotten when starting a counteroffensive, that is, when fighting the first battle.

6. The Problem of Troop Concentration

This problem appears easy, but in practice it is rather difficult. Everyone knows that the best way is to use a large force to defeat a small one, but a lot of people are unable to do this and, on the contrary, often divide their forces. The reason is that they do not have a head for strategy, become confused by complicated circumstances, and as a result are controlled by circumstances, lose the initiative, and just react to circumstances.

No matter how complicated, grave, or harsh the circumstances may be, a military leader must always have a head for organizing and making use of his own forces independently. He may often be forced into a passive position by the enemy, but the important thing is to regain the initiative quickly. Failure to do so inevitably means defeat in the next stage.

The initiative is not something imaginary, but is concrete and material. The most important thing here is to preserve and bring together the largest and most dynamic armed force.

In defensive warfare it is inherently easy to fall into a passive position, for defensive warfare is very different from offensive warfare, in which it is possible to give full scope to the exercise of the initiative. But defensive warfare, which is passive in form, can be imbued with active content; it can be changed from a stage which is passive in form to a stage which is active in both form and content. In form, a fully planned strategic retreat is carried out under compulsion; in content it preserves our troop strength while waiting for an opportunity to destroy the enemy, it is luring him in deep in preparation for the counteroffensive. It is only an unwillingness to retreat and a hasty acceptance of battle (as in the battle of Xiaoshi) that, though it may superficially appear to be an effort to gain the initiative, is in reality passive. A strategic counteroffensive is not only active in content; in form also, it discards the passive posture of a retreat. In a counteroffensive our army attempts to wrest the initiative from the enemy and at the same time to put him in a passive position.

Troop concentration, mobile warfare, quick and decisive battles, and battles of annihilation are all necessary conditions for fully achieving this objective; of these, troop concentration is the first and most essential.

183. Long-range → Some kind of
184. The main error committed by the strategic leadership of the Zhang Guotao line lay precisely here. → The main reason for the errors in strategic direction under the “Left” opportunist line and the Zhang Guotao line lay in failure to do this.
185. Is extremely disadvantageous in war → Is the road to defeat
Troop concentration is necessary in order to change the situation between the enemy and ourselves. First, its purpose is to change the situation as regards advance and retreat. Whereas previously the enemy was advancing and we were retreating, we now attempt to achieve the goal of making the enemy retreat while we advance. When we concentrate our troops and win a battle, this objective is achieved for this one battle, and this in turn influences the entire campaign.

Second, its purpose is to change the situation with regard to offense and defense. The retreat to a stipulated terminal point basically belongs to the passive or "defensive" stage of defensive warfare. The counteroffensive belongs to the active or "attacking" stage. Although the strategic defensive remains defensive in nature throughout, a counteroffensive already represents a change when compared to a retreat, not only in form but in content as well. A counteroffensive represents the transition between the strategic defensive and the strategic offensive; by its very nature, it is a prelude to a strategic offensive. Troops are concentrated precisely in order to achieve this objective.

Third, its purpose is to change the situation with regard to the interior and exterior lines. An army operating on strategically interior lines suffers from many disadvantages, especially in the case of the Chinese Red Army under the circumstances of "encirclement and suppression." But we can, and absolutely must, transform this situation in campaigns or battles. We must turn a big "encirclement and suppression" waged by the enemy against us into a number of separate small encirclement and suppression campaigns waged by us against the enemy. We must turn the enemy's converging attacks against us at the strategic level into our converging attacks against the enemy at the level of campaigns and battles. We must turn the enemy's superiority over us at the strategic level into our superiority over the enemy in campaigns and battles. We must put the enemy, who is in a strong position strategically, into a weak position in campaigns and battles. At the same time, we must see to it that our weak position strategically is turned into a strong position in campaigns and battles. This is what is called exterior-line operations within interior-line operations, encirclement and suppression within "encirclement and suppression," a blockade within a blockade, the offensive within the defensive, superiority within inferiority, strength within weakness, advantage within disadvantage, and initiative within passivity. To wrest victory from within a strategic defensive basically depends on the single move of concentrating forces.

In the war annals of the soviets, this has often been an important and controversial issue. In the battle of Ji'an on October 4, 1930, the advance and attack were begun before our troop strength was fully concentrated. Fortunately, the enemy (Deng Ying's division) fled of its own accord. Our attack itself was certainly not effective.

Beginning in 1932, there was a slogan "Attack on all fronts," which called for attacks from the soviet area in all directions, toward the north, south, east, and west. This is wrong not only for the strategic defensive but also for the strategic offensive. In both strategy and tactics, there are always the two sides of defense and offense, of containment and attack; "attacks on all fronts" are in fact extremely rare. The slogan "attack on all fronts" is an expression of the military egalitarianism which accompanies and grows out of military adventurism. When the revolution is advancing, this is correct as a political slogan, but not as a military slogan.

By 1933, military egalitarianism had put forward the formula "strike with both fists" and split the main forces of the Red Army in two, in the attempt to win victories on two strategic fronts simultaneously. The result was that one fist remained idle, while the other fist fought to exhaustion, and we did not secure the greatest victory which would have been possible at the time. In my opinion, whether we have ten thousand, a million, or ten million troops they should be employed in only one main direction, not two. I am not opposed to operations in two or more directions, but at any given time there should be only one main direction. During the European war, the powerful German army had only one main direction of operations at a time from beginning to end. Among the military critics, there are some who consider that it was an error to withdraw part of the troops from the western theater of operations to reinforce the eastern front in August and September 1914 because of the threat to East Prussia. If we assume that the failure to succeed in the western theater was primarily or partly the result of this redeployment, then this criticism is justified. If the Chinese Red Army, which entered the battlefield of the civil war as a weak and small force, has repeatedly defeated its powerful antagonist and won victories that have astonished the world, the reason lies mainly in the fact that it has concentrated its forces. Any one of its great victories can serve to prove this point. When we say, "Put one against ten, pit ten against a hundred," we are speaking of strategy, of the whole war, and of the overall balance of forces, and in this sense, that is exactly what we have been doing. But this does not refer to campaigns or tactics, in which we must certainly never do so. Whether in counteroffensives or offensives, we should always concentrate a large force to strike at one part of the enemy's forces. In the Dongshao, Ningdu, campaign of January 1931 against Tan Daooyuan, in the Gaoxinghu, Xingguo, campaign of August 1931 against the Nineteenth Route Army, in the Shuikou, Nanxiong, campaign of July 1932

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186. Soviets → Chinese Red Army
187. There are always → When the situation of the overall balance between ourselves and the enemy has not fundamentally changed, there are
188. Whether we have ten thousand, a million, or ten million troops → When we face a powerful enemy, no matter how large our own forces, at a given time
against Chen Jitang, and in the Tuancun, Lichuan, campaign of March 1934 against Chen Cheng, we suffered on each occasion because we did not concentrate our forces. Battles like those fought at Shuikuou and Tuancun have generally been considered victories and have even been considered big victories (in the former we routed twenty regiments under Chen Jitang, and in the latter we routed twelve regiments under Chen Cheng), but we have never welcomed such victories, and in a certain sense we can say flatly that they were defeats. We regard them as having been of little significance because no troops or supplies were captured or the troops and supplies captured did not outweigh the costs. Our strategy is “Pit one against ten,” and our tactics are “Pit ten against one.” These contrary and yet complementary propositions constitute one of our principles for gaining mastery over the enemy.

By the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression” of 1934, military egalitarianism had reached its extreme point. It was believed that the enemy could be beaten by “dividing the forces into six routes” and “resisting on all fronts.” If the result was that the enemy beat us, the reason lay in our fear of giving up territory. When the main forces are concentrated in one direction, leaving only containing forces in the other directions, you naturally cannot help but lose territory. But this is a temporary and partial loss, and the compensation for it is victory in the direction where the assault was made. After victory is secured in the direction of the assault, the losses incurred in the containment areas can be recovered. The first, second, third, and fourth “Encirclement and Suppression” campaigns all entailed losses of territory, especially the Third “Encirclement and Suppression,” in which the entire soviet area was lost, but the result was that not only was it all recovered but its territory was enlarged.

Failure to recognize the strength of the people in the soviet area gave rise to an erroneous psychology of fear of moving the Red Army too far away from the soviet area. This attitude arose during the 1932 Red Army attack on Zhangzhou and in 1933, when the Red Army turned to attack Fujian following the victory over the Fourth “Encirclement and Suppression.” In the former, the fear was that the entire soviet area would be occupied, and in the latter that part of the soviet area would be occupied; proposals were made to divide the troops for defense, but in the end all this proved wrong. From the enemy’s point of view, on the one hand, he is afraid to advance into the soviet area; on the other hand, the thing he fears most is that the Red Army will launch attacks on the White areas. Thus, the attention of the enemy is always fixed on the whereabouts of the main force of the Red Army, and he rarely takes his eyes off the main force of the Red Army to focus on the soviet area. Even when it is on the defensive, the Red Army is the main attraction. To reduce the size of the soviet area is part of the enemy’s overall plan, but if the Red Army concentrates its main forces to annihilate one of his columns, the enemy is compelled to focus his attention and military forces even more on the Red Army. Hence it is possible to wreck the enemy’s plan to reduce the size of the soviet area.

Also, it was wrong to say, “In the blockhouse warfare of the Fifth ‘Encirclement and Suppression’ it is impossible for us to fight with concentrated forces; we can only divide them up for defense and mount short, swift thrusts.” The blockhouse method of warfare, which advanced three to five li or pushed forward eight to ten li at a time, was in large measure facilitated by the fact that the Red Army itself took the defensive at each point. The situation would certainly have been different if we had abandoned the tactics of point-by-point defense on our interior lines, and instead had turned to attack the enemy’s interior lines whenever necessary. The principle of concentration of forces is precisely the tool for defeating blockhouse warfare.

To abandon arming the people and small-scale guerrilla warfare, and “concentrate every single rifle in the Red Army,” as advocated by Lisanism, has long since been proved wrong. From the standpoint of the wars of the soviets, the operations of the armed people and of the small-scale guerrilla units, and those of the main forces of the Red Army are like a person’s two arms. If we had only the main forces of the Red Army, without the armed people and the small- scale guerrilla units, we would be nothing but a warrior with only one arm. The role of the people in a soviet area, in concrete terms and especially when talking about military operations, means precisely the armed people. This is the main reason the enemy is afraid to enter. The kind of concentration of forces we advocate by no means includes the abandonment of arming the people, and of small-scale guerrilla warfare.

It is necessary to deploy Red Army detachments for fighting on secondary fronts; not all need be concentrated. The kind of concentration we advocate is based on the principle of guaranteeing absolute or relative superiority on the battlefield. To cope with a strong enemy or to fight on a vitally important

189. In the Dongshao, Ningdu, campaign → In the battle in the Dongshao area of Ningdu xian in Jiangxi Province. ... In the Gaoxinxu, Xingguo, campaign → In the battle in the Gaoxingxu area of Xingguo xian in Jiangxi. ... In the Shuikuou, Nanxiong, campaign → In the battle in the Shuikuou area of Nanxiong xian in Guangdong Province. ... In the Tuancun, Lichuan campaign → In the battle in the Tuancun area of Lichuan xian in Jiangxi
190. Principles → Fundamental principles
191. The entire soviet area was lost → the Red Army’s Jiangxi base area was almost entirely lost
192. The Red Army is the main attraction → The enemy’s attention is still concentrated on the Red Army
193. In large measure → Entirely
194. Whenever necessary → Whenever necessary and possible
195. Lisanism → The Lisan Line
196. The wars of the soviets → The revolutionary war as a whole
197. In the Selected Works version, this sentence has been moved from the end of this paragraph to the beginning.
battlefield, we must have an absolutely superior force available; for instance, a force of forty thousand was concentrated to fight the nine thousand men of Zhang Huizan on December 30, 1930. To cope with a weak enemy or when fighting on a battlefield that is not of vital importance, a relatively superior force is sufficient; for instance, in the last battle of the Second "Encirclement and Suppression," the Red Army deployed only something over ten thousand men to fight Liu Heding’s seven thousand men at Jianning on May 29, 1931.

Nor does this mean that we must have numerical superiority on every occasion. In certain circumstances, we may go into battle with a relatively or absolutely inferior force. The former case may occur, for example, when we have only a rather small Red Army force in a particular area (not when we have troops but they have not been concentrated). Then, in order to withstand the attack of the stronger enemy in conditions where popular support, terrain, and weather are greatly in our favor, it is of course necessary to concentrate the main part of our Red Army force for a surprise attack on a segment of one flank of the enemy, while containing his center and his other flank with guerrillas or small detachments, and in this way victory can be won. In our surprise attack on this segment of the enemy flank, the principle of using a superior force against an inferior force, of using the many to defeat the few, still applies. The same principle also applies when we go into battle with an absolutely inferior force, for example, when a guerrilla force makes a surprise attack on a large White army force, but is attacking only a small part of it.

As for the argument that the concentration of a large force for action in a single battle area is subject to the limitations of terrain, roads, supplies, and billeting facilities, it should be evaluated according to the circumstances. There is a difference in the degree to which these limitations affect the Red Army and the White army because the Red Army can endure greater hardships than can the White army.

We use the few to defeat the many—this we say to the rulers of China as a whole. We use the many to defeat the few—this we say to the enemy on the battlefield. That is no longer a secret, and in general the enemy is by now well acquainted with our ways. Nevertheless, the enemy can neither prevent our victories nor avoid his own losses because he does not know when and where we shall attack him. This we keep secret. The Red Army generally operates by surprise attacks.

7. Mobile Warfare

Mobile warfare or positional warfare? Our answer is mobile warfare. So long as we lack superior troop strength or reserves of ammunition and have only one Red Army in each soviet area to do all the fighting, positional warfare is basically useless to us. For us, positional warfare is generally inapplicable in attack as well as in defense.

One of the outstanding characteristics of the Red Army's operations, arising from the fact that the enemy is powerful and the Red Army lacks technical equipment, is the absence of fixed battle lines.

The Red Army's battle lines are determined by the direction in which it is operating. Since its operational direction is not fixed, its battle lines are also not fixed. Although the main direction does not change in a given time period, within this overall orientation the secondary directions may change at any moment. When we are checked in one direction, we must turn in another direction. If after a while we are also stopped in the main direction, then this main direction must also be changed.

During a revolutionary civil war, the battle lines cannot be fixed. This was also the case in the Soviet Union. The difference between them and us is that their battle lines were not as fluid as ours. No war can have absolutely fixed battle lines because the vicissitudes of victory and defeat, advance and retreat, preclude this. But relatively fixed battle lines are often found in the general run of wars. Exceptions occur only when an army faces a much stronger enemy, as in the case of the Chinese Red Army in its present stage.

Fluidity of battle lines leads to fluidity in the borders of the soviet areas. They are constantly growing larger and growing smaller, contracting and expanding, and often one rises as another falls. This fluidity of the soviet territories is entirely the result of the fluidity of the war.

The fluidity of the war and of the soviet territories also imparts a fluid quality to soviet construction. Construction plans covering several years are out of the question. Frequent changes in plans are all in a day's work.

It is to our advantage to recognize this characteristic. We must take it as our point of departure, base our schedule on it, and have no illusions about a war of advance without retreat. Nor should we be alarmed by temporary fluctuations in the soviet territories or in the military or political rear areas, nor attempt to establish concrete long-term plans. We must adapt our thinking and our work to the circumstances, be ready to sit down or to march on, and always have our rucksacks handy. It is only from today's fluid way of life that we can strive for relative stability in the future, and eventually for full stability.

The strategic orientation of so-called "regular warfare," which was dominant during the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression," denied this fluidity. Its adherents opposed what they called "guerrilla-ism," and managed affairs as if they were the rulers of a big state. As a result, they got an extraordinary and immense fluidity—the 25,000-li Long March.

198. The former case → Relative inferiority
199. Superior → Large

200. Them and us → The Soviet Union's army and our army
201. Soviet construction → All fields of construction in our base areas
We are a state, but not yet a full-fledged state. We are today still in the first period of the civil war, we are still far from being a full-fledged state, our army is still far inferior to that of the enemy both in numbers and equipment, the territory we control is still very small, and our enemy is constantly intent on destroying us and will not rest until he has done so. Establishing our policy on the basis of these facts, we do not oppose guerilla-ism in general, but honestly admit the guerilla character of the Red Army. It is pointless to be ashamed of this. On the contrary, this guerilla character is precisely our special quality; it is our strong point and the tool with which we defeat the enemy. We should prepare to discard our guerilla character, but we cannot discard it today. In the future, our guerilla character will certainly become something to be ashamed of and to be discarded, but today it is valuable and we must hold on to it firmly.

"Fight when you can win, and move away when you can't win" is the popular interpretation of our mobile warfare today. No military expert in the world would approve only of fighting without ever walking away from a fight. It is just that no one else does as much moving as we do. We generally spend more time moving than fighting and are doing well if we fight one big battle a month. All our "moving" is for the purpose of "fighting," and all our strategic and tactical planning is based on "fighting." There are, however, several kinds of situations in which it is not good to fight. First, it is not good to fight when the enemy forces are too numerous. Second, it is sometimes not good to fight when, although not numerous, the enemy is in very close contact with neighboring forces. Third, generally speaking, it is not good to fight an enemy that is not isolated and is strongly entrenched. Fourth, it is not good to continue fighting a battle that cannot be won. We are prepared to move away from any such situations, and to do so is both permissible and necessary because our recognition of the necessity to move away is based on our prior recognition of the necessary conditions for fighting. Herein lies the fundamental special character of the Red Army’s mobile warfare.

To take mobile warfare as the foundation is by no means to reject all positional warfare. We should recognize the need to use positional warfare to deal with situations such as defending key points in a containment action during a strategic defensive, or when the enemy is isolated and cut off from help during a strategic offensive. In the past, we have already had considerable experience in using this kind of positional warfare to defeat the enemy. We have cracked open many cities, blockhouses, and forts, and we have broken through fairly well fortified enemy field positions. From now on, we should also increase our efforts and remedy our deficiencies in this area. We must absolutely promote the use of positional offensives and of positional defensives whenever required and permitted by the circumstances. We are opposed only to the generalized use of positional warfare or to putting it on an equal footing with mobile warfare at this time; these are the only things that are not permissible.

During ten years of war, have there been no changes whatsoever in the guerilla character of the Red Army, its lack of fixed battle lines, the fluidity of the soviet areas, or the fluidity of construction in the soviets? Yes, there have been changes. In the first stage, from the Jinggangshan to the First "Encirclement and Suppression," the guerilla character and fluidity were very marked, the Red Army was in its infancy, and the soviet areas were still guerilla areas. In the second stage, from the First "Encirclement and Suppression" to the Third "Encirclement and suppression," the guerilla character and fluidity were considerably reduced, front armies had already been established, and soviet base areas had already been set up. In the third stage, from the Third "Encirclement and Suppression" to the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression," the guerilla character and fluidity were further reduced, and a Soviet Central Government and Revolutionary Military Commission had already been set up. The Long March was the fourth stage, when the rejections of guerilla warfare and fluidity on a small scale brought guerilla warfare and fluidity on a large scale. Now we are in the fifth stage. Because of the failure to defeat the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression" and because of this great fluidity, the Red Army and the soviet area have been proportionately reduced in size. On the other hand, we have already set up a base in the Northwest, and the three front armies which are the main forces of the Red Army have been brought under a unified command, as had previously never been done.

In terms of the nature of our strategy, we may also say that the period from the Jinggangshan to the Fourth "Encirclement and Suppression" was one stage, the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression" was another stage, and the period from the Long March to the present is the third stage. During the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression," the previous policy was rejected; today we have in turn rejected the policy of the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression" and revived the

202. We are a state → Our workers’ and peasants’ democratic republic is a state
203. First period → Period of the strategic defensive
204. We are still far from being → Our political power is still far from being that of
205. Positional warfare → Positional warfare, where it is necessary and possible
206. Throughout this text, and especially in the following passage, suqu (soviet areas) has been replaced by genjudi (base areas). These changes are not further indicated in the notes.
207. Soviet base areas had already been set up → Base areas with a population of several million already existed.
208. Rejection → Erroreous rejection
209. Proportionately → Greatly
210. We have already set up a base in the Northwest → We have planted our feet in the Northwest and consolidated and developed the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region Base Area
previous policy.211 We have not, however, rejected everything from the period of the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” nor have we revived everything that preceded it. We have revived what was good in the past, and rejected the mistakes of the period of the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.”

Guerrilla-ism has two aspects. One aspect is irregularity, that is, decentralization, lack of uniformity, absence of discipline, phenomena of oversimplification, and so on.212 These things were inherent in the period of the Red Army’s infancy, and some of them were exactly what was needed at the time. But as a higher stage is reached, it becomes necessary gradually and consciously to eliminate them, and to make it213 somewhat more centralized, somewhat more unified, somewhat more disciplined, and somewhat more complex214—that is, to make it more regular in character. As regards the direction of operations, we should also gradually and consciously reduce those guerrilla characteristics that are no longer needed at higher stages. Refusal to make progress in this respect and obstinate adherence to the old stage are impermissible and harmful and detrimental to large-scale operations.

The other aspect is mobile warfare,215 that is, those guerrilla characteristics that are still necessary in strategic operations and in campaigns today, the unavoidable fluidity of the Soviet areas, the flexible and changing nature of development planning for the Soviets, and the need to avoid premature regularization in building the Red Army. In this respect, it is equally impermissible, harmful, and disadvantageous to our present fighting to deny history, to oppose retention of what is useful, and rashly to depart from the present stage and rush blindly toward a “new stage” which is beyond reach and has no real significance at present.

We are now on the eve of a new stage in the technical equipment and organization of the Red Army. We should prepare to go over to this new stage. Not to make these preparations would be wrong and harmful to our future warfare. In the future, when the technical and organizational conditions of the Red Army have changed, and the building of the Red Army has been raised to a new stage, its operational directions and battle lines will become more stable. There will be more positional warfare, and the fluidity of the war, of the Soviet territories, and of our construction work will be greatly reduced, until finally it will disappear.

Then there will be a way to overcome the present limitations, such as the enemy’s superiority and his strongly entrenched positions.

At present, on the one hand we oppose the erroneous and premature measures of the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression” period;216 on the other hand, we also oppose reviving all the irregularities of the period of the Red Army’s infancy before the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.” But we should be resolute in restoring the many valuable strategic and tactical principles217 by which the Red Army has consistently won victory. At the same time, we must accept some of those good and useful lessons learned in the areas of Red Army building and fighting during the struggles against the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.” Furthermore, we must sum up all that is good from the past in a systematic, more highly developed and richer military line or strategic line, in order to win victory over our enemy today and prepare to turn to a new stage.

The actual waging of mobile warfare involves many problems, such as reconnaissance, judgment, decision, combat deployment, command, concealment, speed, concentration, starting an advance, deployment, attack, pursuit, surprise attack, positional attack, positional defense, engagement, retreat, night fighting, special operations, evading strength and hitting weakness, besieging a town in order to strike at the enemy’s reinforcements, feigning attack, defense against aircraft, operating among several enemy forces, by-passing operations, consecutive battles, operating without a rear, the necessity for rest and recuperation, and so on. In the combat history of the Red Army, these problems have all exhibited a number of specific features that will be218 methodically described in the study of campaigns and should be summed up well. I will not go into them here.

8. Battles of Quick Decision

A protracted war219 and campaigns or battles of quick decision are two aspects of the same thing, two principles which should receive simultaneous and equal emphasis in the war of the Chinese soviets,220 and which can also be applied in anti-imperialist national wars.

Because the ruling forces221 are very strong, the revolutionary forces grow gradually, and this fact determines the protracted nature of the war. This being the case, impatience causes losses, and it is incorrect to advocate

211. During the Fifth . . . the previous policy.
212. Absence of discipline, phenomena of oversimplification, and so on → Absence of strict discipline, and simplified work methods
213. It → the Red Army
214. More complex → More meticulous in its work
215. Mobile warfare → The orientation toward mobile warfare
216. The Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression” period → the period of the domination by “Left” opportunism
217. Strategic and tactical principles → Principles of army building and of strategy and tactics
218. Will be → Should be
219. A protracted war → A strategically protracted war
220. The war of the Chinese soviets → Civil wars
221. Ruling forces → Reactionary forces
"quick decision." To have waged a Soviet war\textsuperscript{222} for ten years might seem surprising in other countries, but for us it is like the opening sections of an eight-legged essay—the statement, amplification, and preliminary exposition of the theme—with many exciting parts yet to follow. No doubt future developments, under the influence of domestic and international conditions, may be greatly accelerated. Because of the changes that have already taken place in the international and domestic environment, and also because even greater changes will follow, it can be said that we have already left behind the past situation of slow development and isolated fighting. But we should not expect success overnight. The spirit of "wiping [the enemy] out before breakfast" is admirable, but it is not good to make concrete plans to "wipe him out before breakfast." Because \textit{semicocolial} China's ruling forces\textsuperscript{223} include many imperialists,\textsuperscript{224} in addition to the domestic counterrevolutionaries, our revolutionary war will continue to be protracted until our domestic revolutionary forces have built up enough strength to breach the main positions of our domestic and foreign enemies, and until the international revolutionary forces give large amounts of direct aid to the Chinese revolution.\textsuperscript{225} To take this as the starting point for formulating our strategic orientation for long-term fighting is one of the important principles guiding our strategy.

The reverse is true of campaigns and battles, for here the principle is not protractedness but quick decision. Alike in ancient and modern times, in China and abroad, quick decisions have been sought in these. In war as a whole, too, quick decision is sought at all times and in all countries, and a long-drawn-out war is considered disadvantageous. China's war alone can only be handled with the greatest of patience and must be treated as a protracted war. During the period of the Lisan Line, some people ridiculed us for our "shadowboxing tactics" (meaning that we would fight back and forth, hither and thither, before we could take the big cities), and taunted us, saying that we would not see the victory of the revolution until our hair turned white. This attitude of revolutionary impatience was proved wrong long ago. But if this idea had been applied to campaigns and battles, it would have been perfectly correct, for the following reasons. First, the Red Army has no sources for arms, especially for ammunition. Second, there are many White armies, but only one Red Army, which must be prepared to smash each "Encirclement and Suppression" by fighting one battle after another in rapid succession. Third, although the individual White armies advance separately, most of them keep fairly close together, and if we fail to achieve a quick decision in attacking one of them, the others will all come. For these reasons, we have to fight battles of quick decision. We ordinarily finish a battle in a few hours, or in a day or two. It is only when the plan is to "besiege a town in order to strike at the enemy's reinforcements" and our purpose is not to attack the enemy we have surrounded but to hit the enemy's reinforcements, that we are prepared to besiege the enemy for a fairly prolonged period. But even then, we seek a quick decision against the reinforcements. A plan for protracted campaigns or battles is often applied when we are strategically on the defensive, and tenaciously holding on to positions on a containment front, or when, during a strategic offensive, we are attacking an isolated enemy cut off from support, or when eliminating White strongholds within a soviet area. But protracted operations of this kind assist rather than hinder the main Red Army force in its battles of quick decision.

A battle of quick decision will not be successful merely because we desire it in our hearts (though desiring it in our hearts is naturally of primary importance); a number of concrete conditions must also be met. The most important of these are sufficient preparation, seizing the opportune moment, concentration of superior forces, encircling and outflanking tactics, favorable terrain, and striking the enemy while he is on the move, or when he has halted but has not yet consolidated his position. Unless these conditions are met, it is impossible to achieve a quick decision in a campaign or battle.

Smashing an "Encirclement and Suppression" has the character of a major campaign, but the principle of quick decision and not protractedness still applies because the financial and military conditions of the people of a soviet area do not allow for protractedness.

But, under the general principle of quick decisions, it is necessary to oppose undue impatience. It is altogether necessary that the highest military and political leading organs of a soviet area, having taken into account these conditions in the soviet area and the enemy's circumstances, should not be overawed by the enemy's menacing power, dispirited by hardships that can be endured, or dejected because of a few setbacks, but manifest the necessary patience and stamina. Smashing the First "Encirclement and Suppression" in the Central Soviet Area took only one week, from the first battle to the conclusion; the Second "Encirclement and Suppression" lasted only a fortnight; the Third "Encirclement and Suppression" dragged on for three months; and the Fourth "Encirclement and Suppression" lasted three weeks. Only the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression" dragged on for a whole year. The final breakout from the siege of the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression" showed haste.\textsuperscript{226} Given the circumstances, we could have held out another two or three months, using this time to rest and train the Red Army.\textsuperscript{227} If that had been done, and if the leadership had been slightly

\textsuperscript{222} Soviet war \rightarrow Revolutionary war
\textsuperscript{223} Ruling forces \rightarrow Reactionary forces
\textsuperscript{224} Include many imperialists \rightarrow Are supported by many imperialists
\textsuperscript{225} Give large amounts of direct aid to the Chinese revolution \rightarrow Crush or contain most of the international reactionary forces

\textsuperscript{226} The final breakout from the siege of the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression" showed haste. \rightarrow But when, after failing to smash the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression," we were obliged to break out, we also showed unjustifiable haste.

\textsuperscript{227} Rest and train the Red Army \rightarrow Rest and reorganize the army
more intelligent after the breakthrough, the situation would have been vastly different.

Even so, the principle of shortening the length of a campaign by every means possible remains valid. In addition to campaign and battle plans that emphasize conditions such as maximizing the concentration of forces, mobile warfare, and so on, so as to annihilate the enemy's active forces on our interior lines (within the soviet area), and quickly defeat the "Encirclement and Suppression," when it is evident that there is no way to terminate the "Encirclement and Suppression" on our interior lines, we should use the main forces of the Red Army to break through the enemy's encirclement lines and switch to our exterior lines, the enemy's interior lines, to solve the problem. Now that blockhouse-ism has developed to its present stage, such tactics will become our usual method of operation. Two months after the commencement of the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression," when the Fujian Incident occurred, the main forces of the Red Army should unquestionably have turned toward the Jiangsu-Zhejiang-Anhui-Jiangxi area, centered on Zhejiang, and should have swept across the area of Hangzhou, Suzhou, Nanjing, Wuhu, Nanchang, and Fuzhou, turning the strategic defensive into a strategic offensive, threatening the enemy's vital centers, and seeking battle in the vast areas where there were no blockhouses. By such means we could have forced the enemy to turn his attack away from the soviet area, and turn back to defend his vital centers, thus shattering his attack on the soviet area, while also assisting the Fujian People's Government, which definitely would have been helped by this action. Since this plan was not used, the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression" could not be broken, and the People's Government inevitably collapsed. After fighting had continued for a year, although it was then no longer advantageous to advance on Zhejiang, we could still have turned to a strategic offensive in another direction, that is, by advancing our main forces into Hunan. Instead of passing through Hunan to Guizhou, by advancing to Zhuzhou, Changsha, and Changde, the greater part of Hunan could have been turned into our own strategic action zone, maneuvering the enemy into moving from Jiangxi to Hunan and destroying him there. This could have been used to break the "Encirclement and Suppression" campaign and protect the soviet area. This plan, too, was rejected, finally destroying any hope of breaking the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression," and leaving only one road—that of the Long March.

9. Wars of Annihilation

It is not appropriate to advocate a "war of attrition" for the Red Army. A game of "comparing treasures" not between two dragon kings, but between a beggar and a dragon king, would be rather ludicrous. For the Red Army, which has nothing of its own and gets everything from the enemy, the basic policy orientation is a war of annihilation. Only by annihilating the enemy's vital forces can the "Encirclement and Suppression" campaigns be broken and the soviet areas expanded. Inflicting casualties is a means that we adopt to annihilate the enemy; otherwise, it would not make much sense. We incur losses in inflicting casualties on the enemy, but we replenish ourselves by annihilating the enemy. This is the method of exchange on the marketplace as applied to war. Against a powerful enemy, a battle in which he is routed is not basically a decisive thing. A battle of annihilation immediately has a decisive impact on any enemy. Injury all ten of a person's fingers is not as effective as chopping off one, and routing ten enemy divisions is not as effective as annihilating one of them.

Our policy orientation in the first, second, third, and fourth "Encirclement and Suppression" campaigns was that of a war of annihilation. Although the enemy forces annihilated each time constituted only a part of the enemy's total forces, the "Encirclement and Suppression" was smashed. In the Fifth "Encirclement and Suppression" our policy was reversed, and in reality this helped the enemy reach his objectives.

Campaigns like those at Gaoyingxu and Shuikousu are not good models, and it has always been recognized that they were not profitable. According to our classics, booty must be taken.

War of annihilation signifies the same thing as concentrating superior forces and using encircling or outflanking tactics. It is impossible to have the former without the latter. Such conditions as popular support, favorable terrain, a vulnerable enemy force, and surprise are all indispensable for achieving annihilation. Of course, the complete annihilation of an entire regiment or division is, in fact, seldom achieved, but whenever the possibility presents itself, it should be our plan to attempt to do so. Our plans are usually based on the premise of attempting to annihilate the greater part of the enemy force.

Routing the enemy, or letting him escape, is significant only if it occurs within the context of a whole battle or whole campaign in which our main armed forces are engaged in a battle of annihilation against a specific enemy force; otherwise it is meaningless. Here again, the losses are justified by the gains.

When the soviet areas set up war industries we must not allow ourselves to become dependent on them. Our basic policy is to rely on the war industries of the imperialists and of our enemy at home. We have a right to the output of the armaments factories of London and Hankow, and moreover, to having it delivered to us by the enemy's transportation corps. This is the truth, and not a joke.

228. Soviet area → The southern Jiangxi and western Fujian areas
229. Advancing to Zhuzhou, Changsha, and Changde → Advancing into central Hunan
230. Has nothing of its own and gets everything → Gets almost everything
231. Here the Selected Works version adds the sentence, "In this way, we not only make good our army's losses, we increase the strength of our army."
232. Decisive → Severe
Wherever the Red Army has not yet learned this truth, there the output of the war factories (though not large) will be the best, and there the Red Army will win the fewest victories.

The whole world is approaching yet another great war of attrition. The first great imperialist war was a great war of attrition, but this will not be the model for the revolutionary insurrections and revolutionary wars that will arise from small beginnings and grow large. These insurrections and wars will rely mainly on attacking and annihilating the opponent to solve their problems.

Telegram from Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai to Zhang Xueliang

(December 13, 1936, at noon)\(^1\)

For the perusal of Elder Brother Li Yi:\(^2\)

We are in receipt of your telegram dated in the early morning\(^3\) of the 12th day of the month.

The fact that the prime culprit\(^4\) has been arrested makes for happiness shared far and wide. As for the current tasks, in terms of the whole country they have been expressed in the telegram to [Pan] Hannian, which we had the honor of submitting to you yesterday, and beg that you transmit to Shanghai; in terms of the Northwest, we herewith describe them briefly, and respectfully request that you consider the matter.

1. Deploy the main forces in Tongguan, Fengxiang, and Pingliang, the most important being Tongguan, and firmly resist Fan Songfu.\(^5\)

2. Call upon the popular masses of Xi’an and the Northwest to rise up in support of this magnanimous act for the public good and do the same throughout the country. Your younger brothers and the rest of us believe that only by basing all actions on the popular masses will the Xi’an uprising firmly develop toward victory.

3. It would be best to place under arrest immediately or to drive out the fascist elements within the armed forces, and carry out broad and thoroughgoing political mobilization throughout the army, proclaim to all officers and soldiers Mr. Chiang’s crimes in selling out the country and harming the people, and politically unite the whole army. This is one of the most pressing tasks at the moment.

4. When the troops of Hu [Zongnan], Zeng [Wanzhong], and Guan [Linzheng] press toward the south, the Red Army has decided to act in concert.

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Our source for this telegram is *Wenxian he yanjiu*, 1986, pp. 131–32 of the annual compendium.

1. Mao indicates the time of day by a character signifying between 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M.
2. I.e., Zhang Xueliang.
3. Here the character signifying the hours from 3 to 5 A.M. is used.
4. I.e., Chiang Kaisheng.
5. Fan Songfu (1897–1979), zi Zheshan, a native of Zhejiang, was at this time the commander of the First Column of the Yunnan-Guizhou Bandit-Suppression headquarters.
with the forces of our elder brother, from the side and the rear, and to destroy them resolutely. Please inform us by telegram at any time as to how we should proceed. In addition, as regards the International, your younger brothers have already made some arrangements, and will inform you of the details at a later date. Enlai plans to come to Xi'an to discuss with our elder brothers the plans for the future and would like to request that you send a plane to Yan'an to fetch him, and that elder brother Yang Huchen secretly inform by telegram the troops in Yan'an for protection. We eagerly await your reply as to how this can be arranged. Please order your radio station to maintain contact with us at all times.


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6. *Guoji fangmian* could here signify either "as regards the International," or "as regards the international aspects." Since the only communication Mao and his comrades are known to have had at this precise time was with Moscow, it is extremely probable that the reference is to the efforts, mentioned below in several other documents, to secure the support of the International for a strong line against Chiang Kai-shek. As indicated in the Introduction, Mao soon discovered that Stalin's perspective on the Xi'an Incident was very different from his.

7. The Chinese term is *kou*, literally, "kowtow."

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Proposal That the Northeastern Army Assure the Occupation of the Two Strategic Key Points, Lanzhou and Hanzhong

(December 13, 1936, in the afternoon)\(^1\)

Elder Brother Li Yi:\(^2\)

Regarding the overall military policy, we propose the following points. Please consider them and give us a reply.

1. There is a great possibility that Liu Zhi will command the Henan group to occupy Tongguan.\(^3\) It seems that you ought to bring this to the attention of elder brother Yang Huchen and advise him to use his main force to block Liu’s forces firmly at Tongguan.

2. In order to assure the occupation of the two strategic points of Lanzhou and Hanzhong and to keep Chiang’s Gansu troops in two separate groups, we propose that:

   a. Yu [Xuezhong]’s entire army be used to consolidate the defense of Lanzhou and carefully guard against attacks by Mao Bingwen and the Northwest Supplies Brigade.

   b. The two armies of Wang Yizhe and Dong Yingbin among our elder brother’s troops and the cavalry army be concentrated along the Pingliang-Huiting line so as to push Chiang’s troops to the one side of southern Gansu, obstruct and stop the southward advance of Hu [Zongnan], Zeng [Wanzhong], Guan [Linzhang], and Mao [Bingwen], and hand over to the Red Army the task of defending Haiyuan and Guyuan.

   c. The Red Army deploy its main force to the Haiyuan-Guyuan region and use a powerful unit to follow Hu’s troops in the Yuwang region so as to coordinate our action with our elder brother’s forces at Jingning and

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We have translated this document from *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 681–82, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Here Mao indicates the time of day using a character which means between 3 and 5 P.M.
2. I.e., Zhang Xueliang
3. Liu Zhi (1892–1971) was a native of Jiangxi and graduated from the Baoding Military Academy. Beginning with the Northern Expedition, he served in many different posts under the command of He Yingjin and Chiang Kai-shek. On December 12, he had been appointed chairman of a commission to reorganize troops in Jiangsu, Anhui, and Henan.
Pingliang and seize an opportunity to eliminate Hu’s forces, which are advancing southward. If Hu and others remain in their present positions, then it is best to push them into Ningxia.

d. Liu Puchen be consulted and asked to send fifteen to twenty regiments of the Sichuan troops to Hanzhong.

We wonder whether the above is appropriate. Please send us your reply. We entreat our elder brother to take charge of formulating these overall military plans. We await your instructions as soon as possible.

Your younger brothers, [Mao Ze]dong and [Zhou En]lai, bow respectfully

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The Field Army Should Move to the Town of Xifeng

(December 14, 1936)

Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

The Field Army should move to the town of Xifeng. The reasons are as follows:

1. Nanjing has already launched a large-scale civil war, throwing all its forces against Zhang [Xueliang] and Yang [Hucheng]. Its main force will advance through Tongguan.

2. There are a lot of unstable elements within Zhang and Yang’s camps. Nanjing’s policy is to win over Yang and attack Zhang. Moving the Red Army nearer to them will embolden them and raise their morale.

3. By moving nearer to Zhang and Yang, we will be able to deal with various contingencies. If we are far away we cannot do so.

4. The town of Xifeng is near where Wang Yizhe is, and we can still attack Hu [Zongnan].

5. Whether or not Xi’an is defensible, various options will become open to us once we move southward.

6. It is impossible to leave Ningxia for the moment. If we did, we would be on our own. At the same time, Zhang and Yang have embarked on a dangerous path.

7. If we remain stationary for the time being in our present position, there will be no battle to be fought, and we will not be able to extricate Zhang and Yang from this crisis. Consequently, our first step should be to move to the town of Xifeng.

Mao Zedong

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Our source for this telegram is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 683–84, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Telegram from Mao Zedong and Others to Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng

(December 14, 1936)

For the honorable inspection of the two generals, Hanqing and Hucheng:¹

1. In the just action of the 12th day of the month, the prime culprit was arrested, to resist Japan and save the nation, and the whole country is in sympathy. Your younger brother and the rest of us lead the entire Red Army and all the people of the soviet areas in firm approval of the revolutionary cause led by you two generals, and we respectfully submit our opinions briefly herewith.

2. Japan has decided to put pressure on Nanjing to expand the civil war, in order to pursue its plot to destroy our country. Some pro-Japanese elements in Nanjing have accepted Japan’s instructions and are continuing to develop Mr. Chiang’s policy of peace abroad and civil war, and are preparing to launch a large-scale attack toward the Northwest. But the popular masses of the whole country, the majority of Guomindang members, and the powerful military figures in the various provinces are without exception anxious to stop the civil war and join together in resisting Japan. They warmly welcome the anti-Japanese uprising in Xi’an and oppose the plots of Japan and the Chinese traitors.

3. The overall guidelines for our actions should immediately undergo the following changes in order to meet the emergency:
   a. Immediately proclaim the organization of the Northwest Anti-Japanese Joint Army to Support Suiyuan,² with Zhang Xueliang as its commander-in-chief; the reorganization of the Northeastern Army into the First Group Army of the Northwest Anti-Japanese Joint Army to Support Suiyuan, with Zhang Xueliang serving concurrently as the commander-in-chief of the First Group Army; the reorganization of the Seventeenth Route Army into the Second Group Army, with Yang Hucheng as its commander-in-chief; the reorganization of the Red Army into the Third Group Army, with Zhu De as commander-in-chief. Establish a military and political committee for the Northwest Anti-Japanese Joint Army to Support Suiyuan, with the high-level leaders of the three group armies as its members, three to five from each group army, with Zhang Xueliang, Yang Huchen, and Zhu De as the three-man presidium, with Zhang as chairman, Yang and Zhu as vice-chairmen, to unify the military and political leadership. If such an organization is favored with your approval, it should be announced immediately to the entire army and the whole country in the name of the tripartite anti-Japanese national salvation joint conference. In addition, great efforts are to be made to see that Mr. Yan Xishan and other patriotic leaders all over the country join in, and that Mr. Yan Xishan be promoted as commander-in-chief of the nationwide Anti-Japanese Joint Army to Support Suiyuan.
   b. Military measures for the present: The three main forces of the Anti-Japanese Joint Army to Support Suiyuan should concentrate in the area centered on Xi’an and Pingliang, develop high morale among the troops, consolidate unity, fight to the finish against the enemies, and defeat them one by one. Within the next three weeks, the troops under Elder Brother Yang are to guard securely the city of Xi’an, and the troops under Elder Brother Zhang and us, your younger brothers, will take responsibility for field battles. If this meets with the favor of your approval, our main forces can reach Xifengzhen within one week, and after that reinforce Xi’an or Guyuan, the decision to be taken according to circumstances. A portion of our forces will deal with the enemy troops under Hu [Zongnan] in Dingbian, Yang’an, and Huaxian, and another portion will deal with the enemy forces under Tang [Enbo] in Fushi and Ganquan. The troops under Elder Brother Wang Yizhe are to remain on guard against the enemy under Hu [Zongnan] in Guyuan, and those under Yu Xuezhong should continue to guard Lanzhou. As long as a few battles are won, the war situation can be greatly improved, and even if there are some losses, it will not adversely affect the overall situation. After the first step as outlined above has been taken, the second step should be resolved on according to circumstances.
   c. The most important task at present is to consolidate our internal ranks, and win victory over the enemy. [To this end], we suggest:
      i. Uniformly put forward in the joint army’s three sections the following ten slogans: Northeastern Army, Seventeenth Route Army, and Red Army, unite; Anti-Japanese armies and anti-Japanese people, unite; Down with Japanese imperialism, down with the Chinese traitors selling out their country; Convene a national salvation conference, and establish a government of national salvation; Win freedom for the people; Oppose Japanese destruction of China and oppose the Chinese traitors’ expansion of the civil war; Demand a halt to the civil war and unity to resist Japan; Fight to preserve China, fight to support Suiyuan, fight to recover the Northeast; Long live the anti-Japanese Joint Army! Long live the independence and liberation of the Chinese nation!

¹ Our source for this text is Wenzhao he yanjing, 1986, pp. 133–34 of the annual volume.
² I.e., Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng. Throughout this document, Yang is referred to by his earlier mingu of Hucheng, rather than as Hucheng.
³ In November 1936, Japan had tried to establish a puppet state in Suiyuan, but Nationalist forces under Fu Zuoyi resisted strongly and successfully.
ii. Engage in enthusiastic political agitation among the troops.

iii. Purge the pro-Chiang elements among the troops.

iv. Arouse the courage for battle throughout the army, and create a spirit of fighting to the death.

The above points are the suggestions of your younger brothers, and we respectfully entreat you to select from among them as you see fit. Time is of the essence, and the slightest laxity spells death. If you take the wise decision to adopt any of them, it would augur well for our cooperation, and for the revolution. We beg you to reply by telegram.

Respectfully submitted jointly by your younger brothers

Mao Zedong
Zhou Enlai
Peng Dehuai
Xiao Ke
Xu Haidong

Zhu De
Zhang Guotao
He Long
Lin Biao
Xu Xiangqian

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Telegram from the Red Army Command to the Guomindang and to the National Government on the Xi'an Incident

(December 15, 1936)

To the gentlemen of the Guomindang and of the National Government in Nanjing, for their perusal:

The Xi'an Incident and the startling news of Mr. Chiang's detention were quite unexpected. This was, however, the result of Mr. Chiang's three grossly erroneous policies of capitulation in foreign affairs, use of military force in domestic affairs, and oppressing the people. Zhang [Xueliang] and Yang [Hucheng], both of whom are members of the Central Executive Committee of your honorable party and leaders of the “Suppress-the-Communists” Army, have also firmly requested that the campaign to “suppress the Communists” be halted, and that everyone join together to resist Japan. Looking at the eight articles of their proclamation, these are indeed the words of the people of the whole country. If they are truly and seriously carried out, what great harm can result? Today's Xi'an Incident is but a continuation of the Fujian Incident and the Guangdong-Guangxi Incident; together, they constitute the three legs of a tripod. All three were the actions of wise heroes from your own honorable party, who wanted to resist Japan and save the country and were dissatisfied with Mr. Chiang's actions tending to surrender to Japan and sell out the country, and therefore rose up to unfurl the banner of righteousness. If you disdain to examine the situation seriously and act according to your own views alone, further such incidents will result, creating disastrous divisions within the country, so that you will not be able to put it back together even if you want to. How can it be said that those persons within the Guomindang who are patriotic and brave are still subject to Mr. Chiang's orders or to those of the pro-Japanese faction, which flatters for-

Our source for this telegram is Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 468–70, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The eight points listed in a circular telegram from Zhang and Yang on December 13 included the following: (1) reorganize the Nanjing government to include members of various parties and factions to take responsibility for national salvation; (2) stop all civil wars; (3) immediately release the patriotic leaders arrested in Shanghai; (4) release all political prisoners; (5) unleash the patriotic movements of the popular masses; (6) guarantee the people's right of assembly and association, and all their political rights; (7) truly carry out the Director General's testament; (8) immediately call together a conference for national salvation.
eigners while crushing the people? If a healthy trend does not prevail, the integrity of the party will be destroyed. Then the country will shrink day by day, the rivers and mountains will be ravaged and shattered, and you, as well as the people, will be ruined and will lift up your grievances and suffering to the heavens. We venture to suggest that the occurrence of the Xi'an Incident provides a most valuable occasion for the Nanjing authorities to engage in self-examination. It absolutely cannot be solved in an arrogant and overbearing manner. This would lead, rather, to the launching of an unprecedented civil war, as indicated by recent dispatches. As the saying goes, "When the snipe and the clam grapple with each other, the fisherman waits on the bank." Today the fisherman has already raised his net. When the Japanese heard that Nanjing had decided to send a punitive expedition against Zhang and Yang, they were in high spirits, put on their armor and readied their troops, poised to strike. If the Nanjing gentlemen do indeed assemble all the troops defending the seacoast and Yangzi River, for a mammoth punitive expedition in the Northwest, then though the Northwest is a poor and desolate area, when the courageous masses under Zhang and Yang rise up and the beacons of war burn in remote Shanxi and Suiyuan, the cauldron will boil throughout the entire nation, and no one can really predict how fate will allocate victory or defeat. Even if the battle is won, and the attack is successful, bringing joy and satisfaction, the Japanese will take advantage of the vacuum to launch an invasion, to attack Shanghai and Nanjing, to seize Qingdao and Ji'nan, and to make North China independent. The Northwest, too, will then be threatened, and the whole country will be lost and truly will not recover from all the disasters. Heed the parable of the praying mantis and the oriole; the scorn for harming your kindred to the delight of your enemy will last for countless generations and will be forever difficult to wash away. We cannot but warn against what we and others know in our hearts to be dangerous. China is the China of the Chinese people. If the country does not survive, how can there be a people? If the people perish, where will the party be? It is for this reason that, for more than a year, we have not shrunk from proposing time and again plans for Guomindang-Communist cooperation, for turning enmity into friendship, and for joining together to meet the enemy of the nation, even to the point of wearing out our tongues. Consequently, if you gentlemen should wish to dissociate yourselves from Mr. Chiang and from the pro-Japanese clique, you need only say that you have summoned up your resolve and decided to accept the proposal of Mr. Zhang and Mr. Yang. Stop the civil war being launched at this very moment,

remove Mr. Chiang from office, and hand him over to the judgment of the citizens. Unite all parties, all factions, all walks of life, and all armies; organize a united front government; discard the false, meaningless bureaucratic airs of the program of authoritarianism, unity, and discipline that Mr. Chiang loved to promote; and sincerely and honestly turn over a new leaf with the people. Let freedom of speech blossom, unban patriotic publications, release patriotic prisoners, order all the armies engaged in civil war to go immediately to Shanxi and Suiyuan to resist the Japanese bandits. Turn darkness into light, and change misfortune into great good fortune. If this is done, then all of us, incapable as we are, shall be willing to lead the 200,000—strong masses of the People's Red Army to join hands with the armed forces of your honorable party, and march forward together to the battlefield of the national revolution, to fight in bloody battle for the freedom and liberation of our motherland. Otherwise, not only will it be impossible for the people of the entire nation, including the patriots within your honorable party, merely to sit and watch the loss of the country and the extinction of the race, we as well shall certainly not watch from the sidelines with arms folded. Having submitted this telegram, we look forward to receiving enlightened instruction from you.


2. This anecdote, which is to be found in the Zhanguo ce (Strategies of the Warring States), in the section devoted to the state of Yan, has passed into common usage in China as an illustration of the fact that, when two fight, a third may reap the benefits. Mao cites it several times in the course of this volume.

3. For this story, see the Shuoyuan. Zhengjian. The praying mantis seized the cicada, oblivious to the oriole behind; the moral is obvious.

4. Wang Jiase is yet another alternative name for Wang Jiaxiang.
A Grand Strategy Must Be Adopted to Strike at the Enemy’s Key Positions

(December 15, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

Whether in the military or the political domain, at present it is imperative to strike at the enemy’s key positions. The enemy’s key position is not Ningxia or Gansu but, rather, Henan and Nanjing. The enemy has already launched a large-scale civil war. Our position with regard to the war is that we are reacting to it rather than taking the initiative. Yet when the enemy’s main force is advancing toward Xi’an, our forces should pursue a grand strategy, make a detour, and strike at the enemy’s head, the Nanjing government. There should be no doubt about this general policy. This plan must be concealed, and no one is to pass it on to lower levels.

Mao

Telegram from Mao Zedong to Zhang Xueliang

(December 17, 1936)

Elder Brother Li Yi:

We have respectfully taken note of your telegram of the 17th. Concentrating forces for a war of resistance is entirely appropriate. The only thing is that, as regards our view of the enemy, your younger brother believes that Hu Zongnan and Tang Enbo each have no more than a detachment, and each can be contained by one unit. The critical points for the enemy are Nanjing and the Jinghan and Longhai railway lines.1 If a surprise attack is launched on the Jinghan and Longhai lines using strategic outflanking troops of 20,000 to 30,000 men and a decisive victory is won, the overall situation would immediately change, and we beg you to consider this point. We have already made several reports to a distant place, but have not yet received any reply.2 You, Elder Brother, have ordered Liu Ding to send information by telegram once daily about the movements of the popular masses. If the distant place concludes that incidents like the present one [in Xi’an] and developments after the incident are not simply military actions but are linked to the popular masses, I reckon they will express their sympathy. The only thing is that the government in a distant place, in response to the demands of foreign relations, may not be able to support us openly as yet. Enlai is waiting outside the city of Fushi,3 so please give orders quickly to the militia in Fushi to allow him to go to that city. I await your response regarding this matter.

Your younger brother Zhao Dong4

Our source for this text is Wenshui he yanjiu, 1986, pp. 135–36 of the annual volume.

1. The Jinghan line is that between Beijing and Hankou. The Longhai line runs westward from the sea to Xi’an.

2. “A distant place” refers to the Communist International in Moscow. It is not surprising that no reply had been received, since as indicated in the Introduction to this volume, Moscow condemned the Xi’an events as a Japanese plot and ordered the Chinese Communist Party to support and protect Chiang Kai-shek.

3. As indicated above in a note to the text of April 6, 1936, Fushi was the old name for Yan’an.

4. Zhao Dong is one of Mao Zedong’s less common pseudonyms.
Telegram from the Chinese Central Soviet Government and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party Concerning the Xi’an Incident

(December 19, 1936)

To Messrs. Kong Yongzhi, Sun Zheseng, Feng Huanzhang, and Chen Lifu in Nanjing; to the gentlemen of the Guomindang National Government; to Messrs. Zhang Hanqing, Yang Hucheng, Wang Tingfang, and Sun Weiru in Xi’an; and to the gentlemen of the Temporary Military Affairs Commission of the Anti-Japanese Allied Armies of the Northeast, most respectfully, for their perusal:

Ever since Xi’an proposed the program for resisting Japan, the entire nation has been in turmoil, and Nanjing’s policy of “resist foreign aggressors only after establishing domestic tranquility” can no longer continue. In all fairness, it is the patriotic and enthusiastic gentlemen of Xi’an who have really taken the lead, and they propose beginning the anti-Japanese resistance immediately. The gentlemen of Nanjing, however, are lagging behind, although, except for the pro-Japanese elements, they are not totally lacking in patriotism. They did not really want to start the civil war. Considering the current general trend, there is no way to survive unless we resist Japan, and there is no way to save the country unless we join together. Obstinately to continue the civil war can only hasten our own demise! In the autumn of this life-and-death crisis, our party and our government have solemnly offered the following proposals for both sides:

1. The armies of both sides shall take Tongguan as the demarcation line for the time being. The Nanjing troops will not attack Tongguan, and the Xi’an Anti-Japanese Army will, for the time being, remain within the borders of Shaanxi and Gansu and await resolution by the peace conference.

2. A peace conference shall be called immediately by Nanjing, and, in addition to representatives sent both from Nanjing and from Xi’an, all parties, all factions, all circles, and all armies shall be notified to select representatives to participate in the peace conference. Our Party and our government are also preparing to send representatives to participate.

3. Before the peace conference begins, all parties, all factions, all circles, and all armies shall first draw up a draft resolution for resisting Japan and saving the nation, and shall discuss the question of dealing with Mr. Chiang Kai-shek. But the basic outlines should be to unite the whole country, to oppose all civil war, and resist Japan together.

4. The location for the conference shall provisionally be set as Nanjing.

The above proposal is indeed a reasonable and effective way to solve the present emergency. It is hoped that the gentlemen in Nanjing will immediately decide on a national policy in order to avoid this national chaos and the vacuum that would make it possible for the Japanese bandits to enter! It is also hoped that the people of the whole country, the various parties, and the various factions will supervise the convening of the peace conference, discuss a definite national policy, and move forward together to meet the national crisis!

Chinese Central Soviet Government
Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party

We have translated this document from Mao Zedong Ji. Bujuan, Vol. 5, pp. 35–36, where it is reproduced from a collection published in China in 1981.
Central Committee Directive Concerning the Xi’an Incident and Our Tasks

(December 19, 1936)

I. The Situation Before the Occurrence of the Xi’an Incident

1. With the beginning of a partial war of resistance in eastern Suiyuan, the anti-Japanese movement throughout the whole country and in the large cities of the Northwest (such as Xi’an, Taiyuan, and Suiyuan) rapidly leapt forward with a fierce momentum that not only forced the broad petty bourgeois masses and the majority of the middle bourgeoisie to join but also created decisive divisions within the big bourgeoisie.

2. Directly faced with this rapidly developing anti-Japanese movement, the Nanjing government was also forced to change its former policy of yielding to Japan, albeit hesitantly and indecisively. In the process of these changes, it still tried hard to compromise with Japan, did not express a positive attitude toward the partial war of resistance in Suiyuan, adopted a policy of suppressing the anti-Japanese movement, and was unwilling to cease its attacks on the Red Army.

3. Under the influence and prompting of the people of the whole nation and of the Northwest, and of the Communist Party and the Soviet Red Army, the anti-Japanese feelings of the Northeastern Army and of the commanders and soldiers of the Seventeenth Route Army have risen very high, and it is for this reason that they have demanded a rapid halt to the attacks on the Red Army, the cessation of all civil warfare, and a united anti-Japanese resistance. But this demand of theirs has been adamantly rejected by Chiang Kaishek.

II. The Meaning of the Xi’an Incident

1. This action was the result of dissatisfaction with the Nanjing government’s policy toward Japan on the part of representatives of a portion of the Chinese national bourgeoisie and of a portion of the dominant faction of the Guomindang, who demanded an immediate cessation to the “Communist suppression” campaign, a halt to all civil fighting, and a united anti-Japanese resistance.

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong ji. Bijiuan, Vol. 5, pp. 37-40, where it is reproduced from a collection published in China in 1981. It was adopted at a meeting of the Politburo at which Mao gave the opening address, and the content of this text parallels to some extent Mao’s remarks on that occasion, as summarized in Nianpu, Vol. 1, pp. 625-26.

tance, and who had also accepted the anti-Japanese proposals of the Communist Party. Consequently, this action came into being for the purpose of resisting Japan and saving the nation, and was begun with the intention that the anti-Japanese united front in the Northwest would promote the creation of a nationwide anti-Japanese unified front.

2. But, because that this action was carried out in many respects in the style of a more or less military secret plot, and detained Nanjing’s highest responsible person and principal commander, Chiang Kaishek, it put Nanjing in the position of being an enemy of Xi’an and thus created the possibility of a new large-scale civil war that would be extremely dangerous for the Chinese nation. Hence, this action has also impeded the union of the nationwide anti-Japanese forces.

III. Two Possible Future Developments Out of the Xi’an Incident, and Their Proponents

1. One possibility is that this incident will cause a civil war to erupt and cause some or most of the Nanjing moderates (the national reformist faction) to become subjectively and objectively pro-Japanese, weakening the nationwide anti-Japanese forces and delaying the launching of a nationwide war of resistance, to the point that it will create conditions favorable to invasion by the Japanese bandits. This possibility would be welcomed by the international alliance of aggressors, Japan, Germany, and Italy, and especially by Japan and the Chinese pro-Japanese faction.

2. The other possibility is that this incident will, on the contrary, bring an end to the “Communist suppression” civil war, cause the early realization of a ceasefire in the civil war and a united resistance against Japan, and make the nationwide anti-Japanese national salvation united front become a reality more quickly. This possibility is the one that the international peace alliance, all the nation’s people, and all those parties, factions, walks of life, and armies that want to resist Japan and save the nation earnestly uphold and wish to make a reality.

IV. Basic Principles for Realizing the Second Possible Future Outcome

1. The position of those organizers and leaders who firmly uphold stopping all civil war and uniting against Japan is to oppose a new civil war and support a peaceful resolution between Nanjing and Xi’an that is based upon joining together to resist Japan.

2. Use every method to unite with the Nanjing left wing, win over the moderates, and oppose the pro-Japanese faction, in order to prod Nanjing to move closer to an anti-Japanese position, and to expose the use of the call to support Chiang by the Japanese and the pro-Japan faction, and their plot to launch civil war.

3. Show sympathy for the Xi’an action, and give active support to Zhang and
Yang (both military and political), so that they may fully realize the proposal to resist Japan launched by Xi'an.

4. Fully carry out preparations for a defensive war when the "punitive army" attacks, and deal a serious blow to the "punitive army" so that it will be forced to reexamine itself. This kind of defensive war does not mean that we want to substitute a policy of expanding the civil war for the policy of a united anti-Japanese resistance but is, rather, for the purpose of promoting the establishment of a nationwide united front against Japan, and of launching a nationwide war against Japan.

Consult with Nanjing Regarding a Peaceful Resolution of the Problem of the Xi'an Incident

(December 19, 1936)

Comrade [Pan] Hannian:

Please consult with Nanjing about the possibility of, as well as the minimum conditions for, a peaceful resolution of the Xi'an Incident, so that the tragic calamity of the destruction of the state may be avoided.

Mao Zedong

Our source for this telegram is the 1985 annual compendium of Wenshui he yanjiu, p. 201.
Eliminate the Enemy Coming from the East in Coordination with the Forces of Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng

(December 19, 1936, 11:00 p.m.)

Zhou:

1. The situation is evolving. On the one hand, the Japanese warlords, Chinese traitors, and Nanjing rightists are doing their utmost to create a situation of civil war; on the other hand, the forces in Xi’an resisting Japan, the Red Army, the Chinese people, powerful factions opposing Chiang within China, the leftists of Nanjing, and the peace-loving countries of the world are uniting to oppose civil war and support the effort to resist Japan.

2. The telegram of the 19th from the Soviet government and the Chinese Communist Party advocating the convening of a peace conference is an effort to strive for uniting with all domestic and international leftist and intermediate forces to oppose civil war and support resistance to Japan.

3. The forces in Xi’an resisting Japan should also advance under the guidance of this common overall orientation.

4. Resolutely eliminating the enemy, who is on the offensive, is an important means of putting into effect this overall orientation.

5. It has been decided that the Red Army should move toward Xi’an and concentrate there, so as to eliminate the enemy coming from the east in coordination with Zhang and Yang as a matter of first priority.

Mao Zedong

To Peng Xuefeng

(December 20, 1936)

Comrade Yufeng:

Please transmit my letter to Mr. Baichuan as soon as you have read it, and ask him to reply. Radio communications and messenger communication between Jixian and Yan’an-Chang’an, and trading relationships between Shaanxi and Shaanxi, must be established right away without delay. In the future most of the channels of communication to North China must pass through Shaanxi, so please discuss this thoroughly with Mr. Yan and obtain his approval. I am now sending Comrade Song Shaolin to deliver a letter to Mr. Yan and to give you [a copy of] this letter. Please give him the letter in response right away to bring back, as soon as possible. It would be best for the xian magistrate, Qu Xiangxian, to maintain the contacts between us, if he has permission from Mr. Yan, because he is already familiar with the situation. In your relations with the outside world, you must have a sincere attitude, maintain a firm stand, and be frugal in expenditures. With regard to the incident in Shaanxi, our orientation has already been stated in detail in the open telegram of the 19th, and I hope that you will act accordingly. Send me a report on the course of your contacts with Shaanxi.

Salutations!

Mao Zedong

Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 686–87, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. As noted above in the Introduction, Zhou Enlai had set out for Xi’an on December 15 and arrived there on the evening of December 17, to serve as the principal Communist spokesman in negotiations with Zhang and Yang, and later with Chiang Kai-shek. Thereafter, he was in regular telegraphic contact with Mao and the other Party leaders in Bao’an.

2. Translated above.

We have translated this letter from *Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji*, pp. 93–94, where it is reproduced from a manuscript copy.

1. Peng Xuefeng (1907–1944), alternate name Peng Yufeng, a native of Henan, joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1927. He had been trained at a military school in Beijing, and served as a Red Army commander or political commissar throughout the Jiangxi Soviet period and the Long March. Most recently, he had been political commissar of the Fourth Division during the Eastern Expedition of early 1936. Later in the year, he was sent by the Party to Shanxi and other places to engage in United Front work. (See above, the reference to him in Mao’s letter of September 22, 1936, to Yu Xuezhong.)

2. Baichuan was the zi of Yan Xishan.

3. I.e., the Xi’an Incident.
Make Five Requests to Chen Lifu for Cooperation in the Resistance to Japan

(December 21, 1936)

Comrade (Pan) Hannian:

Make the following requests immediately of Mr. Chen Lifu and the others, and obtain their consent.

At present the biggest crisis is that Japan is forming a coalition with pro-Japanese factions in Nanjing and various places, and under the banner of support for Chiang Kai-shek they are creating domestic turmoil, in order to enslave China. All leftists in Nanjing and elsewhere should quickly take action to remedy this dangerous situation. The Communist Party is willing to support the left and resolutely advocates the establishment of domestic peace and union to deal with Japan and the pro-Japanese forces, on the basis of the following conditions:

1. Admit some leading personalities of the anti-Japanese movement into the Nanjing government, and eliminate the pro-Japanese faction.

2. Stop all military operations, and recognize the status of Xi’an.

3. Abandon the policy of suppressing the Communists, and unite with the Red Army to resist Japan.

4. Guarantee democratic rights, and establish cooperative relations with all countries that are sympathetic to the anti-Japanese movement in China.

5. When all these conditions are fully guaranteed, persuade the people in Xi’an to free Mr. Chiang Kai-shek and support him in uniting the whole country to fight Japan together. Whatever the result, please reply quickly by telegram.

Mao

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Expose the Joint Plot of the Japanese and the He Yingqin Faction to Murder Chiang

(December 21, 1936, 8:00 P.M.)

Zhou [Enlai]:

Send someone to meet with Dong Zhao, Fan Songfu, Wang Yaowu, and Hu Zongnan, to tell them that He Yingqin, He Chengjun, and others in the pro-Japanese faction are actually plotting to kill Chiang, and that we are willing to negotiate with them about conditions for Chiang Kai-shek’s release. The Huangpu group should not be fooled by the pro-Japanese faction and other intriguers. Leaflets may also be handed out exposing the plot to murder Chiang by Japan and the He Yingqin faction.

Mao

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We have translated this document from the 1985 annual compendium of Wenzhan he yanjiu, pp. 201–2.

1. He Yingqin (1890–1987), zhi Jingzhi, was a native of Guizhou and received a military education in Japan. As chief instructor in tactics at the Huangpu Academy, he became closely associated with Chiang Kai-shek. Beginning in 1930, he was minister of war in the Nanjing government. In 1931 he commanded the Guomindang forces in the unsuccessful First “Encirclement and Suppression” against the Communists. He played a major role in negotiating the Tanggu Truce of 1933 with Japan and gave his name to the He-Umezu Agreement of 1935, becoming known as a partisan of accommodation with Japan at any price. Regarding his role at the time of the Xi’an Incident, see above, the Introduction to this volume.

2. Dong Zhao (1902–1977), a native of Shaanxi, was a student in the first class to enter the Huangpu Military Academy in 1924. At this time, he was the commander of the Twenty-eighth Division of the National Army.

3. For a biography of Wang Yaowu, see below the relevant note to the text dated January 3, 1937.

4. He Chengjun (1882–1961) was a native of Hebei. In 1935 he had been promoted to full general, and on December 1, 1936, he had been appointed chairman of the special military commission in charge of the Wuhan Field Headquarters.
To Yan Xishan
(December 22, 1936)

For the perusal of the honorable Vice-Chairman Baichuan:

The Shaanxi Incident has suddenly occurred under extraordinary circumstances. From the telegraphic dispatches I have learned that you, sir, oppose the civil war and that you have expressed your willingness to take part in "the joint effort to maintain the overall situation." I very much admire you for making such a statement, which is as brilliant as a maxim. We have decided to send you detailed information about the telegrams of the 15th and the 19th. For the sake of the overall situation, we do not endorse any idea of rupture, nor shall we seek revenge upon the Nanjing government. On the contrary, we are eager to help coordinate efforts, along with you gentlemen and the rest of the country, to mediate between the Nanjing government and Shaanxi. In all honesty, to do otherwise would only bring great harm to the nation and great benefit to Japan. At present the troops dispatched by Nanjing are stepping up their fierce attack on Shaanxi, and it is my wish that you, sir, can come up with some strong measures to mediate between the two sides. As for the Red Army, it will never launch any attack on the territory controlled by Nanjing, so long as it stops its policy of "suppressing Communism," endorses the united front, joins in resisting Japan, and designates an appropriate defense zone. As for the areas in Shanxi and Suiyuan under your honorable leadership, we previously sent Peng Yufeng to see you and present to you our humble proposal. For the past several months, you and General Fu have been fighting heroically in Suiyuan and the Northeast against the enemy, launching a mass patriotic movement, and disbanding the anti-Communist association, all of which is most particularly worthy of admiration. At this point, however, the conflict between Nanjing and Shaanxi is extremely urgent, and if the Nanjing side persists in its attacks and nothing can be done to mediate, it will be hardly possible for the Red Army just to sit back and watch. If the scope of the war expands, we shall need your assistance in many respects. I respectfully beg your guidance as to how the four provinces of Shanxi, Suiyuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu can be made to unite closely as a single force, thus giving their statements on the affairs of the country a much stronger impact. It is now imperative to establish quick telegraphic communication between us and to establish messenger stations between Jixian and Yan'an-Chang'an. If we are favored with your consent, the transceiver can begin to operate immediately on January 15. Your side can be in charge of the messenger station in Jixian, and our side may take charge of the station in Yan'an-Chang'an. One ferry boat is to be available on each side of the Pingdu Pass. Each side designates someone to be in charge of communications, and no military personnel from either side is to cross the river. It is also sincerely hoped that economic and trading relationships can be established as soon as possible between Shanxi and Shaanxi and that normal relations can be restored. This spring Mr. Qu Xiangxian, the xian magistrate of Jixian, came to Shaanxi along with the army and worked in our educational department for several months. Mr. Qu is truly a gentleman, and he is very familiar with our policy toward the united front against Japan. He is welcome to come here at any time. I am truly and deeply grateful to you for the many kindnesses you have shown to Peng Yufeng during his stay where you are, and I beseech you to give him guidance whenever he needs it, so that he may have something to go by. I await your instructions in all matters.

Wishing you every good fortune!

Respectfully submitted by Mao Zedong

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We have translated this document from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 95–97, where it is reproduced from a manuscript copy.

1. The reference is to the telegrams of these dates, addressed to the Guomindang, translated above.
A Letter to the Chinese National Revolutionary Alliance
(December 22, 1936)

To the ladies and gentlemen of the Chinese National Revolutionary Alliance:

I have received your letter and am in total agreement with your ideas expressed therein. We still lack the necessary and reliable communications with the Shanxi and Suiyuan authorities, and this poses a great disadvantage for the present urgent task of saving the nation from extinction. We resolutely declare: With complete sympathy for the determination and action of the Shanxi and Suiyuan authorities and their army and people truly to resist the Japanese bandits and to defend our national territory, we wish to assist them with all our might. This spring, when the Red Army crossed the Yellow River and marched eastward, its original destination was Hebei and Chahar, and the frontal enemy was the Japanese bandits, but the situation was unfortunately misunderstood by the two gentlemen, Mr. Yan [Xishan] and Mr. Chiang [Kaishek], so the army was diverted back to the west to await their understanding. Although the Red Army is eager to go to the very frontlines of the anti-Japanese arena, it must first obtain the understanding of the local friendly armies. Before obtaining such an understanding the Red Army will certainly not recklessly advance. If the Shanxi and Suiyuan authorities are serious about their commitment to resisting Japan, and when they deem it necessary, the Red Army will sign an agreement of cooperation with them. Such an agreement should stipulate the demarcation of defense lines, mutual assistance, supply of military materials, unification of military command, and so on. If such an agreement can be reached, and the Red Army can accordingly enter the Resistance War area in Shanxi and Suiyuan, then the Red Army will devote all its efforts to the interests of the Resistance War and will definitely refrain from interfering with the local authorities and from taking any actions harmful to the friendly armies. In your letter, you inquire about the strategic objectives of the Red Army in the Northwest. We would like to advise you that the only objective of the Red Army in the Northwest is to defend the Northwest and North China. At present we are concentrated in the Shaanxi-Gansu- Ningxia area, and we seek first of all the understanding of the Guomindang army and, on the basis of cooperation, to join in the anti-Japanese battlefront. We have no other goal apart from this. We have already made our declaration known to all Guomindang troops in the Northwest: The Red Army will on its own initiative stop attacking them and will take necessary self-defense measures only when they attack us. We shall return all personnel and weapons captured in self-defense as soon as they turn to resisting Japan. As they move over to the anti-Japanese battlefields, no Red Army personnel is ever allowed to interfere in any way with their actions, and they are, rather, to be assisted in every possible way. In sum, at this time when the nation may face extinction at any moment, our wish is to resist Japan and save the nation, and resistance against Japan and national salvation are our only wish. Although some people in every group are still suspicious of us, time will prove that we do precisely what we say. You are struggling hard for national liberation, and, on behalf of our Party, our government, and our Red Army, I should like to express to you our warm admiration and respect and our hopes that our two sides will form a solid battlefront and fight to the very end to drive out Japanese imperialism. We further hope that you will influence all quarters, above all, the Shanxi and Suiyuan authorities, to carry out quickly the war of resistance and establish a unified front of every faction. We, too, are doing the same in relation to all quarters.

With sincere best wishes and a national revolutionary salute to you!

Mao Zedong
December 22, in the Northern Shaanxi Soviet Area

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Our source for this letter is Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 473–74, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Regarding the Circumstances Surrounding the Release of Chiang Kaishhek

(December 25, 1936, at midnight)

Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

The principle of restoring Chiang’s freedom, under five conditions, for the purpose of transforming the orientation of the whole situation, is the result of the negotiations we proposed. This has been completely accepted by Chiang and Nanjing’s Left-wing representatives. Last night I sent a telegram to Enlai to the effect that Chiang should not be let go before they make sure that the prerequisite conditions are met and that the situation has developed to the point that there would be no wavering after his release. But they have already released Chiang Kaishhek today, and Song Ziwen, Zhang Xueliang, and Song Meiling flew today to Luoyang on the same plane. Judging from the circumstances, there are advantages to releasing Chiang, but whether or not the advantages have been realized is a matter that remains to be confirmed subsequently according to the evidence.

The field army should still concentrate its forces in Xianyang immediately.

Mao Zedong

A Proposal Regarding Deployment by Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng with a View to Defeating the Enemy Coming from the East

(December 25, 1936, 3:00 A.M.)

Zhou [Enlai] and Bo [Gu]:

1. According to today’s intelligence, He Yingqin is deploying his main force of the two columns of Zhou Lei and Huang Jie, altogether twenty regiments, to the north of the Wei river; Li Mo’an’s column of approximately eight regiments is employed in Luinan; only eight regiments of Fan Songfu’s column are deployed in the front, to play the role of attraction and containment.

2. The deployment of the enemy makes it very easy, once the Red Army’s main force reaches Xianyang, to defeat Li Mo’an’s column at Lantian, break through to the Longhai line, cut his route of retreat, and develop the military situation. It is proposed that the following deployments be made rapidly:
   a. Immediately send someone to eliminate Feng Qianzai secretly, and consolidate our control over Dali.
   b. Consolidate the river front of the town of Xiaoyi and delay the crossing of the river by the enemy.
   c. Secretly move two divisions of the Northeast Army to Fuping, so as to consolidate our control over this key point.
   d. Deploy one division each in Sanyuan, Gaoling, and Kangqiaozhen. For defense purposes two bridges should be built, one between Weinan and Lintong, and the other between Lintong and Xi’an, and many boats should be prepared, so that when necessary the Red Army may move to the north side of the river to engage in battle.
   e. Deploy one division at Lantian, and send one regiment to the town of Houzi, some units to the town of Bao’an, and a brigade to Shangxian. Fortifications should be built at all these places, and they should be defend the death so as to assure the rear and facilitate a sudden attack by the Red Army on the Longhai line.

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 688–89, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Feng Jinggui (1890–1963), zhi Qianzai, was a native of Shanxi. At this time, he was commander of the Seventh Army of the Seventeenth Route Army. Immediately after the Xi’an coup, he repudiated Yang Hucheng’s action and went over to the side of Chiang Kaishhek.
f. Deploy two divisions at the front facing Weinan and Lintong.
g. At present it is sufficient to deploy one division at Xi’an. The rest of the troops may be concentrated at positions suitable for maneuver. Quickly put forth the above proposals to Zhang and Yang.

Mao Zedong

A Statement on
Chiang Kaishek’s Proclamation of the 26th

(December 28, 1936)

According to a telegram of the 30th from the Hongse Zhonghua agency, yesterday the Communist Party organ, Douzheng, published a statement by Comrade Mao Zedong commenting on the proclamation made by Chiang Kaishek in Luoyang on the 26th (that is, the so-called admonition to Zhang and Yang), the main idea of which is as follows:

In Xi’an Mr. Chiang Kaishek accepted the demand for resistance to Japan put forward by Zhang [Xueliang] and Yang [Hucheng] and the people of the Northwest, and he has ordered his troops conducting the civil war to withdraw from the provinces of Shaanxi and Gansu. This marks the beginning of Mr. Chiang’s reversal of his erroneous policy of the past decade. It is an initial blow to the intrigues conducted by Japan and the Chinese “punitive group” to stage-manage a civil war, foment splits, and get Chiang killed in the course of this incident. The disappointment of Japan and the Chinese “punitive group” is already apparent. The indication that Chiang Kaishek is beginning to wake up, if analyzed objectively, actually may be considered a sign of the Guomindang’s willingness to end the wrong policy that it has pursued for ten years, and if in future it continues to develop along the lines that meet the hopes of the popular masses in general, this would be a victory not only for the masses of the Chinese people but for those all over the world on the peace front who oppose aggressors.

Chiang Kaishek’s proclamation of the 26th¹ is so ambiguous and evasive as to be a truly interesting masterpiece among China’s political documents. If Mr. Chiang really wants to draw a serious lesson from this incident and try to revitalize the Guomindang, and if he wants to end his consistently wrong policy of compromise in foreign affairs and of civil war and oppression at home, so that the Guomindang will no longer stand opposed to the wishes of the people, then, as a token of good faith, he should have produced a better piece of writing, repenting his political past and setting a new course for the future. The procla-

¹ Chiang Kaishek’s proclamation of the 26th → On December 26 Chiang Kaishek issued a statement in Luoyang, the so-called “Admonition to Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng”
tion of the 26th not only cannot meet the demands of the Chinese masses, but also fails to meet the demands of the Left-wing faction of the Guomindang.

Mr. Chiang's very lengthy, two-thousand character proclamation, however, does contain one praiseworthy passage, in which he speaks of "standing by one's word, and carrying one's actions through to the end." He says that although he did not sign the terms set forth by Zhang and Yang in Xi'an, he is willing to accept such conditions as are beneficial to the state and the nation and will not break his word on the grounds that he did not sign. Chinese national custom places great emphasis upon good faith, so that there is the saying that a person's word is worth a thousand pieces of gold, and when merchants do business they often dispense with having things in writing, and instead rely upon spoken agreement. Having heard of this, the foreigners say that Mr. Chiang's making good on his Xi'an promise in the future will prove even more the value of good faith. Mr. Chiang's withdrawal of troops is proof of his acting in good faith. As for the other conditions he has accepted, they are:

1. To reorganize the Guomindang and the National Government, expel the pro-Japanese group and admit anti-Japanese elements.
2. To release the patriotic leaders in Shanghai and all other political prisoners, and guarantee the freedoms and rights of the people.
3. To end the anti-Communist policy and enter into an alliance with the Red Army to resist Japan.
4. To convene a national salvation conference, representing all parties, groups, armies, and sections of the population, to decide on the policy of resisting Japan and saving the nation.
5. To enter into cooperation with countries sympathetic to China's resistance to Japan.
6. To adopt other specific ways and means.

The fulfillment of these conditions requires, above all, good faith and also some courage. We shall judge Mr. Chiang by his future actions.

But Mr. Chiang's proclamation contains the remark that the Xi'an Incident was brought about under the pressure of "reactionaries." It is a pity that Mr. Chiang did not explain what kind of people he meant by "reactionaries," nor is it clear how the word "reactionary" is defined in Mr. Chiang's dictionary. What is certain, however, is that the Xi'an Incident took place under the influence of the following forces:

1. The mounting indignation against Japan among the troops of Zhang and Yang and among the people of the Northwest.
2. The mounting indignation against Japan among the people of Suiyuan and patriotic people [everywhere].
3. The growth of the Left forces in the Guomindang.
4. The demand by the groups in power in various provinces for resistance to Japan and for the salvation of the nation.
5. The stand taken by the Communist Party and by the Soviet Red Army for a national united front against Japan.
6. The development of the world peace front.

These are all indisputable facts. Yet it is just these forces that Chiang calls "reactionary." It's just that other people call them revolutionary, whereas Chiang's dictionary has a different definition, that's all. Mr. Chiang stated in Xi'an that he would fight Japan in earnest, so presumably he will not resume violent attacks on the revolutionary forces as soon as he leaves Xi'an. Not only does Mr. Chiang's own political life and that of his group hang upon his good faith, but Mr. Chiang and his group now actually have confronting them and obstructing their political path a force which has expanded to their detriment—the "punitive group" which tried to get him killed in the Xi'an Incident. For this reason, we urge Mr. Chiang to revise his political dictionary so that the terms correspond to the facts, which is more appropriate. Mr. Chiang should remember that he owes his safe departure from Shaanxi to the mediation of the Left wing of the Guomindang and the Communist Party, as well as to the efforts of Generals Zhang and Yang, the leaders in the Xi'an Incident. Throughout the incident, the Communist Party firmly opposed the civil war, stood for a peaceful settlement to the Xi'an Incident, and made every effort to that end. *This suffices to show that what the Communist Party advocated was acting solely in the interests of national survival. Had civil war erupted and had Mr. Chiang been kept in custody for long, the incident could only have developed in favor of Japan and the "punitive group." Therefore the Communist Party, *apart from being in complete sympathy with Xi'an and its proposals*, firmly exposed the intrigues of Japan and of He Yingqin, Zhang Qun, Wu Tingchang, Zhang Jiaqian, He Chengjun, Chen Shaokuan, and other members of the Chinese "punitive group" and firmly advocated a peaceful settlement to this incident. This happened to coincide with the views of the two generals Zhang and Yang and such leftists as Song Ziwon. This is also exactly what the people throughout the country call for, because the people bitterly detest all civil war.*

Mr. Chiang was set free upon his acceptance of the Xi'an terms. From now on

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2. Mr. Chiang's withdrawal of troops → We shall see whether, after he has withdrawn his troops, Chiang will act in good faith and carry out the terms he has accepted.
3. The people → The revolutionary people
4. So that the terms correspond to the facts → Changing the word "reactionary" to "revolutionary" so that the terms correspond to the facts
5. Erupted → Spread
6. He Yingqin, Zhang Qun, Wu Tingchang, Zhang Jiaqian, He Chengjun, Chen Shaokuan, and other members of the Chinese "punitive group" → Wang Jingwei, He Yingqin, and others
7. All civil war → The present civil war
the question is whether Mr. Chiang will carry out to the letter his own statement that one should stand by one’s word, carry one’s actions through to fruition, and strictly fulfill all the terms for saving the nation. The eyes of the popular masses in the whole country are watching and will certainly not allow Mr. Chiang any room for hesitation or hedging. Japanese aggression and the pro-Japanese faction’s jumping off the gangplank certainly cannot be allowed to continue even for an instant. If Mr. Chiang wavers on the issue of resisting Japan or delays in fulfilling his pledges, then the revolutionary tide of the people throughout the country will sweep him away. Mr. Chiang and his group should bear in mind the old saying, “If a man does not keep his word, what is he good for?”

If Mr. Chiang can bring to an end the humiliation caused by the Guomindang’s policies over the past ten years, thoroughly correct his fundamental errors of compromise in foreign affairs and of civil war and national oppression at home, immediately join the anti-Japanese front uniting all parties and groups, and really take the military and political measures that can save the nation, then of course the Communist Party will lend him all possible support. Now, on August 25 the Communist Party promised such support to Mr. Chiang and the entire Chinese Guomindang in its letter to the Guomindang. The people throughout the country have known for the past fifteen years that the Communist Party observes the maxim of standing by one’s word and carrying one’s actions through to fruition, and they undoubtedly have more confidence in the words and deeds of the Communist Party than in those of any other party or group in China. This is not something alleged by only one party but, rather, something commonly known by all under heaven.

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8. Bring to an end → Clean up
9. Humiliation → Dirt
10. Policies → Reactionary policy

For Comrade Ding Ling
(To the Tune “Immortal by the River”)
(December 1936)

Red flags on the walls flutter in the glow of the setting sun,
Waving idly in the West wind above the isolated town.
New figures come to Bao’an for a time.
A banquet is held in a cave,
To honor one just out of prison.

Who can compare with a pen so fine?
Three thousand crack troops armed with Mausers.
Battle plans lead to the East of the Gansu mountains.
Yesterday a literary young lady,
Today a warlike general.

This poem was first published in Xin Guancha no. 7 (1980). Our source is Shici ji, pp. 174–76.
1. Ding Ling (1904–1986), original names Jiang Weiwen and Jiang Bingzhi, a native of Hunan, had become known as a writer in 1928. She joined the Communist Party in 1932 and, as a result, was abducted in Shanghai by Guomindang agents, kept in prison for a time, and then released on parole in Nanjing. In the summer of 1936, she left Nanjing in disguise and made her way to Beiping, Xi’an, and Bao’an.
2. Asked by Mao after her arrival in Bao’an what she wanted to do, Ding Ling had replied: “Join the Red Army!” She was sent to the front, not as a military commander, but to work in the General Political Department.
Telegram from Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai to Pan Hannian on the Question of Opposing the Pro-Japanese Faction’s Obstruction of a Peaceful Solution to the Xi’an Incident

(January 1, 1937, midday)¹

Comrade Hannian:

A peaceful solution to the Xi’an Incident is extremely advantageous to our national affairs, yet we have heard that the pro-Japanese faction is obstructing with all its might the carrying out of Chairman Chiang’s new policies by refusing to execute orders to withdraw troops and making renewed attempts to instigate civil war. This can be of benefit only to the Political Study Clique and Japan and will bring great harm to the nation, the state, and the Guomindang. The Communist Party and the Red Army stand firmly on the side of a peaceful solution to national affairs, support all Guomindang reforms that promote national salvation and survival, and wish to negotiate with all sides, including Chen Lifu, Song Ziwen, Sun Zhesheng, and Feng Huanzhang, so as to find ways to unite as one to ward off disaster. Today, indeed, all those with a conscience should unite to frustrate the pro-Japanese faction’s plot to ruin the country. It is hoped that, based on this principle, you will hasten to make contact with Mr. Chen Lifu and inform us by telegram of the result.

In addition, the entire Red Army has gathered for training and is awaiting the assignment of defense sectors in preparation for resistance against Japan, and has absolutely no intention of disturbing the Central Army or invading Guomindang territory.

Mao Zedong    Zhou Enlai

¹We have translated this telegram from Dierci guogong hezuo de xingcheng, p. 172, where it is reproduced from the original in the Central Archives.

1. The hour of dispatch of this telegram is indicated by a conventional Chinese character which stands for the period from 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.
Prepare to Deal with the Offensive of the Pro-Japanese Faction

(January 1, 1937, midnight)

To Zhou [Enlai] and Bo [Gu], and for them to inform Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

The internal struggle in Nanjing is extremely intense. The pro-Japanese faction is not resigned to stepping down, and there is the danger that it will put up a last-ditch struggle to detain Li Yi and stage an offensive against Xi’an. Yesterday, He Yingqin ordered Liu Zhi to stop all demobilized armies where they were and have them engage in exercises. Today, He ordered that Li Mo’an secretly advance to Luonan in the name of engaging in exercises, saying that Zhang and Yang have already united with the Red Army and the situation is urgent. The political situation has already undergone changes. Please take the following actions immediately:

1. Consult with Yang [Hucheng] and Wang [Yizhe] on making a united effort to deal with the enemy;
2. Secretly order the Northeast Army and the Northwest Army to mobilize urgently, and guard against the offensive of the pro-Japanese faction;
3. Make preparations with regard to the positions north of the Wei river as well as those at Weinan, Luonan, Shangxian, and Lantian so as to get ready for defense;
4. The Red Army is planning to move to Xingping and Fufeng to play a supportive role;

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 769–70, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. For a biography of Liu Zhi, see above, the “Proposal That the Northeast Army Assure the Occupation of the Two Strategic Key points, Lanzhou and Hanzhong,” dated December 13, 1936. At this time, he was the commander of the Eastern Group Army of the Rebel-Suppressing Army.
2. Li Mo’an (1904—), a native of Hunan, graduated from the Huangpu Military Academy in the first class. While at Huangpu, he joined the Communist Party, but he left it again in 1926. In 1935, he participated in the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression.” Following the Xi’an Incident, he was appointed commander of the Tenth Division, and ordered to attack Xi’an.
3. Weinan and Luonan are located, as the names indicate, just south of the Wei and Luo rivers in southern Shaanxi.

5. Step up activities in Shanxi, Suiyuan, Sichuan, Guangxi, Zhili, and Shandong, and oppose civil war;
6. Make arrangements regarding the rear areas of Zhang and Yang.

Mao Zedong
Directive on Consolidating the Unity Between the Two Armies of Zhang [Xueliang] and Yang [Hucheng] and the Red Army, and Promoting an Improvement in the Overall Situation

(January 2, 1937)

Zhou [Enlai], Bo [Gu]:

1. The core of the overall situation at present is to consolidate the unity of the two armies of Zhang [Xueliang] and Yang [Hucheng] around the Red Army so as to fight against the pro-Japanese faction and push the overall situation in a favorable direction.

2. Nanjing is also just now trying to make use of this development, using the methods of splitting and intimidation to win over the armies of Zhang and Yang so as to isolate the Red Army.

3. Please pay full attention to developing the organization of the Party inside the two armies and deepening political work. The main thing is to unite the cadres.

Luo Fu [Mao] Zedong

The Fifteenth Army Group Should Move to Southern Shaanxi

(January 3, 1937, 8:00 P.M.)

Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

The Fifteenth Army Group should move to southern Shaanxi for the following reasons:

1. That region is a strategic area that affects a number of provinces and is one wing of the enemy’s offensive. By moving the army to southern Shaanxi, it may not only attack the two divisions of Wan Yaohuang and Wang Yaowu which are being concentrated toward Yangxian, but also contain Li Mo’an and Li Tiejun, who are now waging an offensive against Shangxian, thereby securing the right wing of Xi’an;

2. Coordinate with Chen Xianrui to enlarge the soviet areas and expand the Red Army;

3. After our army eliminates approximately one of the enemy’s divisions, the enemy in that combat area will immediately come to a halt, and we shall not need to use a large concentration of forces. For this reason, moving the Fifteenth Army Group to southern Shaanxi will help rather than hinder combat by the main force.

Mao Zedong

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 771–72, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Wan Yaohuang (1891–1977), a native of Hubei, was a graduate of the Baoding Military Academy. He had participated in the campaigns of “Encirclement and Suppression” during the Jiangxi period, and strongly opposed the action of Zhang and Yang in Xi’an. At this time, he was commander of the Tenth Column of the Guomindang Third Army Group, and concurrently commander of the Thirteenth Division. Wang Yaowu (1903–1968), a native of Shandong, had graduated from the Huagpu Military Academy in the third class. He had participated in the Fifth “Encirclement and Suppression,” and was at this time commander of the Fifty-first Division of the Tenth Column.

2. Li Tiejun (1901- ), a native of Guangdong, graduated from the Huagpu Military Academy in the first class. He participated in the Fourth “Encirclement and Suppression” in 1932. In December 1936, he had been appointed to the command of the Ninety-fifth Division of the Eastern Army Group of the Guomindang “Rebel-Suppressing Army.”

3. Chen Xianrui was commander of the Seventy-fourth Division of the Red Army, and was carrying out guerrilla warfare in southern Shaanxi.
Demand That Chiang and Song Fulfill the Conditions Agreed upon in Xi’an

(January 5, 1937)

Comrade [Pan] Hannian:

The following are the conditions that Enlai negotiated with Song Ziwen and Chiang Kaishek in Xi’an, and which were agreed upon:

1. End the war and withdraw the troops;
2. Carry out a preliminary reorganization of the Nanjing government, followed three months later by a thorough reorganization;
3. Release political prisoners and guarantee democratic rights;
4. Cease the suppression of the Communists, unite with the Red Army to resist Japan, designate defense sectors, provide military funds, and allow the soviet areas to remain as before and the Communist Party to come out into the open;
5. Unite with Russia and cooperate with England and America;
6. Let Zhang Xueliang deal with the situation in the Northwest.

Song Ziwen has asked me to send a representative to consult with him in Shanghai. You should visit him right away to clarify the recent changes in Nanjing and also to demand that Song Ziwen put into practice the promises stated above.

Luo [Fu] Mao [Zedong]

Mao Zedong’s Telegram to Zhou Enlai and Bo Gu Concerning Matters of Principle in Negotiations with Zhang Chong

(January 5, 1937, 10:00 P.M.)

Zhou, Bo:

I am transmitting to you [Pan] Hannian’s telegram of the 4th from Nanjing. He and Zhang Chong are about to come to Xi’an, and my thoughts on how to handle this matter are as follows:

1. Chiang [Kaishek] and Song [Ziwen] reproach us as acting in bad faith in proclaiming the Xi’an agreement, to which we reply: after Chiang’s return, Nanjing, in violation of the agreement and in violation of good faith, proclaimed anew its guidelines for suppression of the Communists, once again sent troops toward the Northwest, and held Zhang Xueliang under arrest.

2. I agree with Nanjing’s using political means to resolve problems arising from what happened in the Northwest, but it must be under the following conditions:
   a. Immediate withdrawal of troops;
   b. Immediate release of Zhang Xueliang and his return to Shaanxi;
   c. A guarantee that the Xi’an agreement will be carried out.

3. Views have been exchanged with Chiang and Song on the Three Major Principles of the relationship between the two parties, and they have been clearly acknowledged by Chiang and Song. Pan Hannian has been charged with full powers to negotiate the specific details, and there is no need for Enlai to go to Nanjing. After the withdrawal of troops, Zhang’s release, and the reorganization of the government have been put into effect, thus proving that Nanjing still wishes to show consideration for good faith, a trip can, however, be made to Nanjing. At this time no one can prove that, after going to Nanjing, Enlai would not become a second Zhang Xueliang.

We have translated this telegram from Dierci guogong hezuo de xingcheng, p. 175, where it is reproduced from the original in the Central Archives.

1. Zhang Chong (1904–1941), a native of Zhejiang, had held various responsible posts in the Guomindang hierarchy in Harbin and Tianjin and in the Propaganda Department. In November 1936, he was elected to the Fifth Central Executive Committee. Following the Xi’an Incident, he was sent as the Guomindang representative to conduct discussions with Zhou Enlai.
4. Please consider this matter before Hannian and Zhang Chong come to Xi'an, and do respond with great haste.
5. There should be constant radio contact.

Mao Zedong

The Central Task at Present Lies in Resolutely Preparing for Combat, and in Rejecting Gu and Welcoming Zhang

(January 6, 1937, 8:00 P.M.)

Zhou [Enlai] and Bo [Gu]:

1. The central task at present lies in resolutely preparing for combat, and in rejecting Gu and welcoming Zhang [Xueliang].
2. If Gu comes, then Zhang and Yang [Hucheng]'s units will both be eliminated and the Red Army will be compelled to go up the mountains.
3. The Zhang and Yang forces will quickly build solid positions, while the Red Army takes responsibility for field operations and fights resolutely to the finish to safeguard the revolutionary situation in the Northwest, not letting down our guard in the face of Nanjing’s peaceful air. This is the only method by which to obtain peace, as the precedent of Guangxi proves.
4. At this time Enlai should absolutely not leave Xi'an; Zhang Xueliang has already fallen into a big trap by going to Nanjing.

Luo [Fu] [Mao] Ze[dong]

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 773–74, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Gu Zhutong (1893–1987), zi Mousan, was a native of Jiangsu, who had been associated with Chiang Kaishek since the early 1920s. In January 1937 he was sent to the Northwest as commander of the Guomindang First Army Group of the Rebel-Suppressing Army, with the mission of negotiating with the supporters of the Xi'an coup.
The Work of the Field Army After Concentrating Its Forces
(January 7, 1937, 10:00 P.M.)

Zhou [Enlai] and Bo [Gu], Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

1. After concentrating all its units at Yaoxian, Sanyuan, and Xianyang on the 10th, the field army should complete the following tasks before the 12th (the sooner the better):
   a. After money, ammunition, bedding and clothing, transportation and communications equipment, military maps, books, newspapers, and so on have been collected, they should be handed over to those army groups in need of additional supplies. As for money, 300,000 yuan should be dispersed, enough for two months (publicly it should be said that it is for one month).
   b. Hold a meeting for cadres at the regimental level and above to explain the political tasks and mobilize for war.
   c. Explain our relations with friendly forces.
   d. Explain our policies regarding local work and strictly tighten discipline among the masses.
   e. Make efforts to enlarge the Red Army.

It is requested that Peng and Ren see to it that the above-mentioned five tasks are completed and that every soldier is informed of them. When it is possible to hold the cadres meeting, we plan to ask Zhou and Bo or Luo Ruiqing to go respectively to Sanyuan and Xianyang to participate in the meeting.

2. Prepare the main force (according to plan, the First and Fourth Front Armies) to reach Shangzhou and Luohan to control the borders between Shaanxi, Henan, and Hubei. Some units will stay north of the Wei River (according to plan, the Second and Fourth Front Armies). The plan is to break the enemy’s encirclement so as to expose the Beijing-Hankou and Longhai railroads to us and force Chiang to accept the limits. This matter will be dealt with by Zhou. I look forward to your reply.

Mao Zedong

Circular Telegram of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the Central Soviet Government Calling for Peace and an End to the Civil War
(January 8, 1937)

The Guomindang and the National Government in Nanjing, gentlemen of the Military Commission, Mr. Chiang Kaishek at Fenghua, senior Party, government, and military officials and officers of all provinces, all parties, factions, organizations, and press offices of the whole country:

After the Xi’an Incident occurred, Japanese imperialism and the pro-Japanese factions in China all thought that the opportunity of a lifetime had come and started to provoke a civil war under the pretext of “supporting Chiang” in an attempt to fulfill their scheme of destroying China. At that time, this Party and this government, as well as the people of the whole country and patriots in Nanjing and every province who are against Japan, all advocated a peaceful solution, in order to attain the goal of an end to the civil war and a concerted effort to resist Japan. Fortunately the outbreak of a disastrous civil war was averted because Mr. Chiang Kaishek accepted the anti-Japanese propositions put forward by Mr. Zhang and Mr. Yang, and the latter two gentlemen attached more importance to the state and the nation than to anything else. This Party and this government felt deeply relieved when peace, unification, and unity in resistance against Japan neared fulfillment, and the main forces of the Red Army were already awaiting orders to fight the Japanese bandits, ready to march to the front lines and join in the battle. The Japanese bandits and the pro-Japanese factions, however, do not, after all, wish to see China truly reach peaceful unification, which is why circumstances became perilous all of a sudden as soon as Mr. Chiang returned to Nanjing. With assistance from the Japanese bandits, the pro-Japanese factions, on the one hand, detained Mr. Zhang Hanqing and, on the other, directed the Central armies, which were already retreating on Mr. Chiang's orders, to resume their attacks on Xi’an in an attempt to provoke an unprecedented civil war as a pledge of loyalty to the Japanese bandits. The vicious scheme of the Japanese bandits and the pro-Japanese factions is as clear as a raging fire to all our compatriots. At this critical juncture, this Party and this

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Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 775–76, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

This text first appeared in Hongse Zhonghua, No. 222 (January 16, 1937). We have translated it from Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 5, pp. 53–54.
government, maintaining their position of ending the civil war and uniting to resist Japan, resolutely demand that the Nanjing authorities issue orders to stop military activities, eliminate pro-Japanese factions, and call all parties, factions, circles, and armies to a conference for national salvation, in order to bring about the immediate realization of peace throughout the country. This Party and this government maintain that Mr. Chiang should come out boldly at this moment to prevent a new outbreak of civil war, which would bring calamity to the country and the people. It is possible for Mr. Chiang because all the Central armies now attacking Xi’an are willing to submit themselves to Mr. Chiang. It is also necessary for Mr. Chiang because he has already promised that civil war in China would never recur. This incident will then serve as an important test as to the political integrity of Mr. Chiang’s motto, “Stand by one’s word, and carry one’s actions through to the end.” The popular sentiment in today’s China is clear enough to see that anyone who would defy the will of the people and side with or capitulate to the Japanese bandits is as good as seeking a road to his own doom. It is absolutely imperative and also high time that, throughout the nation, all popular organizations, all press organs, all armed forces, and especially Mr. Chiang Kaishen and the high-ranking officials and the majority of the party members of the ruling Guomindang, with the greatest sincerity in saving the nation, rise and punish the adherents of the pro-Japanese factions, and transform the civil war into a war of resistance. With boundless expectations and best wishes.

The Central Committee of the
Chinese Communist Party and the
Central Soviet Government of China

If The Enemy Is Determined to Start a War, the Red Army’s Main Force May Advance in Three Stages
(January 8, 1937, at midnight)

Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

1. Upon arrival at Sanyuan, prepare to rest for three days, and extend this to five to seven days if the situation permits. Please set the work agenda. The same goes for the Fifteenth Army Group at Xianyang.

2. If the enemy is determined to start a war, the best plan for the Red Army’s main force would be to go to Shang[zhou] and Luo[nan] as the first step, go to western Henan as the second step, and go to the [Beijing-Han[kou] railroad as the third step. Only by so doing can we change the whole situation, cause division in Nanjing, and force Chiang into submission. The Second Front Army should remain behind north of the Wei to support the friendly forces1 in doing battle on the interior lines. Subsequently, the Red Army and friendly forces on the interior lines and the Red Army’s main force on the exterior lines will provide mutual support to engage in strategic coordinated combat. For the moment, however, try to rest for a few more days at Sanyuan and Xianyang. If the enemy does not disrupt the peace, we shall not advance eastward for the time being.

Mao Zedong

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 777–78, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. “Friendly forces” refers to the Guomindang Northeastern Army and Seventeenth Route Army, commanded respectively by Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng.
Strive to Keep the Peace, Avoid Civil War, and Maintain the Status Quo in the Northwest

(January 9, 1937, 8:00 P.M.)

To Zhou [Enlai] and for transmission to Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

1. Our basic policy at present is to strive to keep the peace, draw Chiang [Kaishek] and Song [Ziwen] over to our side, arouse public opinion in the various factions and circles within the country, stir up Britain and the United States, maintain the status quo in the Northwest, and refrain from opening fire unless absolutely necessary. This policy should be explained to Yang [Hucheng], He [Zhuguo], Sun [Weiru], Wang [Yizhe], Miao [Chengliu], Liu [Duquan], Du [Bincheng], and Huang [Xiansheng], as well as the leading members of the Propaganda Committee, and their “leftist” propaganda should be rectified. In the military arena, however, all efforts still must be made to prepare for war, with absolutely no letup.

2. The Red Army troops are gathering in Sanyuan and Xianyang and awaiting an opportunity; they are not to move recklessly. One additional regiment from Yang [Hucheng]’s troops will be sent to Shangxian to maintain a tenacious defense. The Fifteenth Army Group should, however, prepare to advance to Shangxian to await further opportunities after resting for three days.

Luo [Fu]    Mao [Zedong]

The Red Army’s Main Force Should Advance to Shangzhou and Luonan

(January 11, 1937, 9:00 P.M.)

To Zhou [Enlai] and Bo [Gu], and for the information of Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

After careful consideration, it seems best for the Red Army’s main force to advance to Shangzhou and Luonan. After that route is broken through, they can promptly move to western Henan, having rendered the enemy’s middle and right routes useless. The Second Front Army and the Twenty-seventh Army are to be used at Bocheng to threaten the flank of Chen Cheng’s group so that it will not dare to advance boldly, thus aiding our main force in winning victory at Shangzhou and Luonan. Please obtain Yang [Hucheng]’s agreement immediately. If the main force is used north of the Wei, then we will be put in a strategically disadvantageous position, and there will also be many difficulties from a tactical point of view, about which Peng and Ren were concerned. It is best, therefore, not to choose this option.

Mao Zedong
To Comrade Ma Haide
(January 20, 1937)

Comrade Ma Haide:

I would be most grateful if you could enclose this photograph in a letter of yours, and send it on to Mr. Snow.

Mao Zedong

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Negotiating Principles and Military Deployment
(January 21, 1937, 8:00 P.M.)

To Zhou [Enlai] and Bo [Gu], and for the information of Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

1. The problem lies in whether there is a guarantee that making concessions will truly halt the war. If we make concessions and the war continues, then the resulting situation will be even worse than that prevailing before the Xi'an Incident. Therefore we cannot make concessions.

2. Whether there is peace or war, it is imperative that Yang [Hucheng], Sun [Weiru], He [Zhuzuo], Wang [Yizhe], Yu [Xuezhong], Miao [Chengliu], Liu [Duoquan], and the leftists make up their own minds. We should play the role of suggesting and supporting, so as to dodge complaints were the situation to become disadvantageous.

3. Whether there is peace or war, the Red Army’s main force should advance to southern Shaanxi in accordance with the previously set plans to advance to the area between Sichuan and Shaanxi. Except for the Second Front Army, which will remain north of the Wei, the rest [of our forces] should prepare to move southward within a few days. Please immediately investigate the conditions for stationing troops at Shanyang, Zhashui, Zhen’an, Xunyang, Ankang, Ziyang, Hanyin, Shiquan, and other towns, and request that Yang agree to cede these various xian.

4. The West Route Army is advancing eastward. A telegram from Xu [Xiangqian] and Chen [Changhao] indicates that the morale of the troops is still high, and in ten days they will be able to reach Guan. If this army does not suffer another failure, afterward it should be positioned around the Wenxian-Wudu-Chengxian-Kangxian area. In this way our main force in southern Shaanxi and southern Gansu will be able to defeat Nanjing’s plan to surround and tie up the united forces to the north of the Wei River.

5. [Pan] Hannian sent a long telegram from Nanjing giving Chiang’s opinions in reply to Zhou’s letter. Its content is more or less similar to what Mi Chunlin and Li Zhigang1 have said. We have sent a telegram in reply demanding guarantees.

Luo [Fu] Mao [Zedong]

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We have translated this text from a photograph of Mao’s handwritten copy of the note in a memorial tribute album entitled Dr. Ma Haide (George Hatem), published by the China Reconstructs Press in 1989.

1. Ma Haide was the Chinese name adopted by George Hatem (1910–1988), a Lebanese-American physician who first went to China in 1933 because of an interest in tropical diseases, and ultimately spent the rest of his life there as a member of the Chinese Communist Party (which he joined in Yan’an early in 1937) and a widely hailed “internationalist” doctor fighting against venereal disease and leprosy in China. At the time this note was written, after working for a time as a doctor in Shanghai, Hatem had travelled with Edgar Snow to the northern Shaanxi Base Area, arriving in Bao’an in the summer of 1936. He stayed until January 1937, when he moved to Yan’an to continue offering medical services in the base areas, and was soon appointed medical adviser to the Military Commission.

2. The editors of the China Reconstructs album indicate that the photograph referred to was autographed by Mao, and imply that it may have been the widely reproduced portrait of Mao taken by Snow in Bao’an in 1936.

3. For the name Snow, Mao here uses two characters pronounced “shi-le,” instead of what became the standard transliteration, “si-nuo.”

Our source for this document is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 783–85, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Mi Chunlin was in charge of the General Office of the Guomindang Army’s Northwest “Bandit Suppression” Headquarters. Li Zhigang was Yang Hucheng’s representative in Nanjing.
Demand That Chiang Kaishek Give Concrete Guarantees That War Will Not Break Out Again After the Peaceful Solution

(January 21, 1937, between 9:00 and 11:00 P.M.)

Comrade [Pan] Hannian:

Your telegram has been received.

1. From the very beginning we have advocated peace, and we absolutely do not want war.

2. But in Nanjing the atmosphere of suppressing the Communists has been on the rise, and it was particularly obvious in Liu Zhi’s speech,¹ which inevitably raises doubts as to whether there is truly the sincere intent to unite against the outside.

3. We can guarantee that, on the one hand, as soon as the Red Army is provided with proper stationing and fairly adequate provisions, it will not only refrain from any attacks on the White areas but will also cease its struggle against local bullies; at present, the Red Army has already carried out these two points. On the other hand, we can advise the Xi’an authorities to obey Mr. Chiang and Nanjing. Yang [Hucheng], Yu [Xuezong], and Sun [Weiru] have already sent circular telegrams about taking office and dissolving the temporary organizations; what remain are merely the problems of appropriate designation of defense areas and Zhang Hanqing’s return to Shaanxi. This requires Mr. Chiang to keep the general goal in sight and take proper measures to calm the minds of the Northeastern Army and the Seventeenth Route Army. If Chiang is able to act in this way, we must make every possible effort to assist Mr. Chiang, not only in the Northwest but also on the scale of the whole country, and unite all sides against the foreign [invaders]. But Mr. Chiang must give us concrete guarantees.

4. We demand a guarantee from Mr. Chiang that war will not break out again after the peaceful solution, and we hope to discuss the question of these guarantees with Mr. Chiang.

Mao Zedong  Zhou Enlai

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Our source for this text is Wenshansan yaqian, no. 4 (1985) (pp. 204–5 of the annual volume).

1. Liu Zhi had assumed command of the Eastern Route Group Army of the expeditionary force sent against Xi’an by He Yingqin. We have found no information about the speech referred to here.

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Telegram to Pan Hannian from Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai on the Question of Conditions That Chiang Kaishek Is Requested to Carry Out Following the Xi’an Incident

(January 21, 1937)

Comrade Hannian:

1. In order to avoid civil war and present a unified front to the outside, in principle we do not oppose Chiang’s orientation, and Xi’an should be persuaded to follow Nanjing’s unified orientation, and that it is best for Chiang to be lenient with Zhang [Xueliang] and Yang [Hucheng], to reassure them.

2. But we should demand resolutely of Chiang that he agree to all of the following points:

   a. To guarantee that after a peaceful solution is reached, there will be no more war.

   b. Not to carry out the policy of suppressing the Communists, and to guarantee minimal provisions for the Red Army.

   c. To permit some part of the Red Army to station troops for the time being in southern Shaanxi, but not necessarily in Shaanxi [zhou] and Luo[nan], because food is extremely scarce in places such as Heshui, Qingyang, Zhengning, Chunhua, Fuxian,¹ Fushi, and so on, and later troops may be transferred to station in other locations.

   d. Please order Ma Bufang to halt attacks on the Red Army west of the [Yellow] River.

   e. So that Red Army cadres may firmly believe that Chiang is halting his suppression of the Communists, designating defense sectors, and issuing provisions, in order to make proper preparations to resist Japan, it is requested that Chiang reply in his own hand to Enlai’s letter. We can guarantee absolute secrecy, because there are still many who have suspicions amongst the Red Army cadres.

   f. There have been no changes in Xi’an for now, and the Red Army has not

We have translated this telegram from Documents on the United Front, Vol. 2, pp. 370–71. The month is missing in the date as given in the source used by the compilers of this volume, but the editors indicate in a note that it is probably January. Nianbu, Vol. 1, pp. 643–44, confirms that this is the case.

1. The character for this xian, located in central Shaanxi, was changed in 1964 to a less obscure one than that used here by Mao.
made propaganda about cooperating with Zhang and Yang. Xi’an provided one month’s provisions, so the Red Army stopped attacking the local bullies. Chiang should not believe the rumors spread by the pro-Japanese faction.
g. We had no prior knowledge of the erroneous propaganda perpetrated by the American woman journalist Smedley in Xi’an after the Xi’an Incident. Said journalist has now come to the soviet areas, and she must be persuaded to use caution in what she says.

Mao Zedong    Zhou Enlai

Negotiating with Chiang Kaishek on the Question of Places to Station the Red Army, Among Other Matters

(January 22, 1937)

Comrade [Pan] Hannian:

We have taken cognizance of your telegram sent at 11:00 A.M. today. Our reply is as follows:

1. What preoccupies the Red Army cadres is the danger of a continued war to “suppress the Communists.” If this possibility exists, then it is dangerous to have the Red Army constrained in the area between the Wei and Yellow rivers. Based on the actual number of Red Army troops at present, it takes more than 500,000 yuan every month to allocate even the same small food allowance as in the past. In future, when the practice of seizing moneys from the landlords is halted, we will have no other recourse. This is the first point. There is very little grain in Qingyang, Chunhua, Fuxian, Yan’an, and other xian, so there is absolutely no way that a lot of troops can be stationed there for long. This is the second point. Therefore, we demand: first, that Chiang send us a letter in his own hand stating that the practice of “supressing the Communists” will be halted, so as to oppose Japan together, and that places will be designated for the stationing of our troops and permission will be given to allocate ample funds every month. Second, that he agree to our stationing some units in southern Shaanxi. We do not demand the main road between Shangzou and Luonan, or Hanzhong or other important areas, but we do request that the following eight xian be designated [for our use]: Zhashui, Zhen’an, Xunyang, Ankang, Hanyin, Ziyang, Shiquan, and Zhenba. These xian were mostly soviet areas to begin with. As for the Red Army’s main force, we request that the following fifteen xian and three towns be designated [for our use]: Qingyang, Heshui, Zhengning, Ningxian, Xifeng, Xunyi, Chunhua, Zhongbu, Luochuan, Fuxian, Ganquan, Fushi, Qingjian, Yichuan, Wayao, Anbian, and Yuweng. We had originally planned to ask Chiang to transfer the two Gaos² away from northern Shaanxi and Ma

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 786–88, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The time at which this telegram was sent is indicated by a conventional Chinese character meaning between 9:00 and 11:00 P.M.
2. Gao Guizi and Gao Shuangcheng, the commanders of the Guomindang Army’s Eighty-fourth and Eighty-sixth Divisions respectively.
Demand That Chiang Kaishek Write a Document in His Own Hand to Dispel Misgivings, So That a Thorough Peaceful Solution Can Be Secured

(January 25, 1937, at midday)\(^1\)

Comrade [Pan] Hannian:

We have taken note of your telegram.

1. Yang [Hucheng], Yu [Xuezhong], and Sun [Weiru] have sent circular telegrams about taking office and are ready to dissolve their temporary organizations and subordinate themselves to the Center. At present, provided only that Mr. Chiang treats them with leniency, stations few troops in Shaanxi and Gansu, gives preferential treatment to Hanqing, demonstrates concern for the two armies, and dispels their misgivings, a thorough peaceful solution can be secured. We will make every effort to mediate and see that this is carried out successfully.

2. It would be very difficult to convince the Red Army’s high-ranking officers without something written in Mr. Chiang’s own hand, because for many years the two sides have been antagonistic. If ill feelings are to be laid aside at once, for Mr. Chiang this simple expression is a way to make his true intentions known to the broad public, and it can serve to dispel thoroughly the Red Army’s misgivings. Moreover, since you, elder brother, are the person who will handle the letter, make it clear that you will fly to Xi’an and hand it over to Enlai in person. It will be kept absolutely secret, and our side will take full responsibility if there are any leaks. The unit stationed in southern Shaanxi is really restricted by the actual conditions, and Chiang is sincerely requested to give permission.

3. The West Route Army has already been ordered to stop near Gansu for two days; ask Chiang to order Ma [Bufang]’s army out of the two prefectures in Gansu immediately, and the eastward march can be halted right away.

Mao Zedong    Zhou Enlai

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3. This is the old name of an area now known as Jiayuan in Gansu Province.

Our source for this document is Wenxian he yanjiu, no. 4, 1985 (pp. 205–06 of the annual volume).

1. The time at which this telegram was sent is indicated by a conventional character meaning between 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M.
Telegram from Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai to Pan Hannian Regarding the Question of the Decision to Abandon the Demand to Station Troops in Southern Shaanxi

(January 29, 1937, at midday)\(^1\)

Comrade Hannian:

1. For the purpose of resolutely supporting Mr. Chiang’s guidelines and resolving the Northwest problem in a peaceful manner, and to put a permanent end to civil war and unite against foreign aggressors, we have decided to abandon the demand to station troops in southern Shaanxi. We will have Xu Haidong’s troops withdraw from Shangxian to Lixian as a first step, and withdraw to Zhengning and Qingyang as a second step. The withdrawal from Shangxian may begin three days before the withdrawal from Weinan, so that before the Central Army enters Xi’an to station its troops there, passing through the Xi’an-Xianyang line, only a partial increase in the defense sectors in Northern Shaanxi or in Ningxia will be necessary.

2. A separate telegram deals with the question of withdrawal of troops of the Northeastern Army and the Seventeenth Route Army.

Mao Zedong    Zhou Enlai

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Our source for this telegram is *Dierci guogong hezuo de xingcheng*, p. 182, where it is reproduced from the original in the Central Archives.

1. The time at which this telegram was dispatched is indicated by a character signifying between 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M.

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To Xu Teli

(January 30, 1937)

Old Comrade Xu:

You were my teacher twenty years ago, you are still my teacher today, and you are sure to remain my teacher in the future.\(^1\) When the revolution failed, many Communist Party members left the Communist Party and some even went over to the enemy’s side; yet you joined the Communist Party in the autumn of 1927 and adopted an extremely positive attitude. In the long years of hard struggle from that time on, you have been more active, less fearful of difficulties, and more eager to learn new things, than many of the young and middle-aged comrades. What people call “old age,” “body and mind in bad shape,” and “difficulties and impediments” all capitulate before you. What about in other people’s presence? These things are used as excuses for being intimidated and flinching.

You understand so much, yet have always considered your knowledge inadequate, unlike some people who are actually only “half-full,” yet like to “spill out” all over the place. Whatever you have in your mind is what you say and do, whereas with some people, there is always something filthy hidden in some corner of the mind. At all times, you are one with the masses, whereas it seems that some people are happiest only when divorced from the masses. You have proved yourself in every way as a model in observing the discipline of the Party and the revolution, whereas it seems that some people believe that discipline applies only to others but not to themselves. You put the revolution, work, and others in first place, but some people put fame, rest, or themselves in first place. In general, you choose to do difficult tasks and never shirk responsibilities, whereas some people are only willing to do easy tasks and shirk responsibility at the moment when it is called for. I admire you for all these qualities, wish to continue to learn from you, and wish for all Party members to learn from you. I am writing to congratulate you on your sixtieth birthday and wish that you enjoy good health and longevity and become a model for all revolutionary Party members and the entire people. I offer you a revolutionary salute!

Mao Zedong

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Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji*, pp. 98–99, where it is reproduced from the manuscript.

1. Xu Teli had been Mao’s teacher at First Normal School in Changsha in 1913–1918. (See Volume 1, p. 372 note 26.)
The Red Army Should Advance and Retreat Together with the Armies of Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng

(January 30, 1937, midnight)

Zhou [Enlai] and Bo [Gu], Luo [Fu], Wang [Jiaxiang], Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi]:

Our opinion is as follows:
1. Peace is our basic policy, as it is that of Zhang [Xueliang] and Yang [Hucheng].
2. But together with Zhang and Yang, we constitute a trinity. When we advance, we advance together. When we retreat, we retreat together. We cannot think only of ourselves, and lose Zhang and Yang.
3. Tell Zhang’s and Yang’s units that we will travel side by side with them from beginning to end. Before they agree to withdraw their troops, we shall not act independently, and shall assist their struggle for better conditions.
4. Strive to win the final peace on the basis of this attitude.


Message of Condolence to Wang Yizhe’s Family from Mao Zedong, Zhu De, and Zhang Guotao

(February 4, 1937)

Ever since the news of General Wang Yizhe’s murder\(^1\) reached us here, there has been a constant outpouring of mourning and grief. On the 4th, Mao Zedong, Zhu De, and Zhang Guotao sent a telegram of condolence on this occasion to Wang’s family, which reads as follows:

To Chairman Mr. Yang Hucheng, Chairman Mr. Yu Xiaochou, and, through them, the ladies and gentlemen of Mr. Wang Dingfang’s family for their perusal: We were extremely shocked to learn of Mr. Dingfang’s tragic fate. Mr. Dingfang worked hard for the national united front against Japan; he was not only a mainstay of the state and the nation, but also a leader of the patriotic people. He contributed a lot to peace and worked hard to obtain unification and unity, thereby offending the minority who ignored the larger issues, and paid for this with his life. The army and the people in the soviet areas grieve and mourn in one voice, and we hereby specially send our condolences and respectful regards through this telegram.

Mao Zedong Zhu De Zhang Guotao

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Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 789–90, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

\(^1\) Regarding Wang Yizhe’s assassination by radical young officers, see above, the Introduction.
The Main Substance of Our Negotiations with Nanjing

(February 9, 1937, 11:00 P.M.)

Zhou [Enlai]:

1. Please refer to the telegram to the Third Plenum\(^1\) for our political standpoint in negotiating with Nanjing;

2. As regards the military aspect, we agree with the proposal that, at the outset, our forces should be organized into twelve divisions, constituting four armies, under the command of Lin [Biao], He [Long], Liu [Bocheng], and Xu [Xiangqian], respectively. These in turn make up one route army, with a commander-in-chief, Zhu [De], and a deputy commander-in-chief, Peng [Dehuai].

3. We will change the title of the army right away if the other side agrees to provide soldiers’ pay and provisions, that is, if we are treated in the same way as the Central Army. If the other side should still delay the change, then ask for a monthly subsidy of at least 800,000 to a million.

4. If a national defense committee is organized, the Red Army should be represented. If there is no such organization for the time being, the Red Army also needs to have its representative residing in the capital so as to participate in the national defense preparations.

5. On the problem of the Party, it will be sufficient if there is no arrest of our members and no sabotage of our organizations. There will be no change in the organizational leadership of the Red Army.

([Fan] Changjiang will return tomorrow.)

Mao [Zedong] Luo [Fu]

Supplement to the Substance of Our Negotiations with Nanjing

(February 10, 1937, midday)\(^1\)

Zhou [Enlai]:

Organizations in which our side will participate: 1. Military organs such as the Military Commission, the General Headquarters, the National Defense Conference, and so on. 2. Political gatherings such as meetings of delegates from various parties and groups, the National Assembly, and so on. 3. During the period of resistance against Japan, we will participate in the government.

Luo [Fu] Mao [Zedong]

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Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 791–92, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The reference is to the telegram of February 10, 1937, to the Third Plenum of the Guomindang Central Executive Committee translated below.

Our source for this text is *Wensha yanjiu*, no. 4 (1985) (p. 207 of the annual volume).

1. The Chinese character used here to indicate the time of day means between 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M.
Telegram of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to the Third Plenum of the Chinese Guomindang (February 10, 1937)

For the perusal of the gentlemen of the Third Plenum of the Chinese Guomindang:

The whole country rejoices at the peaceful solution of the Xi'an Incident; it is truly a blessing for the state and the nation that the policy of peace, unification, and unity in resistance against foreign aggression has finally been put into practice. At this critical juncture, when the Japanese bandits are rampant and the survival of the Chinese nation hangs in the balance, this Party hereby expresses its sincere hope that the Third Plenum of your honorable party will, on the basis of this policy, establish the following points as national policy:

1. Stop the civil war on all fronts and concentrate the strength of the country to cope with the foreign invasion;
2. Guarantee freedom of speech, assembly, and association, and release all political prisoners;
3. Call a conference attended by representatives from all parties, all factions, all circles, and all armies, gathering the talented people of the whole country for a concerted effort to save the nation;
4. Swiftly complete all preparations for the war of resistance against Japan;
5. Improve the livelihood of the people.

If your honorable party’s Third Plenum resolutely and determinedly establishes this as national policy, then this Party, to demonstrate its sincerity in unity against foreign aggression, is willing to pledge to the Third Plenum of your honorable Party that it will do the following:

1. Abandon the policy of armed uprising aimed at the overthrow of the National Government in all parts of the country;
2. Rename the Soviet Government as the Special District Government of the Republic of China and the Red Army as the National Revolutionary Army, directly under the orders of the Central Government in Nanjing and its Military Commission;

3. In the areas under the jurisdiction of the Special District Government, practice thorough democracy based on general elections;
4. Abandon the policy of confiscating the land of the landlords and adhere resolutely to the common program of the national united front against Japan.

The national crisis is daily growing more acute, and time waits for no man. This Party can vow to heaven its loyalty to the nation, and you gentlemen are eager in your service to the country. You will assuredly be able to accept the request of this Party, so that a national united front for resistance against aggression and the salvation of the nation will be formed from this time onward. We are all descendants of the Yellow Emperor, sons and daughters of the Chinese nation. Faced with national crisis, there is no alternative save to discard all our prejudices, cooperate closely with one another, and dedicate ourselves to the great common prospect of the final emancipation of the Chinese nation. This telegram is to convey this message, and we look forward to being enlightened by your instruction.

With national-revolutionary salutations!

The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party

Our source for this telegram is Mao Ze-dong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 5, pp. 57–58, where it is reproduced from Xin Zhonghua bao, February 10, 1937, in which it was first published.
Written Reply Regarding Principles of the Negotiations with the Guomindang

(February 12, 1937, 3:00 A.M.)

Zhou [Enlai]:

Please pay attention to the following:

1. Defense sectors should include Jinji and Lingwu. If the Northeastern Army is indeed to be transferred, we should also ask for Haiyuan, Guyuan, Zhengyuan, and Xifengzhen because the defense areas we now have are truly insufficient. We do not, however, mean to encourage the transfer of the Northeastern Army. On the other hand, if it becomes unavoidable after the Northeastern Army is transferred, it would be appropriate to repeat explicitly the demand for the whole of northern Shaanxi and Ningxia, which has been put forward earlier to Nanjing. But in order not to increase Chiang’s difficulties, this may be discussed only at a later date.

2. Although defense sectors have been designated for the West Route Army, they have neither yielded these sectors nor stopped fighting with us. We should demand a ceasefire and the yielding of defense sectors.

3. The Red Army guerrilla units in provinces other than Shaanxi and Gansu, including the ones over a thousand men strong, shall all be converted to militia or defense regiments; it is absolutely inappropriate to have them transferred to concentrate their forces in Shaanxi and Gansu.

4. Try to reject the propositions of political instruction liaison officers, or at least delay them.

5. Funds should be provided from February.

6. During the negotiations, you should restate the position put forward in our telegram to the Third Plenum, to the effect that we will carry out the four items we pledged only if they carry out the five demands made of them. Otherwise the other side will try to compel us to make further concessions. In reality these are our minimum conditions, and no further concessions should be made. Moreover, it will take more time to carry this out (it is very difficult to persuade the cadres and the popular masses), and only by insisting that the other side fulfill our five

Our source for this text is Wenxian he yanjiu, no. 4 (1985) (pp. 207-8 of the annual compendium).

1. The editors of Wenxian he yanjiu state that something is probably missing after this clause.
Demand That Nanjing Expand Our Defense Sector

(February 14, 1937, 2:00 A.M.)

Zhou [Enlai):

1. Send an airplane immediately to pick up [Liu] Bocheng.
2. Take advantage of the opportunity provided by the northward transfer of the Fifteenth Army Group to increase our defense sector and demand the six xian of Jinji, Lingwu, Zhongning, Yuwang, Qingjian, and Yichuan, as well as the Anbian area (including Ningtiaoliang and north of Jingbian) and Wayaobao. In addition, there were originally soviet areas on both shores of the lower reaches of the Wuding River all the way to the Yellow River, including the areas around Hekou, Chuanxu, Mankuping, and Zuolingting, and Li Xianzhou’s troops stationed there now must evacuate the area.
3. Ningxia and the whole of northern Shaanxi should also be mentioned, but this may be discussed again in future.
4. West of Liangzhou, Chiang designates Ganzhoufu, Suzhoufu, and Anxizhou, including all xian therein.
5. The West Route Army is to occupy Anxizhou with some of its forces to receive cargo when the spring thaw comes. Its main force will be in the Erzhou region of Gansu, but Ma [Bufang]’s troops must vacate that area.
6. Please consider how to bring about the above.

Mao

Talk on the Sino-Japanese Problem and the Xi’an Incident

(March 1, 1937)

Smedley: Is there any basic change in the united front policy the Communist Party is now carrying out from what you discussed last fall with the reporter Snow?

Mao: On a basic level, there is no real change. This is reflected in the following points:

1. Our united front is directed against Japan. Thus it is not meant to oppose all imperialisms but, rather, opposes Japanese imperialism because Japanese imperialism is now invading China. But we ask that Britain, America, France, the Soviet Union, and other countries sympathize with China’s anti-Japanese movement, or at least not oppose it. On this basic premise, we wish to establish friendly relations with these countries.
2. Our united front is a national one. That is to say, it includes all parties and factions and all classes within the nation, excluding only the Chinese traitors. Some say that the Communist Party advocates a popular front, but this is not true. What the Communist Party advocates is a national front. This sort of national front is much more extensive than the popular fronts in France or Spain.
3. Therefore, the major political program of this national front against Japan should include the following:
   a. Domestic peace and unification;
   b. War of resistance against Japan;
   c. Democratic rights and freedom for the people;
   d. The Nanjing government transformed into a genuine government of national defense, accommodating all parties and all factions and removing from office all pro-Japanese elements;
   e. The state system transformed into a democratic republic based on general elections and a parliamentary system;
   f. Improving the livelihood of the people;
   g. Developing industry and commerce;
   h.Uniting with all countries sympathetic to China’s war of resistance against Japan.

This interview with Agnes Smedley was first published in Yan’an in Xin Zhonghua bao, issues nos. 338–343, March 16–April 3, 1937. Our source is Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 793–94, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.
Smedley: What level of sacrifice are you prepared to make in order to form the national united front against Japan?

Mao: That depends on the historical situation. Beginning in the summer of 1927, the Guomindang abandoned the united front of the two parties, the Guomindang and the Communist Party, abandoned Mr. Sun Yatsen’s policy of uniting with Russia, uniting with the Communist Party, and uniting with the peasants and workers, abandoned the political program of national independence, democracy, and freedom, and headed instead in the opposite direction. This presented us with no choice but to take responsibility for the Chinese revolution single-handedly, and to carry out the policies of Soviet political power and the land revolution, placing us in opposition to the Guomindang. At the time, this policy we adopted, which was in opposition to the Guomindang, was absolutely correct and necessary. After the September 18 Incident took place, however, the Communist Party issued a statement demanding a halt to the civil war and expressing our willingness to conclude with the Guomindang an agreement for internal peace and a war of resistance against Japan, on three conditions. But at that time only the Nineteenth Route Army accepted our proposal, whereas Nanjing not only totally disagreed but also launched a large-scale “Encirclement and Suppression” against us. When the North China problem arose, the nation faced extremely serious peril because of foreign aggression, and we further issued a statement on August 1, 1935, proposing to organize a united anti-Japanese army and a government of national defense. In December that same year we issued our Party’s resolution on establishing a national united front against Japan and designed a concrete program for the united front. After this new policy was announced, it met with immediate approval from the broad popular masses, and more than a few patriotic elements in the Guomindang embraced the policy as well. This was because, when faced with an even bigger enemy, only by ending the civil war could Japan be fought and foreign aggression resisted, thereby opening a new stage in Chinese politics. The Guomindang, however, was unwilling to abandon its old policy, and last August we wrote another long letter to the Guomindang, resolutely demanding a shift in the target of hostility from the domestic [front] to the Japanese invaders and restoration of Sun Yatsen’s three basic principles, at the same time suggesting that the state system be changed into a democratic republic and a parliament be convened on the basis of general elections, and demanding that they realize and redress their past mistakes and make a fresh start. We proclaimed: the Soviet areas wish to practice the same democratic system as that practiced throughout the country. This letter won broad sympathy within the Guomindang. Yet the Guomindang Central Committee made no reply to us at all. When the Xi’an Incident broke out, the country was placed in great peril. The danger lay in the fact that Japan would necessarily take advantage of the opportunity to launch an attack, so its peaceful solution was truly an immeasurable blessing. In order to consolidate domestic peace and hasten resistance against Japan, we sent an important telegram to the Guomindang on February 10, the eve of the convening of the Guomindang’s Third Plenum. In the telegram we expressed the following points:

1. Rename the Soviet Government as the Special District Government of the Republic of China and the Red Army as the National Revolutionary Army, [respectively] subject to the direction of the Nanjing government and the Military Commission;
2. Put into practice a thoroughly democratic system in the areas under the jurisdiction of the Special District Government;
3. In all parts of the country, abandon the policy aimed at overthrowing the National Government (we already began to carry out these guidelines last year and are merely reiterating them now).
4. Abandon the policy of confiscating the land of the landlords.

These new declarations were meant entirely to eliminate suspicions harbored in various circles and to abolish the state of hostile opposition so as to form a national united front with the Guomindang against Japan. As for the Guomindang, we demanded that they fundamentally change their past policy and carry out the program of resisting foreign invasion, practicing democracy at home, improving the livelihood of the people, and so on.

Smedley: How are you going to apply your principle of the united front here in this area and other areas? For example, by what means will you deal with merchants, intellectuals, landlords, peasants, workers, the armies, and so on?

Mao: In our relationship with the merchants, there is no difference between the past and the present. We have always advocated the development of national industry and commerce. Nowhere has the Red Army failed to protect the merchants. It is widely known as fact that, recently in areas around Xi’an and Sanyuan, not only did the Red Army protect the merchants, but it did not confiscate the land from any landlord, thus earning praise from all circles. Commerce within the Soviet boundaries is completely free.

In our relationship with intellectuals, the present policy is consistent with the past policy of protection. We give preferential treatment to technical personnel and are respectful in our attitude toward cultural workers and artists.

Landlords will not be deprived of their land on the condition that they do not oppose the policy of fighting Japan and saving the nation.

As to workers, all sorts of measures to improve their treatment will be taken, in line with actual conditions.

As for the question of our attitude toward the Guomindang armies: All Chinese armies, especially the Huangpu armies, which boast a glorious history, should become closely united under the national front in a concerted effort against Japan, pointing their guns outward and avoiding civil war. Although the Red Army and the Guomindang have been fighting each other for ten years, we
shall not bear grudges; we are willing to join hands with them and fight together in defense of the motherland under one command. We are convinced that they must share our position.

On all the aforementioned policies we wish to hold discussions with the Guomindang and people of all circles, reach a consensus, and place them in the program of the national front, following the main clauses on the anti-Japanese principles and the state system, so as to carry them out on a nationwide scale.

Smedley: Does the new policy of the united front mean that the Chinese Communists are giving up class struggle to form a national front and have thus become nationalists?

Mao: As has been stated above, every policy that the Communist Party has decided to adopt is designed solely for the purpose of truly resisting Japan and safeguarding China. Consequently, internal peace must be achieved and the opposition of the two régimes abolished; otherwise a war of resistance against Japan is impossible. This is an instance of subjecting the interests of a part to those of the whole and subjecting the interests of a class to those of the nation. Every party and every individual within the country should be clear on this important principle. The Communists will certainly not narrowly tie down their views based on the interests of one class or of one time; on the contrary, they are intensely concerned with the interests of the whole country and the whole nation, and with their permanent interests. On matters of class struggle, we advocate that efforts be made from two aspects as described below, so that the problem may be properly solved.

First, with regard to the landlords and capitalists, they are wealthy and powerful and should respect above all the interests of the nation and do their best to improve the livelihood and treatment of the workers and peasants. The reason is that if the landlords and capitalists persist as before in oppressing and exploiting the workers and peasants in every cruel and inhuman way, and concern themselves only with the interests of their one part or their one class, the workers and peasants will be unable to survive, much less resist Japan. As a result, the nation will be destroyed, and the landlords and capitalists themselves will become slaves without a country. So any landlord or capitalist with the slightest conscience should arouse his sense of patriotism and support the improvement of the economic and political life of the workers and peasants for the sake of fighting Japan and saving the nation. It simply will not do that only they themselves are fed while the workers and peasants are not, and that only they themselves enjoy political freedom while the workers and peasants do not. I think that Japan’s running dogs, that is, the Chinese traitors, are the only ones who care nothing about the larger issues and the national interests, and who would, at this crucial moment of imminent national subjection and the extinction of the race, go on oppressing and exploiting the workers and peasants with all their might. We have already put forward demands on this issue to the Guomindang on behalf of the workers and peasants of the country, and for the sake of the larger situation and the national interests, the Guomindang should have a satisfactory response.

Second, with regard to the workers, peasants, and the masses of the poor, they have no money and no power, but they constitute the foundation of the country and the largest class. At this crucial moment, when national subjugation and extinction are imminent, their most important task is likewise to fight Japan and safeguard China. Moreover, they shall be the main force in fighting Japan and saving the nation, and there is absolutely no way to fight Japan and save the nation without them. When their economic and political lives have been improved, their resentment against the landlords, capitalists, and the Guomindang will abate. The workers and peasants, however, should likewise be concerned with the larger issues and the interests of the nation. Therefore, we also do not advocate raising any demand that does not fit in with resisting Japan and saving the nation. The Communist Party advocates improving the livelihood of the people, and that is the reason it has stopped confiscating land.

There is no question that the policies the Chinese Communist Party has currently put forward are of a patriotic nature. Some people say: The Communists are internationalists, and they are not concerned with national interests and have no intention of defending the motherland. This is utter nonsense. The Chinese Communists are internationalists, and they are in favor of the movement for world harmony [guoji datong yundong]. They are at the same time patriots defending the motherland. To defend the motherland they are willing to fight in resistance against Japan down to their last drop of blood. The national liberation struggle led by the Communist Party over the past fifteen years is a reality known to all. Such patriotism does not conflict with internationalism, because only an independent, liberated China can participate in the movement for world harmony.

Smedley: If a Chinese national front government is established, what would be its conditions for peace with Japan? Should there still be negotiations between China and Japan?

Mao: If Japan desires peace, we will not refuse to negotiate. Our conditions for peace are the following:

First, that Japan abolish its policy of aggression against China, or what is called its continental policy, and Hirota’s three principles, and that it respect China’s independence and place the two countries on an entirely equal footing;

1. It is not altogether clear whether Mao here intends the Confucian concept of datong, or “Great harmony,” to stand simply for a movement to create harmony among nations, or whether the term guoji datong yundong is, in fact, a euphemism for “world Communist movement.”
Second, that the Four Northeastern Provinces and northern Chahar be returned, that Manchukuo be abolished, and that the eastern Hebei government of Yin Rugeng be abolished;

Third, that troops stationed in North China be withdrawn;

Fourth, that Japanese planes cease flying at will within the boundaries of China;

Fifth, that Japanese spy organizations, or what are called special agencies, all over China be abolished;

Sixth, that brutal and irrational behavior by any Japanese person within Chinese territory toward any Chinese person be prohibited;

Seventh, that smuggling be prohibited.

Only when Japan agrees to discuss these conditions should peace negotiations be started. We oppose any negotiations that would jeopardize China’s territorial sovereignty. You should know, however, that negotiations on these conditions are possible only when a people’s government is established in Japan. The present government in Japan is one of warlords, so this possibility does not exist.

Smedley: Has war against Japan become unavoidable?

Mao: It is unavoidable. Until the Japanese people overthrow the government of the warlords, Japan’s policy of aggression will not come to an end, so the war is unavoidable. After Germany and Japan concluded their treaty, the threat of war was intensified somewhat.

Smedley: Japan asserts that cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party in China hampers peace in the Far East. How would you answer this sort of theory?

Mao: What the Japanese warlords really mean by the so-called “peace in the Far East” is the Japanese occupation of China and the latter’s allowing this occupation without any resistance; it also means no objection from countries concerned with the China question such as England, America, France, the Soviet Union, and so on. This is “subjugation of other countries without having to fight,” the so-called “peace in the Far East” that the Japanese warlords need. But there is another kind of peace in the Far East, which is to carry out the means I discussed earlier, where Japan abandons its policy of aggression, hands back the Four Northeastern Provinces, withdraws its troops, and so on, which would allow the

Chinese people to lead peaceful lives and the countries of the world to trade with China in a peaceful way. This is the other kind of peace in the Far East. But only this sort of peace is genuine peace, the kind needed by the Chinese people, and also the kind needed by all peaceful countries in the world, and also the kind needed by the Japanese people. The only ones who do not need this sort of peace are the Japanese warlords and their allies in aggression, the two fascist states of Germany and Italy. Therefore, let us put it this way: we oppose “peace in the Far East,” meaning the first kind of “peace,” but we favor peace in the Far East, meaning the second kind of peace. We advocate substituting the second kind of peace for the first kind of “peace.” Because the so-called “peace” touted by the Japanese warlords is nothing but another name for war, another name by which the Chinese are to be made slaves, the people of all peaceful countries in the world threatened, and another name in which great harm is to be done to the Japanese people. As far as I can see, this kind of “peace” should be “hampered” by all means.

Smedley: Is there not a contradiction between Sino-Japanese war and world peace? Is it possible to find a point of compromise?

Mao: There is certainly a contradiction between a Sino-Japanese war and world peace. The majority of countries and peoples of the world want peace, but the Japanese warlords, on the contrary, want war. This sort of contradiction could never be reconciled according to Japanese policy. There is only one way to resolve the contradiction, which is, on the one hand, that peaceful countries in the world join China in opposing the Japanese policy of aggression and compel the Japanese warlords to comply with world public opinion, and, on the other hand, that if war is unavoidable, China should resolutely wage a war of resistance. These are the only ways that accord with world peace. The basic premise for compromise in the world as well can only be founded on a policy of sanctioning and resisting aggressors.

Smedley: Do you think that peace treaties such as the Nine-Power Treaty, the Kellogg-Briand Pact, the Treaty of the League of Nations, and other such peace treaties are able to stop Japan from fighting a war against China? What kind of role will these treaties play and what significance do they have in the war between China and Japan?

Mao: Looked at from today’s standpoint, these treaties are, indeed, an expression of the wish for peace, and for this reason the aggressor countries have expressed their resolute opposition. With respect to an aggressor nation such as Japan, however, these treaties have only the force of moral sanctions and cannot possibly stop Japan from waging war against China. These treaties certainly cannot play a very important role in a war between China and Japan, and there-

2. The Eastern Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government was a Japanese puppet political entity which had been established in December 1935 under the leadership of Yin Rugeng, a former Guomindang official. It controlled 22 xian, which were thus removed from the jurisdiction of the government of the Republic of China. See above the relevant note to Mao’s talk of January 1936 with a correspondent of Red China Press.
fore are not of much practical political significance. To prevent Japan from waging war against China, a new kind of treaty is needed. Such a treaty should include articles specifying the use of armed force to counter Japan’s violent aggression, as was done in the Pacific Collective Security Treaty. Only this kind of treaty can truly prevent war or hasten its end when war does arise.

**Smedley:** Can China wage war against Japan immediately after the united front government is set up? Or is a long period of preparation necessary?

**Mao:** This depends on the Japanese situation. When Japan attacks China, no matter when this happens, China should immediately initiate its war of resistance. But we do not advocate making any provocations against Japan; our principle is to fight a war of self-defense. Therefore we should make swift and feasible preparations in every possible way so that China is able to deal with any contingency at any time. We are not against making preparations but, rather, against so-called “long-term preparations” and against actually compromising in the name of making preparations.

**Smedley:** Without international assistance, can the Chinese people launch a victorious war of resistance against Japan with the resources and wealth they now possess? Can China sustain the war financially and economically?

**Mao:** China has to fight the war of resistance even without allies. Besides, with China’s resources and natural conditions, it is possible to sustain protracted warfare. The history of the ten-year war that the Red Army fought is living proof. But we are seeking friendly forces because Japan has already found its bandit allies, so China should definitely not isolate itself. For this reason we propose that the five countries China, Britain, the United States, France, and the Soviet Union form a Pacific united front. This sort of united front is of assistance to China and also of mutual help for each of the countries, because Japan’s aggression is a great disaster not only for China but also for the world, just as Germany is a great bane to the world. Moreover, these two aggressor nations have formed an alliance. I believe that China, Britain, the United States, France, and the Soviet Union should hasten to unite as one, or else there is the danger that the enemy will defeat the five countries one by one.

**Smedley:** Under the present circumstances—that is, given the alliance of Japan, Germany, and Italy—what sort of effects will such a war have upon Japan’s economy, finance, trade, and so on? Will Japan be able to pull through the war with the help of these two countries?

**Mao:** Japan’s invasion of China does not in the least serve the interests of the Japanese people. The ultimate outcome of Japan’s war against China will not be Japan’s victory but, rather, its financial, economic, and political collapse. This point is known, not only to the Japanese people but also to those in the Japanese bourgeoisie who have some vision. Yet the Japanese warlords will never understand this no matter what. The Japanese warlords, having formed an international alliance of aggression, wish to gain the help and support of Germany and Italy by coordinating operations. By using this method, not only do they hope to pull through their war of aggression against China, but they are also preparing to use such methods to gain the whole world. Their dream is, of course, quite satisfying, but the way I see it, their end will not be at all satisfying. The Chinese should have confidence in their own victory over Japan.

**Smedley:** Why did the Communist Party advocate a peaceful solution to the Xi’an Incident? Many people were quite taken aback and hope for an explanation.

**Mao:** It should have come as no surprise but, rather, should have been anticipated, but people failed to associate it with the past political position of the Communist Party. Ever since Japan started its invasion of China, we have been ready to put an end to the civil war, for only when China has gained internal peace can there be a war of resistance. Our proclamation of four years ago regarding our willingness to conclude an anti-Japanese agreement with the Guomindang armies under three conditions, the August 1 Declaration the year before last, our letter to the Guomindang last year, and so on, are all indications of our sincerity in establishing a new united front with the Guomindang. During the Xi’an Incident there were people in this country who tried hard to provoke a civil war. The danger of a civil war was grave then. Had Zhang Hanqing not sent Mr. Chiang Kai-shek back to the capital on December 25, and had the aftermath of the Xi’an Incident not been handled according to Mr. Chiang’s methods, a peaceful solution would not have been possible. The country might have been ravaged by successive wars, and no one knows what might have ensued. This would necessarily have given Japan the best opportunity for invasion, and China might have been ruined because of this, or at least come to considerable harm. During the Xi’an Incident, the Japanese warlords and some Chinese in Nanjing, Shanghai, Beijing, and Tianjin claimed that it was a Communist Party plot. This sort of allegation did not tally with the facts at all. The Xi’an Incident resulted from political disillusionment within the Guomindang over the questions of fighting Japan and domestic reforms. It was an altogether sudden occurrence of which we had no prior knowledge whatsoever. When antagonism developed between Nanjing and Shaanxi after the incident occurred, there were again some people who came up with the story that the Communist Party was going to turn Xi’an into a

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3. The reference is to the proclamation of January 17, 1933, translated in Volume IV, pp. 355–6, offering to conclude an agreement with “any armed force” on three conditions: a halt to attacks on the soviet areas, a guarantee of democratic rights, and the arming of the popular masses to create a volunteer army to defend China and fight Japan.
Madrid. This, too, did not tally with the facts at all. The political environment in China is entirely different from that in Spain. The civil war in Spain was inevitable, whereas in China today the only war to be fought is one of resistance against foreign invasion, and internal peace is essential. The fact that the Xi’an Incident was resolved in a peaceful manner has proved that their stories were nothing but conjecture or, with some people, vicious rumor.

Smedley: Many people not only ascribe the incident to the manipulation of the Communist Party, but also say that red flags were hung high over the city wall there, and that the Red Army was capturing young men and women around Sanyuan. What, then, is the true story?

Mao: As for things like red flags flying in Xi’an, the Japanese and the Chinese traitors are probably the only ones who would have seen them, but Xi’an people have not seen any to this day. As for stories about capturing young men and women, they must also necessarily come out of the mouths of the Japanese and the Chinese traitors. This, too, can only be made clear by going and asking the young men and women of Sanyuan. Today there are official documents still saying that the Red Army commits murder and arson, oppresses the popular masses, and destroys the countryside. They have been saying such things for ten years already, but they are not weary of them yet and would like to repeat them again. Those who say these things have freedom of speech all right, but the people all over China have the freedom to discern the facts with their own eyes. So far the government has not yet passed a law forbidding people to discern the facts with their own eyes, and anyone can visit the places where the Red Army has passed through or been stationed and observe for himself the actual situation, so there is no need for me to dwell on this.

Smedley: It is being said outside [China] that the present policy of the Communist Party is one of submission, capitulation, and repentance toward the Guomindang. What would you say to this?

Mao: I am aware that some people outside are saying just that. But what merits attention is that the Japanese would not want to say such things. The Japanese wish only that the Guomindang and the Communist Party fight each other and would certainly not advocate such a policy of "submission, capitulation, and repentance." This is because the Japanese warlords know full well that the Communist Party's adoption of the policy of cooperation with the Guomindang, even though some call it "submission, capitulation, and repentance," actually deals a serious blow to Japan's policy of aggression. In viewing matters related to China, there is a standard to go by, which is that the Japanese are bound to oppose all revolutionary policies, while they are bound to welcome all counter-revolutionary ones. To judge whether or not a policy or an action is correct, all one has to do is have a look at the Japanese attitude toward it. And now all one has to do is have a look at how the Japanese oppose the so-called policy of "submission, capitulation, and repentance" to prove just how revolutionary our policy actually is. What the Communist Party demands of the Guomindang is that it discard its old policy of the past ten years and change it to a new one of national revolution and democratic revolution. These demands were expressed in the Communist Party's telegram to the Third Plenum of the Guomindang, specifically about calling a conference of representatives on national salvation, guaranteeing democratic rights and freedom for the people, improving the livelihood of the people, hastening preparations for a war of resistance, and so on. Under these conditions, the Communist Party is willing to rename the soviets and the Red Army, eliminate its opposition to the Guomindang, and cease confiscating land from the landlords. Without a doubt, these sorts of measures represent a substantial compromise by the Communist Party toward the Guomindang. But this kind of compromise is necessary because it stems from a greater and more important principle, which is the necessity and urgency of resisting Japan and saving the nation. This may be called mutual concession and unity in a concerted effort to resist Japan. All sensible leaders and members of the Guomindang understand its significance. But certain people in our country are imbued with the Ah Q spirit and have self-righteously described our concession as "submission, capitulation, and repentance." As everyone knows, Lu Xun, who died not long ago, portrayed a man by the name of Ah Q in one of his stories. This Ah Q was forever the winner, so that others were all the losers. Let them say what they like. In any event, there are more than a few Ah Q types in this world. Besides, there are some who suffer from "leftist infantile disorder." Such people are everywhere. That Sun Mingjiu, who assassinated Wang Yizhe, is an extreme example of this kind of person. Their patriotism is impulsive; they are indignant over the tragic fate of being deprived of sovereignty and losing territory, and they are pure of heart and mind. But they are lacking in political experience and tend to lose their bearings in the midst of great change, and they do not understand the differences and relationship between the part and the whole, between the past and the present, between today and tomorrow. At first they opposed Mr. Chiang's return to Nanjing, and later the peaceful solution. As for Xi'an, there are some people there who not only fail to understand the Communist Party, but who do not understand Zhang, Yang, and other persons who favor peace. They do not know that, although the Guomindang's progress is slow, there exists the possibility of concerted resistance against Japan. Within the Guomindang, anti-Japanese sentiment in the National Revolutionary Army increases day by day, and most leaders and party members are likely to join us and the people in the cause of fighting Japan and saving the nation. Changes in Guomindang policy are admittedly not yet altogether satisfactory, but it is, after all, the beginnings of change. The resolutions at the Third Plenum may be regarded as evidence for such beginnings of change.

4. Sanyuan is a locality some 25 miles north of Xi'an.
Those people do not know enough to differentiate the patriots and potential patriots, who make up the majority of the Guomindang, from those elements actually selling out their country, or the so-called pro-Japanese faction. They lump these two together as one. Nor do they know that the responsibility of all advanced elements in the country is to exercise persuasion from various angles upon those who are not yet able to understand our point of view, and make them understand so that they will join us in our fight against the enemy. Here patience is required, and sometimes it is necessary to make some concessions, but as long as the major principle of resisting Japan and saving the nation is not violated, everything can be negotiated. As for this group of impatient people, with regard to their failure to understand our policy, we can offer only the foregoing self-criticism. As for those who disregard the interests of the nation in their pursuit of personal or partial interests, whether they be members of the pro-Japanese faction or those who pay lip-service to resisting Japan, it won’t be a matter of self-criticism, or simply making a few jabs at them; rather, their plot shall be exposed so that they can never carry out their tricks.

Smedley: What is your attitude toward the Three People’s Principles?

Mao: We have had faith in the Three People’s Principles for a long time. Otherwise, how could we have been admitted into the Guomindang between 1925 and 1927? Quite a number of people in our Party have been members of the Guomindang Central Committee or its provincial party committees. I am one of those, as are Lin Boqu, Wu Yuzhang, Dong Biwu, Xie Juezai, and Dong Weijian. There are quite a number of others who have served as leading officers in the National Revolutionary Army, such as our Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, Peng Dehuai, Liu Bocheng, He Long, Lin Biao, Ye Jianying, and Xu Xiangqian. The task at present requires fighting hard for the genuine realization of the revolutionary Three People’s Principles: that is, a Nationalism of winning China’s independence and liberation by fighting a war of resistance against foreign aggression, a People’s Rights of winning the establishment of a parliamentary system based on general elections and a democratic republic by granting democratic rights and freedom domestically, and a People’s Livelihood of winning the alleviation of the misery of the majority of the people by improving the people’s lives. There is nothing contradictory between these Three People’s Principles and our present political program, and we are making just such demands of the Guomindang at this time. Last August, in our letter to the Guomindang, we already demanded that they restore Mr. Sun Yatsen’s revolutionary Three

People’s Principles. We are fighting most resolutely and most earnestly to realize a China of the Three People’s Principles. Take our carrying out of the land revolution in the past, for example. This is nothing other than Mr. Sun Yatsen’s proposal of “land to the tiller.” As for the fact that we maintain faith in communism, there is no conflict there either. During his lifetime Mr. Sun Yatsen had agreed with our simultaneously maintaining our faith in communism. Moreover, among Guomindang members, there are many who believe in capitalism, many who believe even in anarchism, and on the other hand some who believe in Confucianism, Buddhism, or Christianity—all kinds of things—and none of them are excluded. As long as agreement is reached on the present revolutionary political program, the foundation for unity and national salvation has been laid, all suspicions may be dispelled, and we may embark on the road to joint resistance to foreign aggression. Herein lies, in fact, the basis for the Republic of China’s glorious and splendid future.

5. Lin Boqu (1886–1960), also known as Lin Zuhan, was a native of Hunan. He joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, and took part in the reorganization of the Guomindang in 1923–1924. In 1933 he was commissar for finance in the Jiangxi Soviet Government. At this time, he was chairman of the Border Region government.
Orientation for Negotiations with the Guomindang About the Size of the Red Army and for Dealing with the Anti-Chiang Faction

(March 1, 1937)

To Zhou [Enlai], and for transmittal to Peng [Dehuai], Ren [Bishi], and Ye [Jianying]:

1: On the orientation for the negotiations:
   a. Establish the size of the Red Army at fifty thousand, with soldiers’ provisions and pay in line with National Army standards, and a temporary subsidy of five hundred thousand [yuan]. This is to be the final limit of our concessions, but every effort should be made to exceed these figures.
   b. The Twenty-seventh, Twenty-eighth, Twenty-ninth, and Thirtieth Armies, and other local forces less than fifty thousand strong are all to be converted to security forces and militia whose expenses are included in the expenditure for administration of the special zones.
   c. Demand compensation to cover expenses of transporting the old and the weak and of recalling Soviet currency.¹

2. On the orientation for dealing with the anti-Chiang factions:
   a. Persist in the line of supporting Chiang and resisting Japan.
   b. On the one hand, suggest to Chiang that he abandon his policy of sowing dissension and discriminating against other factions and switch to a policy of truly uniting the whole nation to fight against foreign aggression, but join with Chiang in opposing local factions that work in collusion with Japan.
   c. On the other hand, suggest to the various anti-Chiang factions that they abandon their anti-Chiang policy and strive to bring about changes in Nanjing’s national policy, and that they abandon their policy of military and financial opposition to Nanjing so as to achieve the goal of resisting Japan and saving the nation.

Luo [Fu]  Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this text is Wenzian he yanjiu, no. 3, 1985 (p. 164 of the annual volume).
1. The reference is to paper currency issued by the bank of the Chinese Soviet Republic during the Jiangxi period.

Inscription Commemorating the Founding of the Alumni Association of the Anti-Japanese University

(March 5, 1937)

With a resolute and unswerving political orientation and an arduous and combative work style, together with flexible and lively strategy and tactics, we will certainly be able to drive out Japanese imperialism and establish a free and liberated new China.
Written Reply Regarding the Substance of Zhou Enlai’s Negotiations in Nanjing

(March 5, 1937, 9:00 P.M.)

With utmost urgency, to Zhou [Enlai]:

1. The detachment directly under General Headquarters is made up of two intelligence regiments, one at the front and the other at the rear, with a total of about fifteen hundred people. As regards all the other organs, for the appointment of brigade commanders and the formation of units, we will wait to reply until Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi] have given their views. We agree with all the rest.

2. Demand that the Guomindang, at the same time that we make public our declaration, also make public in the form of a statement acknowledgment of our legal status.

3. It would be best for the administrative districts to have a system of a chairman and a number of committees, with a monthly budget (including expenditures for security forces) of three hundred thousand. Another two million in Soviet currency is also to be recalled.

4. Let it be known that the figures for Party membership still need to be clarified, but the total number is estimated to be around a hundred thousand, half in the Soviet areas and half in the White areas. For the time being Zhou and Ye are to attend the national conference, and Mao will not. Lin [Boqu], as chairman of the Special District, will also sit on the Economic Committee.

5. Please make appropriate arrangements within the next day or two for food allowances and reinforcements for the West Route Army.

Luo [Fu] Mao [Zedong]

Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi] are also to be informed.

The Situation and Tasks After the Achievement of Domestic Peace

(March 6, 1937)

[Ren] Bishi:

1. The legal recognition by the Third Plenum of the successful peaceful resolution achieved in the great Xi’an negotiations has opened a new stage throughout the country, characterized by the cessation of civil war, a concerted effort to resist Japan, and peaceful unification for the sake of joint opposition to foreign aggression. It has also led to a transitional period toward the effective establishment of a nationwide united front and the beginning of a nationwide war of resistance. The duration of this period will be determined by the outcome of the struggle among various forces. Meanwhile, all sorts of twists and changes may arise, but there will be no change in the overall direction.

2. Today’s task is to consolidate domestic peace and prepare for the war of resistance against Japan so as to advance the practical work of the nationwide united front and the beginning of the resistance war. The Party’s work continues to be participating actively in the movement to resist Japan and save the nation, and becoming this movement’s central leading force. All work must be modified to suit this overall task.

The Red Army should take advantage of the opportunity to strengthen its internal political and military training, and to enhance the Party’s role as a fortress within the Red Army. It should reeducate its cadres to enable them to assume new tasks in the new situation, tighten military discipline, learn mass work, and strive to become a model for all anti-Japanese armed forces.

Luo [Fu] Mao [Zedong]

Our source for this text is Wenzhan he yanyiju, no. 4 (1985) (p. 211 of the annual volume).

1. See above, the note to the text of March 1, 1937.

2. The editors of Wenzhan he yanyiju state that this should probably read “national defense conference.”
Cooperation Has Essentially Been Established
Between the Guomindang and
the Communist Party

(March 7, 1937)

Fuchun:

What you heard is not true, but the negotiations are getting down to concrete details, and cooperation has essentially been established between the Guomindang and the Communist Party. The policies of the Guomindang are in the process of changing.

Mao, in reply

To Edgar Snow

(March 10, 1937)

Mr. Snow:

I have been thinking of you ever since your departure. I trust that you are well. My conversation with Smedley conveyed several new developments in our policy, and I am hereby having someone send you a copy. Please have a look at it, and spread the word for us. We are all very grateful to you.

Wishing you the best of health!

Mao Zedong

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Our source for this text is *Wenxian he yanjü*, no. 4 (1985) (p. 213 of the annual volume).

1. The time when this telegram was transmitted is indicated by a character signifying between 9:00 and 11:00 P.M.

2. In a telegram of March 6 to Mao, Li Fuchun said he had heard that a national defense committee had been organized in Nanjing, and that Chiang Kai-shek, as commander, would have Yan Xishan, Zhang Xueliang, and Zhu De as his deputies. Mao would be chairman of Gansu Province, and the Red Army would have nine divisions.

Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji*, p. 100, where it is reproduced from a copy of the manuscript original.
Telegram of Condolence from Mao Zedong and Zhu De to the Memorial Meeting in Suiyuan

(March 13, 1937)

To General Fu Zuoyi and General Zhao Chengshou in Suiyuan, and for the perusal of the memorial meeting in honor of the officers and men killed in battle:

When the puppet troops, driven forward by the Japanese bandits, invaded eastern Suiyuan, you gentlemen led all the forces under your command in defending our territory, resisting foreign aggression, and heading off repeated enemy attacks, thereby washing away some of the great shame and humiliation to which our nation has been subjected. The officers and men were heroically valiant in fighting the enemy in pursuit of justice and righteousness, and their glorious spirit is sure to be emulated for generations to come and to inspire the whole nation. Zedong and the rest of us hereby specially send to you gentlemen for your perusal this telegram, to express our deep mourning over our nation's dead.

Mao Zedong and Zhu De
bow to you in respect

To Fan Changjiang

(March 29, 1937, at midnight)

Mr. Changjiang:

I'm extremely sorry to have neglected you that time! We have all read your article,² for which we offer deep thanks!

I am sending for your reference a copy of my conversation [with Smedley] and a copy of the address for the memorial at the Yellow Emperor's tomb.³ Please have them published when possible. It is my fervent hope that you will favor me often with your advice so as to make up for my various deficiencies.

Respectfully wishing you good luck in your writing!

Your younger brother, Mao Zedong

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We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 102–3, where it is reproduced from the manuscript original.

1. Fan Changjiang (1909–1970), a native of Sichuan, had been a correspondent for the Tianjin Dagongbao since 1934. Following the Xi'an Incident, he had been sent to Xi'an and Yan'an to report on developments. On his return from the Northwest in 1939, he joined the Chinese Communist Party.

2. The reference is to the report which Fan had sent to the Dagongbao about the Chinese Communist Party's stand in favor of resistance to Japan.

3. See above, the text of Mao's interview with Agnes Smedley, dated March 1, 1937, and below, the "Elegiac Address in Honor of the Yellow Emperor," dated April 5, 1937.
Two Principles in Negotiating with Nanjing

(April 1, 1937, 2:00 A.M.)

[Peng] Xuefeng:

1. When negotiating with Nanjing, with regard to the Red Army and the soviet areas, the principle is to ensure our absolute leadership; with regard to the relationship between the two parties, the principle is to ensure our party's independence. Concerning these aspects, we absolutely cannot compromise. The other side has already more or less agreed.

2. Nanjing has not at all laid down the condition that Mao must go abroad.¹

The news from North China has been wrongly reported.

Mao Zedong

An Elegiac Address in Honor of the Yellow Emperor

(April 5, 1937)

The Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic has sent a special delegate to honor the tomb of the Yellow Emperor and hold a national tomb-sweeping ceremony. The Soviet Government, on behalf of all citizens within the soviet areas and for the purpose of paying respect to the first ancestor of the Chinese nation, and expressing its resolute determination to be forerunners in fighting to resist Japan and save the nation from perishing, and to strive for the realization of national unity, has specially sent a delegate on the 5th to take part in the ceremony. The original text of the elegiac address is recorded below:

On April 5, the twenty-sixth year of the Republic of China, the chairman of the Soviet Government, Mao Zedong, and the commander-in-chief of the People's Anti-Japanese Red Army, Zhu De, have reverently delegated Lin Zuhan to memorialize in the traditional manner with flowers and silks at the tomb of the Yellow Emperor, our Chinese nation's first ancestor.

You, our illustrious ancestor,
Founded our nation of China;
How numerous your descendants and prosperous your state,
How lofty the mountains and vast the rivers.

Full of intelligence and far-sighted wisdom,
Your glorious reign reached even the barren lands;
You have built this great nation,
Standing grandly in the East.

Changes in the world have come over time,
And leaders stumble and fall;
After several thousand years,
Our powerful neighbor disdains virtue.

The Ryukyus and Taiwan have been lost,
Korea lies in ruins;
Liaoning, Rehe, northern and southern Hebei,
Are overrun with Chinese traitors!

¹ Our source for this text is Wenxian he yanjiu, No. 4 (1985) (p. 213 of the annual volume).

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 5, pp. 67-68, where it is reproduced from Xin Zhonghua bao, April 6, 1937.
We have offered land to our enemies,  
but will they ever be satiated?  
Others hold whips in their hands,  
we have become their slaves.  
How exemplary you were, our ancestor,  
a hero of your generation;  
having fought hard at Zhuolu,  
you pacified the whole region.  
How is it that your descendants,  
fail to fight back in this way,  
and let this proud and glorious country  
fall into the hands of knaves?  
Although we lack capability,  
my comrades and I are eager to rise up and fight;  
tens of thousands of rugged miles we have marched,  
giving our all for the sake of the nation.  
For many years we’ve struggled hard,  
endured countless perils;  
before the enemy barbarians are destroyed,  
how can we return home?  
Let all parties and all circles  
firmly unite as one;  
be they soldier or civilian,  
whether poor or rich.  
The national united front  
is the remedy to save our nation;  
four hundred million people  
will firmly resist to the very end.  
A democratic republic,  
reform of domestic politics;  
hundreds of millions united in one mind,  
are bound to win the battle.  
Restoring our territories,  
defending our national sovereignty;  
these goals and aspirations  
we shall never forget.  
We have mustered our forces and gathered our armies,  
to report to you, our illustrious ancestor;  
give us your careful inspection,  
emperor of heaven, empress of earth.  
May we offer up our sacrifices!

Address at the Opening Ceremony  
of the First National Salvation Congress  
of Young People from the Northwest  
(April 12, 1937)

Special to this newspaper: The first National Salvation Congress of Young People from the Northwest officially opened on the 12th, attended by more than three hundred representatives from all over (Hebei, the Northeast, Shanxi, Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia, and Mongolian and Muslim nationalities). The meeting place had been prepared and decorated beforehand. It was set up in the central auditorium, which was decorated brightly in a stately and magnificently manner, altogether fresh and beautiful. Meanwhile, all the streets and alleys of the city of Yan’an were adorned with colorful posters and slogans supporting the conference, so that the streets took on an entirely new look that was exciting and exhilarating!

At one o’clock on the afternoon of the 12th, the opening ceremony began in the central auditorium. Aside from the participants, there were sixty or seventy visitors, and the whole auditorium was almost full. First, Comrade Feng Wenbin made opening remarks; addresses by Chairman Mao, the Communist Party representative Comrade Luo Fu, Zhou Enlai, Commander-in-Chief Zhu De, Comrades Bo Gu, Lin Boqu, Xu Teili, and others followed. The main points of Chairman Mao’s lecture are as follows:

If we try to explain the relationship and differences between the Communist Party’s past tactics and slogans and its current new ones, it becomes clear that, after the Great Revolution failed, it was right to struggle for the soviets because at that time the bourgeoisie, and its political party, the Guomindang, had betrayed the revolution, and the workers and peasants had no choice but to struggle against the feudal landlords and the bourgeoisie. Ever since the “September Eighteenth Incident,” and especially after the North China Incident, the situation has changed significantly. The invasion by the Japanese, and their measures to destroy China, have endangered not only the workers, peasants, and toiling masses but also the bourgeoisie. No one wants to become a slave without a country, so the Communist Party promoted the establishment of a national united front against Japan, and with the peaceful resolution of the Xi’an Incident, the first step in establishing the national united front—striving for domestic peace—has been basically accomplished. Now the second stage has been en-

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 5, pp. 69–70, where it is reproduced from Xin Zhonghua bao, April 13, 1937.
The Tasks of the Chinese National United Front Against Japan at the Present Stage

Outline of a Political Report at the Party Congress of the Soviet Regions

(May 3, 1937)

The Present Stage of Development of China's External and Internal Contradictions

As the contradiction between China and Japan has become the principal one and China's internal contradictions have dropped into a secondary and subordinate position, changes have occurred in China's international relations and internal class relations, giving rise to a new stage of development in the current revolutionary situation.

1. China has long been in the grip of a struggle between two acute and basic contradictions—the contradiction between imperialism and China and the contradiction between the feudal system and the masses of the people. In 1927 the bourgeoisie betrayed the revolution and sold the national interests to imperialism and feudal forces, thus creating a situation in which the soviet state power stood in sharp antagonism to that of the Guomindang, and, of necessity, the task of the national and democratic revolution devolved upon the Communist Party alone.

2. The situation since the September Eighteenth Incident and the North China Incident has given rise to the following changes in these contradictions:
   a. The contradiction between China and imperialism in general has given way to the particularly salient and sharp contradiction between China and Japanese imperialism, which is to say that Japanese imperialism has car-

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong ji, Vol. 5, pp. 189–205, where it is reproduced from the 1944 edition of Mao's Selected Works.

1. The Task of the Chinese National United Front Against Japan at the Present Stage
2. The bourgeoisie
3. The state power
4. The Communist Party
5. Since the September Eighteenth Incident and the North China Incident
ried out and is carrying out a gangster conquest policy of total colonization and exclusive occupation of China. Consequently, the contradictions between China and certain other imperialist powers have been relegated to a secondary position, while the rifts between these powers and Japan and between the socialist Soviet Union and Japan have been widened. Consequently also, the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese people are faced with the task of linking China’s anti-Japanese national united front with the world peace front. Our united front is against Japan, and not simultaneously opposed to all imperialist powers. China and the Soviet Union should unite.

b. The contradiction between China and Japan has changed internal class relations within China and has confronted the bourgeoisie and even the warlords with the question of survival, and as a result they and their political parties have been gradually undergoing a change in their political attitude. This has placed before the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese people the task of establishing an anti-Japanese national united front different from the French Popular Front and pointing out the possibility of accomplishing such a task and the necessity of accomplishing it. Our united front should include the bourgeoisie and all who agree to the defense of the motherland, and represents national solidarity against the foreign foe.

c. The contradiction between China and Japan has changed matters for the masses throughout the country (the proletariat, the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie) and has changed the situation and tactics of the party of the proletariat, the Communist Party. More and more people have risen to fight for national salvation. The policy proclaimed by the Communist Party after the September Eighteenth Incident was to conclude agreements with those sections of the Guominjang willing to cooperate with us to resist Japan, subject to three conditions (stop attacking the soviet areas, guarantee the freedoms and rights of the people, arm the people), and it has developed into a new policy of establishing an anti-Japanese national united front of the whole nation. This is the origin of the following proposals and positive efforts on our part: the 1935 August 1 declaration and December resolution, beginning to abandon the “anti-Chiang Kai-shek” slogan in the spring of 1936 and the letter to the Guomindang in August, the resolution on the democratic republic in September, insistence on a peaceful settlement of the Xi’an Incident in December, and in 1937, the February telegram to the Third Plenum of the Central Executive Committee of the Guomindang.

d. Because of the contradiction between China and Japan, a change has also occurred in the Chinese warlord régimes and the civil wars among them, which are the product of the imperialist spheres of influence and of China’s semicolonial economic conditions. Japanese imperialism fosters such separate régimes and civil wars for the purpose of facilitating exclusive Japanese domination of China. Certain other imperialist powers are in favor of unity and peace in China in their own interests. The Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese people, for their part, are exerting their utmost efforts against civil wars and splits, and for peace and unity.

e. In terms of relative political importance the development of the national contradiction between China and Japan has demoted the domestic contradictions between classes and between groupings to a secondary and subordinate place. But the substance of these contradictions between classes and groupings still exists and has by no means diminished or disappeared. The same is true of the contradictions between China and the imperialist powers other than Japan. Therefore, the Chinese Communist Party and the people are faced with the following task: to resolve appropriately those internal and external contradictions that can and must be resolved at present so as to fit in with the general task of unity against the enemy.

3. The first stage of the new period in the Chinese revolution, which began on December 9, 1935, was declared over when the Guomindang’s Central Executive Committee held its Third Plenum in February 1937. The major events in this stage were the movements for national salvation among the students and

6. A gangster conquest policy of total colonization and exclusive occupation of China → A policy of total conquest of China
7. The world peace front. → The world peace front. This means that China should not only unite with the Soviet Union, which has all along consistently been the good friend of the Chinese people, but as far as possible should work for joint opposition to Japanese imperialism with those imperialist countries which, at the present stage, are willing to maintain peace and are against new wars of aggression.
8. Is against Japan → Should have as its aim resistance to Japan
9. The petty bourgeoisie → The urban petty bourgeoisie
10. Soviet areas → Revolutionary base areas
11. Proposals and positive efforts on our part → Steps taken by us
12. In the spring → In May
13. The imperialist spheres of influence → The imperialist policy of spheres of influence
14. In favor of → Temporarily in favor of
15. Between groupings → Between political groupings
16. The people → The Chinese people
17. To resolve appropriately → To make appropriate adjustment to
18. The enemy → Japan
19. The various policies → The Chinese Communist Party’s demand for various policies
20. With foreign countries. → With foreign countries that are opposed to Japan.
21. Was declared over → Came to an end
ward and get rid of the pro-Japanese elements.

5. The present stage, from the Guomindang’s Third Plenum to the beginnings of the realization of a nationwide armed resistance against Japan, is the second one in the new period of the Chinese revolution. Both the previous and present stages are stages of transition toward nationwide armed resistance against Japan. If, in the previous stage, the principal task was the fight for peace, then, in the present stage, the principal task is the fight for democracy. If the attainment of peace in the previous stage accomplished the first prerequisite for the establishment of the anti-Japanese national united front, then the attainment of democracy in the following stage will constitute the second prerequisite for the establishment of the front. While striving to establish a genuine, solid anti-Japanese national united front for the overall objective of resisting Japan and saving the nation (and this is the only means by which the task of defending the motherland can be accomplished), one must understand that it is certainly not possible without internal peace, and likewise impossible without internal democracy. Hence, at the present stage of development, the fight for democracy is the central link in the revolutionary task. If we fail to see clearly the importance of democracy and slacken our fight for it, we shall be unable to establish a genuine, solid anti-Japanese national united front, and it will be impossible to carry out a nationwide armed resistance against Japan, to gain thorough victories, and to defend China and recover lost territories.

The Struggle for Democracy and Freedom

6. Japanese imperialism is now intensifying its preparations for the war of invasion of China south of the Great Wall. The signing of treaties of alliance by Japan, Germany, and Italy, the adoption of the 2.8-billion-yen budget, the dissolution of the Diet, and the strengthening of Manchuria all tend toward this goal. In concert with the intensified preparations of Hitler and Mussolini for predatory war in the West, Japan is exerting every ounce of energy in the East in order to prepare the ground, according to a definite plan, for the subjugation of China at a single stroke—creating the military, political, economic, and ideological conditions at home and the diplomatic conditions internationally, and fostering the pro-Japanese forces in China. The so-called “Sino-Japanese collaboration” and a certain relaxation in diplomatic measures prove precisely the tactical needs of Japan’s policy of aggression on the eve of war. China is now approaching the critical moment of decision on the question of survival and extinction and must rush preparations for resisting Japan and saving the nation as a matter of extreme urgency. We are certainly not against preparation; what we are against is the

22. Nanjing’s Third Plenum → The Guomindang Central Executive Committee’s Third Plenum in Nanjing
23. Eliminate domestic antagonism → Stop internal armed conflicts
24. The enemy → Japan
25. Party → Communist Party
26. This task has been basically accomplished → This call has been basically put into effect
27. This could be observed at → This initial change revealed itself at
28. Question → Demand
29. One must understand that → One must understand that to establish a genuine, solid anti-Japanese national united front
30. Prove precisely → Sten precisely from
They should subject the Guomindang, the party in power, to severe criticism, and press and impel it to give up its undemocratic limitation to one party and one class and act according to the opinions of the people. In the next few months of this year, a broad democratic movement must be set in motion throughout the country, with the immediate objective of completely democratizing the national assembly and the constitution. The second matter concerns freedom of speech, assembly, and association for the people. Without such freedoms, it will be impossible to carry out the democratic reconstruction of the political system, mobilize the people for the war of resistance, victoriously defend the motherland, and recover the lost territories. In the next few months the nationwide democratic movement should strive for at least a minimal achievement of such freedoms, which must include the release of political prisoners, the removal of the ban on political parties, and so on. Democratic reconstruction of the political system and freedom and rights for the people constitute an important part of the program of the anti-Japanese national united front; at the same time they are prerequisites for the establishment of a genuine, solid anti-Japanese national united front.

9. Our enemies—Japanese imperialism, the Chinese traitors, the pro-Japanese faction, and the Trotskyites—have been doing their utmost to wreck every step in the great revolutionary movement for peace and unity and democracy and freedom in China, and for a war of resistance against Japan. In the past, while we were fighting strenuously for peace and unity, they were doing all they could to engage in a movement for civil war and splits. At present and in the near future, while we fight strenuously for democracy and freedom, they will no doubt resort to their wrecking again. Their overall objective is to thwart us in our task of armed resistance in defense of the motherland and to accomplish their aggressive task of subjugating China. From now on, in the struggle for democracy and freedom we must not only exert ourselves in propaganda, agitation, and criticism directed toward the Guomindang diehards and the backward sections of the people, but must also fully expose and firmly combat the intrigues of the Japanese imperialists and of the pro-Japanese elements and Trotskyites who serve as their running dogs in the invasion of China, as this is the only way to achieve our objectives.

10. For the sake of peace, democracy, and armed resistance and for the sake of establishing an anti-Japanese united front, the Chinese Communist Party has made the following four pledges in its telegram to the Third Plenum of the Guomindang Central Executive Committee: (a) The Soviet Government in the Shansi-Gansu-Ningxia revolutionary base area will become the Government of the Special Region of the Republic of China and the Red Army will be

31. Indefinite preparation → Protracted preparation
32. Acute contradictions → Rule
33. The dictatorship of one party and one class → The reactionary Guomindang dictatorship of one party and one class
34. Internal hostilities eliminated → Internal armed hostilities ended
35. Undemocratic → Autocratic
36. Engage in → Foment
37. Task → Plan
38. The Soviet Government → The Communist-led government
39. Become → Be renamed
come[^40] [part of] the National Revolutionary Army, and they will come under the direction of the Central Government in Nanjing and its Military Council, respectively; (b) a thoroughly democratic system will be applied within the soviet areas;[^41] (c) the policy of overthrowing the Guomindang by armed force will be discontinued; and (d) the confiscation of landlords’ land will be discontinued. These pledges are necessary as well as permissible, for only thus can we transform the state of antagonism between the two different regimes within the country, which must be transformed, and establish a new basis for achieving unity for common action against the enemy, in line with the principle of changes in the relative political importance of China’s external and internal contradictions. These are principled and conditional concessions, made with the aim of obtaining in return what the whole nation needs—peace, democracy, and armed resistance. Moreover, the concessions have limits. The preservation of the Communist Party’s leadership over the Soviet Area[^42] and in the Red Army, and the preservation of the Communist Party’s independence and freedom of criticism in its relations with the Guomindang—these are the limits beyond which it is impermissible to go. Concessions mean concessions by both parties; the Guomindang abandons the policy of civil war, dictatorship, and nonresistance;[^43] and the Communist Party abandons the policy of maintaining antagonism between the two regimes. We exchange the latter for the former and resume our cooperation [with the Guomindang] to fight against national humiliation and for national salvation. To describe this as capitulation by the Communist Party is nothing but Ah Q-ism, nothing but malicious slander.

11. Does the Communist Party agree with the Three People’s Principles? Our answer is: Yes, we do. The Three People’s Principles have undergone changes in the course of their history. The revolutionary Three People’s Principles of Mr. Sun Yat-sen won the people’s confidence and launched[^44] the victorious revolution of 1924–1927 because they were resolutely applied as a result of cooperation with[^45] the Communist Party. On the other hand, as a result of turning on the Communist Party (during the party purge[^46] and pursuing an opposite policy, the people’s confidence was lost, the revolution was defeated, and the nation and the state were thrown into a perilous situation.[^47] Now that there are extremely grave national and social crises and the Guomindang cannot continue to rule in the same old way, the people of the whole country and the patriots within the

Guomindang are urgently demanding cooperation between the two parties. Consequently, it is completely in keeping with the historical requirements of the Chinese revolution that the essence of the Three People’s Principles should be revived and restored; that the two parties should resume their cooperation, in accordance with the Principle of Nationalism, or the struggle for national independence and liberation, the Principle of Democracy, or the attainment of internal democracy and freedom, and the Principle of People’s Livelihood, or the promotion of the people’s welfare; and that they should lead the people to put these principles resolutely into practice. This ought to be clearly grasped by every member of the Communist Party. Communists will never abandon their ideal of socialism and communism, which they will attain by going through the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The Communist Party[^48] has its own party and political program.[^49] Its party program[^50] is one of socialism and communism, which is different from the Three People’s Principles. Even its democratic revolutionary political program[^51] is more thoroughgoing than that of any other party in China, although it is basically not in conflict with the program of the Three People’s Principles as proclaimed at the Guomindang’s First and Second Congresses. Therefore, far from rejecting the Three People’s Principles, we are ready staunchly to put them into practice; moreover, we ask the Guomindang to implement them together with us, and we call upon the whole nation to put them into effect, so that the Communist Party,[^52] the Guomindang, and the people of the whole country shall unite and fight for these three great objectives of national independence, people’s rights and freedom, and the livelihood and happiness of the people.

12. Was our past soviet slogan[^53] wrong? No, it was not. Since the bourgeoisie[^54] withdrew from the revolution, became retainers of imperialism and the feudal forces, and turned into enemies of the people, the revolutionary task met with defeat before being accomplished, and the only remaining components[^55] of the revolution are the proletariat, the peasantry, and the petty bourgeoisie,[^56] the only remaining revolutionary party the Communist Party, so that the responsibility for the revolution[^57] had to fall on the shoulders of the Communist Party.

[^40]: Become → Be redesignated as part of
[^41]: Soviet areas → Areas under the government of the Special Region
[^42]: The Soviet Area → The Special Region
[^43]: Nonresistance → Nonresistance to the foreign foe
[^44]: Launched → Became the banner of
[^45]: Cooperation with → Mr. Sun’s cooperation with
[^46]: Party purge → Party purge and the anti-Communist war
[^47]: Perilous situation → Dangerous situation, as a consequence of which the people lost confidence in the Three People’s Principles
[^48]: The Communist Party → the Chinese Communist Party
[^49]: Party and political program → Political and economic program
[^50]: Its party program → Its maximum program
[^51]: Democratic revolutionary political program → Program for the period of the democratic revolution
[^52]: The Communist Party → We hold that the Communist Party
[^53]: Past soviet slogan → Past slogan of a workers’ and peasants’ democratic republic
[^54]: The bourgeoisie → The bourgeoisie, and particularly the big bourgeoisie
[^55]: Components → Motive forces
[^56]: Petty bourgeoisie → Urban petty bourgeoisie
[^57]: Revolution → Organizing the revolution
alone. The Communist Party alone held aloft the banner of revolution, preserved the revolutionary tradition, put forward the slogan of a soviet workers' and peasants' democratic republic, and fought hard for it for many years. The slogan of a soviet workers' and peasants' republic was not in conflict with the task of bourgeois-democratic revolution but signified that we were resolutely carrying out this task. Not a single item of policy adopted in our actual struggle was out of keeping with this task. Our policy, including the confiscation of the landlords' land and the enforcement of the eight-hour workday, never went beyond the bounds of capitalist private ownership, nor did we put socialism into practice then. Under the slogan of the new democratic republic, what components will be included? It will consist of the proletariat, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie, and all those in the country who agree with the national and democratic revolution; it will be the alliance of these classes in the national and democratic revolution. The salient feature here is that it is possible for the bourgeoisie to rejoin the revolution given the present international and domestic conditions, and the party of the proletariat should therefore not repel but welcome them greatly and revive its alliance with them for the struggle, so as to help the Chinese revolution move forward. In order to eliminate the internal armed confrontation, the Communist Party is willing to discontinue the policy of forcible confiscation of the landlords' land and is prepared to solve the land problem by legislative and other appropriate means in the course of building a democratic republic. The first question to be settled is whether China's land will be owned by Japanese imperialism or by the Chinese. Since the solution to the peasants' land problem is predicated on the defense of China, it is necessary to make a transition from the method of forcible confiscation to appropriate new methods.

It is correct both to have put forward the soviet slogan in the past and to drop it today.

13. To establish the national united front for joint resistance to the enemy, certain internal contradictions must be properly solved, the principle here being that the solution should help strengthen and extend the anti-Japanese national united front and not weaken or narrow it. During the stage of the democratic revolution, it is impossible to avoid contradictions and struggles between classes, parties, and groupings, but it is both possible and essential to end such struggles as are detrimental to unity and to resisting the enemy (civil war; antagonistic conflict among the political parties; provincial separatism; feudal political and economic oppression; on the one hand, and the policy of insurrection and economic demands harmful to the resistance and national salvation, on the other; and so on), and to continue such struggles as benefit unity and resistance to the enemy (for freedom to criticize, for the independence of the political parties, for improvement of the political and economic lives of the people, and so on).

14. Within the task of fighting for an anti-Japanese national united front and a unified democratic republic, the tasks of the Red Army and the Soviet areas are: (a) raise the level of the Red Army to suit the circumstances of the new stage of national revolutionary war against Japan. To this end, the Red Army shall be immediately reorganized into the National Revolutionary Army and become a model military force in the national revolutionary war by raising the level of its military, political, and cultural education so as to surpass its present state and the level of all other armies in the country. (b) Turn the Soviet areas into a component part of a unified democratic republic, apply its new democratic system, reorganize its security forces, clear out the Chinese traitors and saboteurs, and create a region that is a model of anti-Japanese resistance and democracy. (c) Carry out planned economic construction in this area and restore and improve the economic livelihood of its people. (d) Carry out planned cultural work for the purpose of eliminating illiteracy.

Our Responsibility to Lead

15. It is a law confirmed by Chinese history that the Chinese bourgeoisie (to put it more accurately, the national bourgeoisie), which may participate in fighting imperialism and feudalism under certain historical circumstances, vacillates and turns traitor in others because of its economic and political flabbiness. Thus it is history's verdict that China's bourgeois-democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism is an objective that can be attained, not under the leadership of the bourgeoisie but only under that of the proletariat. Moreover, it is possible to overcome the bourgeoisie's inherent vacillation and lack of thoroughness and to prevent the miscarriage of the revolution only by bringing the perseverance and thoroughness of the proletariat in the democratic revolution

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58. Held → Continued to hold
59. The petty bourgeoisie → The urban petty bourgeoisie
60. The revolution → The resistance against Japan
61. A democratic republic → A new democratic republic
62. Japanese imperialism → The Japanese
63. The soviet slogan → The slogan of a workers' and peasants' democratic republic
64. Groupings → Political groupings
65. The enemy → Japan
66. Economic demands → Excessive economic demands
67. The enemy → Japan
68. The task → The overall task
69. Soviet areas → Anti-Japanese base areas
70. The soviet areas → The base areas
71. A unified democratic republic → The state
72. Its new democratic system → Its democratic system under the new conditions
73. Planned → Essential
74. Planned → Essential
75. An objective that can be attained → A task that can be completed
into full play. Is the proletariat to follow the bourgeoisie, or is the bourgeoisie to follow the proletariat? This question of responsibility for leadership in the Chinese revolution is the linchpin upon which the success or failure of the revolution depends. The experience of 1925–1927\(^76\) proves how the revolution forged ahead when the bourgeoisie followed the political leadership of the proletariat and met defeat when the proletariat (led by the party of the proletariat)\(^77\) became the political tail of the bourgeoisie. This piece of history should not be allowed to repeat itself. From today’s point of view, without the political leadership of the proletariat and its party, it is impossible to achieve any results with regard to the anti-Japanese national united front and fulfilling its tasks, it is impossible to establish an anti-Japanese national united front, to attain the objectives of peace, democracy, and armed resistance and to defend the motherland, and impossible to achieve a unified democratic republic. Today the bourgeoisie\(^78\) is still more passive and conservative, proof of this being its long hesitation in daring to accept fervently the anti-Japanese national united front initiated by the proletarian party.\(^79\) For this reason, the responsibility of the proletariat and its political party for giving political leadership is increased, so that to function as the general staff headquarters in resisting Japan and saving the nation is a responsibility the Communist Party cannot relinquish, an obligation it cannot decline.

16. How is it that the proletariat gives political leadership through its party to all levels of society\(^80\) throughout the country? First, by putting forward basic political slogans that accord with the course of historical development and by putting forward slogans of action for each stage of development and each major turn of events in order to translate these political slogans into reality. For instance, we have put forward the basic slogans for “an anti-Japanese national united front” and for “a unified democratic republic,” but we have also put forward the slogans “end the civil war,” “fight for democracy,” and “carry out armed resistance,” as overall objectives and specific policies for action\(^81\) by the entire nation. Without such objectives and such policies, political leadership is out of the question. Second, the proletariat, and especially its vanguard, members of the Communist Party, should set an example through its boundless enthusiasm and loyalty in achieving such objectives when the whole country goes into action for them. In the fight to fulfill all the tasks of the anti-Japanese national united front and the democratic republic, Communists should be the most far-sighted, the most self-sacrificing, the most resolute, and the least prejudiced in sizing up situations and should rely on the majority of the masses and win their support.

Third is to establish appropriate relations with its allies and develop and consolidate these alliances, adhering to the principle of never relinquishing its defined political objectives. Fourth, expand the ranks of the Communist Party, maintain its ideological unity and strict discipline. It is by doing these primary things that the Communist Party gives effect to its political leadership of the country.\(^82\) The advancement and successful creation of these conditions constitute the preconditions\(^83\) for guaranteeing our political leadership and for ensuring that the revolution will win complete victory and not be destroyed\(^84\) by the vacillations of our allies.

17. When peace is achieved and cooperation is established between the two parties, changes should be made in the forms of struggle and organization and the methods of work that we adopted in the past when carrying out the line of two antagonistic régimes. There should be complete changes in the direction of carrying out the line of an anti-Japanese national united front and a democratic republic, from military to peaceful and from illegal to legal, from secret to open, and from unilateral actions to cooperation with allies. To make changes across the board in work between such fundamentally different things is not easy and will require earnest efforts to learn afresh. The retraining of cadres thus becomes a key link.

18. Many comrades have been asking questions about the nature of the democratic republic and its future. Our answer is: as to its class nature, it will be an alliance of all classes,\(^85\) and, as to its future, it may move in a noncapitalist direction.\(^86\) Because our democratic republic is to be established in the course of a national war of resistance under the leadership of the proletariat and in the new international environment (with socialism victorious in the Soviet Union and the approach of a new world revolution\(^87\)). Therefore, although from the point of view of social conditions\(^88\) it will generally not have changed its nature as a bourgeois state,\(^89\) in concrete political terms it should, rather, be a state based on an alliance of the working class, the peasantry, and the bourgeoisie.\(^90\) As to its future, therefore, although it may move in a capitalist direction, the possibility also exists that it will make a robust turn in a non-capitalist\(^91\) direction, and the party of the Chinese proletariat should struggle hard for the latter prospect.

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76. 1925–1927 → 1924–1927
77. Party of the proletariat → The Communist Party
78. The bourgeoisie → The bourgeoisie, represented by the Guomindang,
79. The proletarian party → The Communist Party
80. All levels of society → All revolutionary classes
81. Action → Concerted action
82. The country → The people throughout the country
83. Preconditions → Foundation
84. Destroyed → Disrupted
85. All classes → All revolutionary classes
86. Noncapitalist → Socialist
87. A new world revolution → A new period of world revolution
88. Social conditions → Social and economic conditions
89. A bourgeois state → A bourgeois-democratic state
90. The peasantry, and the bourgeoisie → The peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie, and thus different from the general run of bourgeois republics.
91. Non-capitalist → Socialist
19. The fight against closed-doorism and adventurism and also against tailism is essential to the accomplishment of the Party’s tasks. In the mass movements the Party has a historical tradition of rank closed-doorism, haughty sectarianism, and adventurism, which reflects the Chinese social conditions; this is an ugly tendency that hinders the Party in establishing an anti-Japanese national united front and winning over the majority of the masses. It is necessary to wipe out this tendency in each and every field of work. Our slogan is to reply on the majority and take the whole situation into account. There must be no revival of the Chen Duxiu type of tailism, which is a reflection of bourgeois reformism in the ranks of the proletariat. To debase the class stand of the Party, to obscure its distinctive features, to sacrifice the interests of the workers and peasants to suit the needs of bourgeois reformism, is sure to lead the revolution to defeat. Our slogan is to carry out firm revolutionary policies and strive for complete victory in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. To oppose these undesirable tendencies, it is necessary to raise the Marxist-Leninist theoretical level of the whole Party, for Marxism-Leninism alone is the compass which can guide the Chinese revolution on the road to victory.

92. The Party has a historical tradition of → Traditional tendency toward
93. Necessary → Absolutely necessary
94. Our slogan is → What we ask is
95. Our slogan is → What we ask is
96. To oppose these undesirable tendencies → To overcome the undesirable tendencies described above
97. Necessary → Absolutely necessary

Struggle to Win the Masses in Their Millions for the Anti-Japanese National United Front

Concluding Remarks at the Party Congress of the Soviet Areas

(May 7, 1937)

Comrades! In the course of the discussions over the past few days, except for the case of a few comrades who have raised different views, there has been unanimous agreement with my report—“The Tasks of the Anti-Japanese National United Front at the Present Stage.” But the dissenting views were rather significant, and therefore in my concluding remarks I shall first answer their questions before discussing certain other issues.

I. The Question of Peace

For nearly two years our Party has fought for internal peace. After the Third Plenum of the Guomindang Central Executive Committee, we declared that peace had been attained, that the stage of “fighting for peace” was over, and that the new task was to “consolidate the peace.” We also pointed out that this was linked to “fighting for democracy”—consolidating the peace through fighting for democracy. A few comrades, however, argue that this view of ours is untenable. It follows that they must either arrive at the opposite view or hover between the two. Because they say, “Japan is retreating and Nanjing is wavering more than ever; the contradiction between the two nations is on the decline and the contradiction within the country is on the rise.” Naturally, according to this appraisal, there is no such thing as a new stage or new tasks, and the situation has reverted to its old stage or even deteriorated. I believe this view to be incorrect.

In saying that peace has been attained, we do not mean that it is consolidated; on the contrary, we have said that it is not consolidated. Bringing about peace and consolidating peace are two different things. History might reverse its course for a while, and peace might meet with setbacks because of the existence of
Japanese imperialism, Chinese traitors, and the pro-Japanese faction. But peace has been the reality since the Xi’an Incident and was the product of several factors (Japan’s fundamental policy of invasion, the favorable attitude of the Soviet Union and also Britain, the United States, and France toward peace in China, the pressure of the Chinese people, the Communist Party’s guidelines for peace during the Xi’an Incident and its policy for eliminating the confrontation3 between the two régimes, the differentiation within the bourgeoisie, the differentiation within the Guomindang, and so on); it is not something that can be made or unmade by Chiang Kaishek alone. To unmake the peace, he would have to fight against many forces and draw closer to Japanese imperialism and the pro-Japanese faction. There is no doubt that Japan4 and the pro-Japanese faction are still endeavoring to provoke5 civil war in China. That is precisely why peace is not yet consolidated. Such being the case, we have come to the conclusion that, instead of reverting to the slogans and the stage of “end the civil war” and “fight for peace,” we should take a step forward and point to the slogan and stage of “fight for democracy,” for this is the only way to consolidate the peace and bring into being the war of resistance against Japan. Why do we put forward the three closely related slogans of “consolidate the peace,” “fight for democracy,” and “carry out armed resistance”? The answer is that we desire to push the wheel of revolution forward and that circumstances allow us to do so. To deny the new stage and the new tasks, to deny that the Guomindang has “begun to change,” and as a necessary consequence of this logic, to deny the achievements of all the forces that have been struggling for peace during the last year and a half is only to remain where one was before, without advancing a step.

Why is such an unsound appraisal made? Because they start not only from fundamental points (Japan’s retreat, Nanjing’s further wavering, the decline of national contradictions, and the rise of domestic contradictions) but also from a number of limited and transient phenomena (Sato’s diplomacy, the Suzhou trial,6 the suppression of strikes, the eastward transfer of the Northeast Army, Yang Hucheng’s journey abroad, and so on), and link the two together, thereby forming a dismal picture. We say that the Guomindang has already begun to change, but at the same time we also say that it has not changed completely. It is inconceivable that the Guomindang’s reactionary policy over the past ten years would change completely without new efforts, without more and greater efforts, by us and by the people. Quite a number of reputedly “left-leaning” people, who often bitterly denounce the Guomindang and who during the Xi’an Incident advocated putting Chiang to death and “fighting our way out through Tongguan,”7 are now astonished when events like the Suzhou trial occur immediately after peace is attained, and ask, “Why does Chiang Kaishek still do such things?” These people ought to understand that neither the Communists nor Chiang Kaishek are gods, nor are they isolated individuals but, rather, members of a party, a class, or a nation. The Communist Party has the ability to push the revolution forward by degrees but is unable to clear away all the evils in the country overnight. Chiang Kaishek and the Guomindang have begun to observe8 these changes, but the accumulated filth of the past ten years will certainly not be cleansed overnight without greater efforts by the whole people. We maintain that the trend of the movement is toward peace, democracy, and armed resistance, but this does not imply that the old evils of civil war, dictatorship, and nonresistance can be swept away without effort. It is only through struggle and hard work, extending over a long period, that the old evils, the old filth, and certain setbacks and even possible reversals in the revolution may be eliminated.

“They are bent on destroying us.” Quite true, they are always trying to destroy us. I fully acknowledge the soundness of this appraisal, and indeed one would have to be fast asleep to overlook this point. But the question is whether there has been any change in the way they are trying to destroy us. I think there has been a change, from a policy of war and massacre to one of reform and deceit, from a tough policy to a soft one, from a policy of elimination to one of persuasion, from a military policy to a political one. Why has there been such a change? Confronted with Japanese imperialism, the bourgeoisie9 has no choice but to seek an ally10 in the proletariat, just as we are seeking an ally in the bourgeoisie, and this should be the point of departure in considering the question. Internationally, by the same token, the age-old hostility between France and the Soviet Union has turned into alliance. Our task10 has also changed from a military to a political one. We, for our part, have no use for plotting or scheming; our aim is to defeat Japanese imperialism in a common effort by uniting with all members of the bourgeoisie and the Guomindang who favor resistance against Japan.

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3. Confrontation → Antagonism
4. Japan → Japanese imperialism
5. Provoke → Prolong
6. The reference is to the trial, held in Suzhou in April 1937, of the leaders of the National Salvation Association, who had been arrested in November 1936. This group, popularly known as the “Seven Gentlemen,” included Shen Junru, Zhang Naiji, the eminent woman lawyer Shi Liang, and four others. According to Mao (see above, the text of December 28, 1936), Chiang Kaishek had agreed to their release as one of the conditions under which he was freed after the Xi’an Incident, but instead they were now formally condemned. The seven were released only after the beginning of the war against Japan.

7. Tongguan, near the border between Shaanxi and Henan, was the scene of a direct confrontation between the forces sent toward Xi’an by the authorities in Nanjing, and the armies of Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng, which lasted from late December 1936 to the end of January 1937. See above, the Introduction.

8. The bourgeoisie → The bourgeoisie and the Guomindang
9. Seek an ally → Temporarily seek an ally
10. Our task → Our task domestically
II. The Question of Democracy

"To put the emphasis on democracy is wrong; the emphasis should be solely on resistance to Japan. Without direct action against Japan, there can be no movement for democracy. The majority of the people want only resistance to Japan, not democracy, and what is needed is another December Ninth Movement."

Let me first put a few questions. Can it be said that what the majority of the people wanted in the previous stage (from the December Ninth Movement to the Third Plenum) was merely resistance to Japan and not [domestic] peace? Was it wrong to emphasize peace in the past? Was it impossible to have a movement for peace without direct action against Japan (the Xi'an Incident and the Third Plenum took place after the battle in Suiyuan was over, and today, too, there is as yet nothing equivalent to the Suiyuan battle or the December Ninth Movement)? Everyone knew that, in order to resist Japan, there had to be [domestic] peace, that without peace there could be no resistance to Japan, and that peace was a condition for resistance. All the anti-Japanese activities in the previous stage, whether direct or indirect (beginning with the December Ninth Movement and ending with the Third Plenum), were centered on the struggle for peace, which was during the first stage the central link, the most essential thing, in the anti-Japanese movement.

Similarly today, in the new stage, democracy is the most essential thing for the task of resistance against Japan, and to work for democracy is to work for resistance against Japan. Resistance and democracy are interdependent conditions, one for the other, just as are resistance against Japan and internal peace, democracy and internal peace. Democracy is the guarantee of resistance to Japan, while resistance can provide favorable conditions for developing the movement for democracy.

In the new stage we hope there may be—and indeed, there will be—many direct and indirect struggles against Japan, and these will give an impetus to the war of resistance and greatly assist the movement for democracy. But the core and essence of the revolutionary task history has set us is the winning of democracy. Is it, then, wrong to keep stressing democracy? I do not think so.

"Japan is stepping back, Britain and Japan are headed toward equilibrium, and Nanjing is wavering more than ever." Ignorance of the laws of historical development has given rise to this needless anxiety. If there were a revolution in Japan and she really withdrew [from China], it would help the Chinese revolution and would be just what we want, marking the beginning of the collapse of the world front of aggression. What room for anxiety would there be then? This is not what is happening for the time being; Sato’s diplomatic moves are preparations for a major war, and a major war confronts us. Britain’s policy of wavering can get her nowhere; her clash of interests with the aggressor country makes this certain. If Nanjing continues to waver for long, it will become the enemy of the whole nation, which is something its own interests do not allow. A temporary retrogression cannot change the general law of history. Hence one cannot deny the existence of the new stage or the necessity of setting the task of winning democracy. In any case, moreover, the slogan of democracy is appropriate because it is obvious to everybody that the Chinese people have far too little democracy, not too much. Actual events have also shown that to define that new stage, and to set the winning of democracy as our task, is to move a step closer to resistance. Events have moved forward; let us not put the clock back.

"Why place so much emphasis on a national assembly?" Because it is something that can affect every aspect of life, because it is the bridge from dictatorship to democracy, because it is connected with national defense, and because it is a legal institution. To recover eastern Hebei and northern Chahar, to combat smuggling, to oppose economic collaboration, and so on, as many comrades have proposed, is quite correct, but this complements, rather than in any way conflicts with, the fight for democracy and a national assembly; the essential thing is still the national assembly and freedom for the people.

It is correct and indisputable that the day-to-day struggle against Japan and the people’s struggle for a better life must be linked to the movement for democracy. Nevertheless, the central and essential thing in the present stage is democracy and freedom.

III. The Question of the Future of the Revolution

Several comrades have raised this question, and my answer here can only be brief.

In the writing of an article, the second half can be written only after the first half is finished. Resolute leadership of the democratic revolution is the prerequisite for the victory of socialism. We are fighting for socialism, and in this respect we are different from any revolutionary partisan of the Three People’s Principles. Our efforts of today are directed toward the great goal of tomorrow; if we lose sight of that great goal, we cease to be Communists. But, likewise, we cease to be Communists if we relax our efforts of today.

We are exponents of the theory of the transition of the revolution, and we are for the transition of the democratic revolution in the direction of socialism. The democratic revolution will develop through several stages, all under the slogan of

12. The aggressor country → Japan
13. Dictatorship → Reactionary dictatorship
14. Economic collaboration → "Economic collaboration"
15. Our efforts of today are directed toward the great goal of tomorrow → Our present efforts are directed toward the great future goal
a democratic republic, and not under the slogan of the soviets. The change from the predominance of the bourgeoisie to that of the proletariat is a long process of struggle, of struggle for leadership in which success depends on the work of the Communist Party in raising the level of political consciousness and organization both of the proletariat and of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie.\textsuperscript{16}

The staunch ally of the proletariat is the peasantry, and next comes the petty bourgeoisie.\textsuperscript{17} It is the bourgeoisie that will contend with us for leadership.

To overcome the vacillation of the bourgeoisie and its lack of revolutionary thoroughness, we must rely on the strength of the masses and on the correctness of our policy; otherwise the bourgeoisie will instead come out on top in relation to the proletariat.

A sound transition (that is, bloodless) is what we would like and we should strive for it, but what will happen will depend on the strength of the masses.

We are exponents of the theory of the transition of the revolution, not of the Trotskyite theory of permanent revolution,\textsuperscript{18} and not of the semi-Trotskyite Lisanism. We are for the attainment of socialism by going through all the necessary stages of the democratic republic. We are opposed to tailism,\textsuperscript{19} but we are also opposed to adventurism and impetuosity.

To reject the bourgeoisie on the grounds that its [participation] is only temporary and to describe the alliance with the revolutionary sections\textsuperscript{20} of the bourgeoisie (in a semicolonial country) as capitalism is a Trotskyite approach, with which we cannot agree. Today’s alliance with the revolutionary sections of the bourgeoisie\textsuperscript{21} is in fact a necessary bridge on the way to socialism.

IV. The Question of Cadres

To shoulder the task of guiding a great revolution requires a great party and great leaders and cadres.\textsuperscript{22} In China, which has a population of 450 million, it is impossible to carry through our great revolution, which is unprecedented in history, if the leadership consists of a small, narrow group and if the Party leaders and cadres are petty-minded, short-sighted, and incompetent. The Chinese Communist Party has been a large party for a long time, and it is still large despite the losses during the period of reaction; it has many good leaders and cadres, but still not enough. Our Party organizations must be extended all over the country, and we must purposefully train tens of thousands of cadres and hundreds of first-rate mass leaders. They are to be cadres and leaders versed in Marxism-Leninism, politically far-sighted, competent in work, full of the spirit of self-sacrifice, capable of tackling problems on their own, steadfast in the midst of difficulties, and totally loyal and devoted in serving the nation, the class, and the Party. It is on these cadres and leaders that the Party’s line relies for its links with the membership and the masses, and it is by relying on their firm leadership of the masses that the Party can succeed in defeating the enemy. Such cadres and leaders must be free from selfishness, from individualist heroism, ostentation, sloth, passivity, and sectarian arrogance, and they are selfless and national and class heroes. Such are the qualities and the style of work demanded of the members, cadres, and leaders of the Communist Party. Such is the spiritual legacy handed down to us by the tens of thousands of members, the thousands of cadres, and the scores of first-rate leaders who have laid down their lives for the cause. We ought to\textsuperscript{23} acquire these qualities, do still better in remodeling ourselves, and raise ourselves to a higher revolutionary level; all this is no doubt necessary. But even this is not enough; we must also regard it as our duty to seek out many more new cadres and leaders in the Party and the country. Our revolution depends on cadres. As Comrade Stalin has said, “Cadres decide everything.”

V. The Question of Democracy Within the Party

To attain this aim, inner-Party democracy is essential. If we are to make the Party strong, we must practice democratic centralism to stimulate the initiative of the whole membership. There was more centralism during the period of reaction and civil war. In the new period, centralism should be closely linked with democracy. Let us apply democracy, and so give scope to initiative throughout the Party. Let us give scope to the initiative of the whole Party membership, and so create\textsuperscript{24} new cadres and leaders in great numbers, eliminate the remnants of factionalism,\textsuperscript{25} and unite the whole Party as solidly as steel.

VI. Unity in the Conference and in the Whole Party

After explanation, the dissenting views on political issues voiced at this conference have given way to agreement, and the earlier difference between the line of

\textsuperscript{16} Petty bourgeoisie → Urban petty bourgeoisie

\textsuperscript{17} Petty bourgeoisie → Urban petty bourgeoisie

\textsuperscript{18} The Chinese term zhuanbian, here translated “transition,” is also the standard Chinese equivalent for the Russian word pererastanie (growing over), which Lenin used to characterize his own view of the succession of stages in the revolution (also called “uninterrupted revolution”), in contrast to Trotsky’s “permanent revolution.” Although Mao, as might be expected, supports Lenin against Trotsky, there is no evidence that he had ever heard of “growing over”; he probably took zhuanbian to mean simply “transition.”

\textsuperscript{19} Khvozism, a term coined by Lenin, is commonly rendered “talism.” Lenin used it to stigmatize those members of the Communist Party who followed along behind the workers, not realizing that it was the Party’s mission to lead the working class.

\textsuperscript{20} The revolutionary sections → The anti-Japanese sections

\textsuperscript{21} Revolutionary sections of the bourgeoisie → Anti-Japanese sections of the bourgeoisie

\textsuperscript{22} Great leaders and cadres → Many first-rate cadres

\textsuperscript{23} We ought to → Beyond a doubt, we ought to

\textsuperscript{24} Create → Train

\textsuperscript{25} Factionalism → Sectarianism
the Central Committee and the line of retreat adopted under the leadership of certain comrades has also disappeared, this shows that our Party is very solidly united. This unity provides the most important basis for the present national and democratic revolution because it is only through the unity of the Communist Party that the unity of the whole class and the whole nation can be achieved, and it is only through the unity of the whole class and the whole nation that the enemy can be defeated and the task of national and democratic revolution accomplished.

VII. Struggle to Win the Masses in Their Millions for the Anti-Japanese National United Front

The sole aim of our correct political policy and of our solid unity is to win the masses in their millions for the anti-Japanese national united front. The broad masses of the proletariat, the peasantry, and the petty bourgeoisie are awaiting our work of propaganda, agitation, and organization. Further efforts on our part are also needed to establish an alliance with the revolutionary sections of the bourgeoisie. To make the policy of the Party the policy of the masses requires effort, long and persistent effort, unrelenting, strenuous, patient, and painstaking effort. Without such effort, we shall achieve nothing. The formation and consolidation of the anti-Japanese national united front, the accomplishment of the task incumbent on it, and the establishment of a democratic republic in China are absolutely inseparable from this effort to win over the masses. If we succeed in bringing millions upon millions of the masses under our leadership by such effort, all our revolutionary tasks can be speedily fulfilled. Japanese imperialism fears nothing about us but such efforts on our part. By our exertions we shall surely overthrow Japanese imperialism and attain complete national and social liberation.

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26. Disappeared → Been settled
27. The petty bourgeoisie → The urban petty bourgeoisie
28. The revolutionary sections of the bourgeoisie → Those sections of the bourgeoisie that are opposed to Japan

Circular of the Military Commission Soliciting Historical Materials on the Red Army

(May 10, 1937)

“August 1” of this year marks the tenth anniversary of the birth of China’s Red Army. In the past ten years the Red Army has accomplished many glorious historic feats that have resounded both inside and outside China. Now, on the foundation of the past ten years’ great struggle is born the Red Army’s new grand and glorious historic mission. Thus, this tenth anniversary of the Red Army brings with it special commemorative significance.

To commemorate this Red Army anniversary of special significance, the decision has been made to launch a large-scale compilation of the Red Army’s ten years of battle history nationwide and to appoint eleven comrades as members of a “Red Army History Editorial Committee,” namely, Xu Mengqiu, Zhang Aiping, Lu Dingyi, Ding Ling, Wu Xiru, Shu Tong, Gan Siqi, Fu Zhong, Huang Zhen, Xiao Ke, and Deng Xiaoping, to collect and organize the materials. Xu Mengqiu is to serve as chairman of the committee.

We now appeal to the heroes of the Chinese nation—all the officers of the Red Army—to make the greatest possible efforts, based on each person’s own experiences, to write down all sorts of Red Army history and battles . . . and so on, and to collect all sorts of memorabilia, so as to complete this great piece of historical writing to commemorate the Red Army’s ten years of struggle.

All manuscripts and memorabilia submitted, if selected for inclusion, will be rewarded with 5 jiao to 20 yuan in cash. Written submissions must reach the committee before mid-July. Manuscripts must be signed with the author’s real name and the name of one’s organization. A list of items solicited is attached on a separate sheet [see next page].

Chairman, Chinese Revolutionary
Military Commission
Commander-in-Chief

Mao Zedong
Zhu De

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 5, pp. 71-73, where it is reproduced from Xin Zhonghua bao, May 13, 1937.
Letter to the Spanish People

(May 15, 1937)

People of Spain, comrades in arms:

We, the Chinese Communist Party, the Chinese Red Army, and the Chinese soviets, regard the war now being fought under the leadership of the Spanish government as the most sacred war in the world. This war is being waged not only for the life of the Spanish people but also for the oppressed peoples of the world because the Spanish government is resisting German and Italian fascism, which, with their Spanish accomplices, are destroying the culture, civilization, and human justice of the world. The Spanish government and the Spanish people are fighting the German and Italian fascists, who are the very ones in league with and giving support to the Japanese fascist invaders of China in the Far East. The Japanese fascists are invading China with all their might. After occupying our Four Northeastern Provinces, they invaded North China and Central China. Were it not for the support received from German and Italian fascism, the Japanese fascists could not, as they are now doing, attack China like a mad dog.

The Chinese Communist Party agrees completely with all the parties and groups that have joined together in the popular front, and at this moment we too are calling upon all parties and groups in China to form a national united front to fight against the Japanese fascists. Our work is just now moving ahead with great urgency. A victory for us will certainly deal a blow to the Japanese fascists, and that will also help the Spanish people and the Spanish government.

We believe that the struggle of the Chinese people cannot be separated from your struggle in Spain. The Chinese Communist Party is supporting and encouraging you, the Spanish people, by struggling against Japanese fascism. The Chinese Communist Party, the Chinese Red Army, the Chinese soviets, and the Chinese people are greatly moved by your defense of Madrid and by your victories on the northern and southern fronts. Every day the press here in our soviet areas publishes reports about your heroic struggle. We firmly believe that the unity of the various parties in your People's Front is the basis for your final victory. We are also in complete agreement with the ten great principles put forward by the Spanish Communist Party.

Besides the similarities already mentioned between your struggle and our struggle in the East, our ranks have also been infiltrated by Trotskyite bandit
elements. Only by resolutely opposing these traitors within can we consolidate our ranks. As we struggle against our own enemies, we are also helping your struggle in Spain.

In China there are more than a hundred magazines and newspapers that publish news, articles, and photographs expressing sympathy with your heroic struggle for democracy and freedom. We know that your victory will directly aid us in our fight against Japanese fascism. Your cause is our cause. We write with emotion about the International Brigade organized by people from every land, and we are glad to know that there are Chinese and Japanese in their ranks. Many comrades of the Chinese Red Army also wish to go to Spain join in your fight. Not a day goes by in which your struggle and the whole situation in Spain is not discussed. Were it not that we are face to face with the Japanese enemy, we would surely join you and take our place in your front ranks.

As you know, the Chinese Red Army has carried on a ceaseless and hard struggle for ten years. We fought without resources, through hunger and cold, with insufficient arms, ammunition, and medical supplies, until at last we won our victories. We know that you and your armies are also going through great hardships like those that we have experienced, and we are certain that you will be victorious. Our ten-year struggle has taught us that if a revolutionary people and their revolutionary army are not afraid of suffering but continue to fight unyieldingly and heroically against the enemy, they will surely be victorious.

We, the Chinese Communist Party, the Chinese Red Army, the Chinese soviets and the Chinese people, express our deepest comradely respect to you, the heroic men and women who struggle for a democratic system in Spain. Through them, the oppressed nations of the whole world have expressed this spirit of boundless unity and fraternity. As in the past, every moment of every day we shall pay close attention to the progress of your struggle. We shall be filled with exultation for all your victories, and we are certain that final victory will surely be yours.

Mao Zedong

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1. In an interview with Nym Wales on May 14, Mao declared that Spain was a "semi-colonial country like China," and that the enemies of the Spanish people were "feudalism and imperialism, the same as in China." He also emphasized, however, as in other texts contained in this volume, that China had a United Front instead of a Popular Front, because "Japanese aggression also subjugates our capitalist class. Because the rice bowl of the Chinese capitalists is also being broken by the Japanese, they can join the broader United Front." Chiang Kaishak, Mao said, could not be China's Franco, "because he represents the national bourgeoisie and the army, as well as the compradors and landlords, and he could not maintain a government position by Fascist support as in the case of Franco." The victory of socialism in China was far away, but not so distant as might be imagined. In conclusion, Mao made a point to which he would return repeatedly throughout the rest of his life: "In the world revolution, the backward countries will be victorious first. America will probably be last." (See Helen Foster Snow, Inside Red China, pp. 264–65)

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On Resisting Japan, Democracy,
and Northern Youth

(May 15, 1937)

Wales: How are things going with regard to the recent peace negotiations between the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party?

Mao: The talks are still going on. The most important thing is to have political guidelines shared by both parties, which provide the foundation for cooperation between the two parties. Without such political guidelines by which both parties will abide, cooperation cannot be achieved very well. The principle underlying these guidelines is the realization of the revolutionary tasks of nationalism, democracy, and people's livelihood. As for the specific work of reorganizing the military forces and changing the soviets, this will soon be under way. So far the Guomindang's actions have been inadequate. For example, pressing charges against national salvation leaders in Shanghai, treatment of the workers in Shanghai cotton mills, and the various restrictions on rules and regulations set forth by the National Assembly are all disappointing actions.

Wales: Has the danger of civil war yet been entirely eliminated?

Mao: On the surface, the crisis of civil war is over. It still exists beneath the surface, but it is no longer important. If we were to say now that peace has been fully established, the masses would become lax with regard to the movement to "consolidate the peace." At present, civil war has not yet been halted on a nationwide scale. For its part, the Chinese Communist Party has already ordered the Red troops scattered throughout the country to stop fighting, but Guomindang troops are still engaging in "suppression." For example, battles continue to be waged in the Fujian-Zhejiang-Jiangxi border region, the Hubei-Henan-Anhui border region, the Hunan-Jiangxi border region, the Hunan-Hubei-Jiangxi border region, and other places. We are now appealing to the Guomindang to stop attacking these regions. As for antagonism between Nanjing and the localities, it does exist, and only by practicing a thoroughgoing democracy can such antagonism and the threat of civil war be eliminated altogether.

We have translated the text of this interview from Mao Zedong ji, Vol. 5, pp. 223–30, where it is reproduced from Mao Zedong lunwen ji, published in December 1937 by the Dazhong chubanshe in Shanghai. It also appears, with one small omission indicated below, in Mao Zedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 497–504, where it is likewise taken from a contemporary publication. Nym Wales' English version does not appear to be available.
Wales: How does the Communist Party view the various factions in Nanjing?

Mao: We want to unite with all Guomindang elements who are sympathetic with the national democratic revolution and work on explaining things to those who are unsympathetic, so that they understand and cease to obstruct the national democratic revolution. A Guomindang Left-wing movement in support of peace, democracy, and the War of Resistance is developing, and its supporters want to see the whole nation united, the restoration of Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary Three People’s Principles, the transformation of the Guomindang, and the restoration of its revolutionary spirit. There is another group of people who are not sufficiently resolute, do not thoroughly accept the task of a national democratic revolution, and are suspicious of cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party. They are struggling, but the people’s mission has been compelling them and influencing them, causing them to come over to the side of the people. There is yet another group of people existing within the Guomindang known as the “pro-Japanese” faction, and the whole country is dissatisfied with them, including most of the people within the Guomindang. If these people do not change their attitude, they will cut themselves off from the people and from the Guomindang.

Wales: What kind of progress has the united front made since the Xi’an Incident?

Mao: There has been some progress on the united front since the Xi’an Incident. Most important is the closer relationship between the two parties, the Guomindang and the Communist Party. And then those who have been suspicious of Communist Party policies have also changed their attitudes somewhat, so that they no longer are opposed to cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party. As for opposition to a peaceful solution to the Xi’an Incident by the “Leftists,” this has also decreased somewhat. But distrust of the Nanjing government within cultural circles, among students, and in the public opinion still actually exists because, up until now, Nanjing has not yet shown in concrete fashion any thorough and resolute changes, has continued to retain many erroneous policies, and has thereby evoked nationwide distrust. We say, “Everyone should get to work,” and a thorough change on Nanjing’s part depends on continuing work by all the nation’s people; we cannot wait for it to change automatically by itself. The future for the united front is hopeful. What is extremely obvious is that there must be unity within the country if we are to achieve the goal of resisting Japan.

Wales: What are the reactions of the various parties and factions within the country towards the united front?

Mao: Except for the Chinese traitors, all other parties and factions are sympathetic to nationwide unity. Many figures among the bourgeoisie expressed approval and support for the peaceful policy adopted by the Communist Party in the Xi’an Incident, but another group of dichard elements took an oppositional stance. If these elements do not change their attitude, then, regardless of their subjective views, they are in fact actually helping Japanese imperialism. As far as we know, those who most vociferously oppose domestic unity are precisely the same Chinese traitors who are directly under Japanese command. For instance, the Trotskyite elements and their ilk are obvious examples. The activities of such elements are without a doubt the actions of Chinese traitors. Our way of dealing with this group of people is to do everything possible to expose their schemes so that they are unable to fool the people, and so that the whole Chinese people will recognize them as the common enemy of the entire nation and rally together against them.

Wales: How can the problem of local forces standing in opposition against Nanjing be solved?

Mao: The existence of the antagonism between local strongholds and Nanjing is not conducive to resisting foreign aggression. Our policy is to reduce such antagonism as much as possible to achieve the goal of uniting against the foreign aggressor. To reach this goal, Nanjing and the various provinces should move a step closer to each other. The main thing is that only once there is progress on the issue of democracy can the antagonism be eliminated and both sides embark on the great road to unity for resistance against Japan.

Wales: Within the policies of the united front, how can the problem of class struggle be appropriately solved?

Mao: Before the class system is abolished altogether, it is impossible to eliminate class contradictions. But in the face of a war of resistance against Japan, we should have an appropriate solution to this problem. For this reason, in the program of the united front we have proposed that, politically, the people be given democratic rights and, economically, that their livelihoods be improved. The workers and peasants have endured political and economic oppression, so they are bound to rise up in rebellion. Only by granting democratic rights and improved livelihoods can these contradictions be reduced. In the joint political program now in the process of being negotiated with the Guomindang, we plan to propose that the workers and peasants be granted freedom of assembly, association, and speech, and universal suffrage. For the workers, it is necessary to raise their pay and improve their working conditions. For the peasants, rents and taxes should be reduced. As for the land question, it should be resolved through establishment of laws and other appropriate means.

Wales: Why are you placing such an emphasis on the question of democracy?
Mao: I have on many other previous occasions mentioned the relationship between democracy and resistance against Japan. We seek domestic peace and unity through the war of resistance, but without democracy, peace cannot be consolidated and there cannot be true unity. Resistance against Japan is something in which the people of the whole country must participate. Without democracy, the common people cannot participate; without peace and unity and without the participation of the people, a war of resistance becomes impossible, and even if there were such a war, victory could not be guaranteed. Therefore, a democratic system is a prerequisite for victory in a war of resistance against Japan. It cannot be done without. The reason we place such an emphasis on the question of democracy is that we want to defeat Japanese imperialism.

Wales: How can the realization of democratic politics be facilitated?

Mao: The realization of democratic politics depends on a democratic movement. If the broad masses of people do not demand and push forward a movement for democracy, democratic politics will not be realized. People of all circles and all parties and factions should unite to strive to win democratic rights. The whole nation’s military personnel should support the democratic movement because the only way to save China, defeat Japan, and avoid the threat of being reduced to the status of a colony is to put into practice democratic politics and grant the people the freedom to participate in political affairs. As for the concrete carrying out of a democratic movement, attention should be placed on the election, convocation, and meeting of the National Assembly, and on winning absolute freedom of speech, assembly, association, and publication, patriotism, and national salvation. These are minimal democratic rights. If the whole country can move in this direction, then a united democratic republic can be realized.

Wales: What is the Communist Party’s attitude toward the current National Assembly?

Mao: Today’s National Assembly has a national defense nature, and at the same time serves as a bridge in the transition from dictatorship to democracy. Therefore, the whole country should take part in the National Assembly, and the Communist Party intends to do so. Nanjing’s regulations regarding the election, convocation, and meeting of the National Assembly are not democratic, and unless they are revised the role of the National Assembly will be extremely limited. For this reason, the whole country should join together to demand that Nanjing modify its inappropriate regulations. The people should take part in the election of the National Assembly; its convocation and meeting should be given ample freedom; its tasks should not be limited to discussion of a constitution but must instead be expanded to include thorough and concrete discussion of guidelines for resistance against Japan and national salvation. The Communist Party’s opinions regarding the National Assembly have already been publicized nation-ally and raised with the Guomindang, and negotiations are still under way, with the goal of having the National Assembly carry out the tasks of democracy and resistance against Japan.

Wales: What are the Communist Party’s views on the release of political prisoners?

Mao: The Communist Party long ago raised the demand to release political prisoners all over the country, and it now continues to do so and has made this a part of its negotiations with the Guomindang. If Nanjing wants to show that it has completely changed its policies, there is no reason not to release the political prisoners. At present, however, the Guomindang has made no concrete moves on this question; although it says it agrees to release the political prisoners, it has not actually done so, and there are instances of further arrests for the crime of patriotism. The Suzhou trial of national salvation leaders was a tremendous disappointment, and even many Nanjing insiders were dissatisfied about it. If Nanjing wants to show sincere determination to start anew with the people, it should immediately release the seven national salvation leaders and proclaim their acquittal.

Wales: What is your opinion about preparing for the war of resistance?

Mao: Whenever Japanese imperialism attacks us, we shall always put up an immediate fight against it. We are always at the ready to handle any incident, whenever and wherever war might break out. But if, for the time being, Japan does not launch a large-scale armed invasion of China, and instead adopts a rather mild policy during the period of its preparation for invasion, we should take advantage of this time to prepare ourselves actively for a war of resistance. What we call “preparations” has different connotations from the Guomindang’s preparations theory of the past. The Guomindang’s preparations theory in the past was first to attain peace within and then to resist aggression from without. This amounts to a ceaseless civil war, exhausting the strength to resist Japan. The preparations being made today, on the other hand, are to stop the civil war, strengthen domestic peace, realize democratic politics, open up to the people all freedoms necessary for national salvation, organize, train, and arm the popular masses, and, at the same time, to hasten the completion of the military, political, financial, economic, cultural, and educational preparatory work for the resistance. China’s war of resistance demands that we win the final victory. The scope of this victory is not limited to Shanhaiguan or to the Northeast, but should include the liberation of Korea and Taiwan, and even the success of the people’s revolutionary war of liberation within Japan. This is our opinion about preparing for the war of resistance.

1. See above, the relevant note to Mao’s speech of May 7, 1937.
2. In the Mao Zedong wenji version, this sentence ends with “should include the liberation of Taiwan,” and makes no mention either of Korea or of a war of liberation in Japan itself.
Wales: What is your speculation about the outcome of the Sino-Japanese War?

Mao: There are two possible scenarios for the outcome of the war. One is that China wins total victory over Japanese imperialism and the Chinese nation obtains freedom and liberation. The success of the domestic united front, the close unity of the people and the government, the victory of the international peace front, and assistance from forces for peace within Japan are prerequisites to realizing this scenario. But the Chinese people’s own unity and determined war of resistance are the primary and deciding factors in realizing this scenario. Without these conditions, the war of resistance has no future. The other possibility is that Japanese imperialism achieves its goal of turning China into a colony exclusively occupied by itself. This danger also exists; but this danger will arise only under the conditions that the Chinese people are scattered, disunited, do not wage a war of resistance or do not do so resolutely and thoroughly, and China does not join together with its helpful friends all over the world. If the Chinese people remain asleep, their house will be taken from them by their enemies. The Communist Party is struggling for the attainment of the first scenario. The proposal of a national united front is for the purpose of striving for such a scenario. We call upon all parties, factions, and classes to oppose resolutely the transformation of China into a colony, and to demand freedom and liberation for China. Moreover, in order to win victory for such freedom and liberation, we must fight the enemy to the very end.

Wales: What is your view of the recent rapprochement between Great Britain and Japan?

Mao: The Japanese rulers and the government of the British Conservative Party, trying to ameliorate the conflict between them, are conducting compromise negotiations to achieve their goal of sacrificing China. The Chinese people cannot simply let themselves be slaughtered. The Chinese people should pay close attention to this. If Nanjing shows any wavering or passivity in defending the national interests, the people and the patriotic elements within the Guomindang will never forgive them. At the same time, we must know that the compromises between Britain and Japan over the China question do not now have any good foundations. It is true that compromises between Britain and Japan always exist and are possible, but there are limitations as to time and place. Britain wants to maintain the status quo, but the substance of this status quo is in a constant state of flux. This can be seen from the British concessions, one after another, since the “September Eighteenth Incident.” Basically, Japan’s policy of exclusive occupation of China and the open door policy held by Britain and the other imperialists stand in opposition to one another, although certain temporary and partial compromises are possible because Britain had originally been ready to sell out China’s interests to achieve her own self-interested goals. No matter to what extent Britain and Japan compromise with each other, the Chinese people should not ignore for one second the issue of the survival of the Chinese nation. In the anti-Japanese movement we cannot be overly trusting of Britain. As long as we clearly understand Britain’s nature, we will not be fooled by her. China must not be completely isolated, and Sun Yat-sen’s policy of alliance with the Soviet Union has its realistic political significance today. The Sino-Soviet relationship should become closer and improve. The interests of the United States in the Far East are also incompatible with Japan’s mainland policies, so the United States should not look on China’s problem with indifference. We should make a distinction between the British Conservative Party and the vast British people. The Conservative Party, having vacillated in its West European policy between the peace front and the fascist front, has incurred the great dissatisfaction of its own people, and if on the China question it continues to gang up with the Japanese aggressors and seeks concessions, then not only will the Chinese people oppose it, but even the British people will not necessarily show sympathy. The organization of the international peace front is expanding greatly, and it is also preparing to punish all fascists. The Chinese liberation movement and the world liberation movement are closely related. Our future is absolutely bright.

Wales: What are your hopes for the northern youth?

Mao: The northern youth are the vanguard of the national liberation struggle. The majority of them should unite and fight to the end for the national democratic revolution. Many among them are disgusted with the current situation, and the solution should be sought through a collective movement. This movement is the struggle for the realization of democracy and resistance against Japan. The northern youth should intensify their interest in striving for democracy and freedom. Struggling for patriotic democratic freedom is one of the crucial links in today’s political life. If various people only talk about resisting Japan and do not understand the actual struggle for democratic politics, then there will be no effective resistance against Japan. Bourgeois reformism is having some influence on the northern youth, attempting to pull them from the front lines back to the rear, from rising up back to normalcy and tranquility, from positions of leadership back to tailism, wiping out the leadership role of the northern youth in the national democratic revolution. The northern youth should struggle against such reformists, and strictly scrutinize and completely overcome the tendencies and influences of the reformists.
Two Aspects That Need to Be Addressed When Meeting with Chiang Kaishek

(May 24, 1937, 7:00 P.M.)

Zhou [Enlai]:

We think that when you meet with Chiang this time there are two aspects of the issues that should be discussed: the first concerns the guiding principles regarding matters such as the soviet areas, the Red Army, Communist prisoners, Party organs, funds, defense sectors, and so on; the second concerns foreign relations with Japan, Britain, and the Soviet Union, military and economic aspects of national defense, and questions such as the National Assembly, the people’s freedom, and political prisoners. Please notify us by telegram of your ideas on how to present the two aspects mentioned above. We will send you a telegram before the 27th; please be prepared to fly to Shanghai on the 28th.


The Main Points in the Talks with the Guomindang

(May 25, 1937, midday)

Zhou [Enlai]:

With regard to the questions for discussion in negotiations with Chiang, besides the ones you mention in your telegram, on which we agree, the following points should be added:

1. Matters that should be raised with Chiang, and regarding which his policies should be probed:
   a. Questions concerning Japan, such as defending Suiyuan and Qingdao, recovery of eastern Hebei and northern Chahar, combating smuggling and economic guidance, the British-Japanese talks in London, and so on;
   b. The question of alliance with Russia;
   c. The question of collective security in the Pacific;
   d. Military and financial defense preparations;
   e. The question of Chinese traitors and pro-Japanese elements withdrawing from government office.

2. Things that you must do your best to bring about:
   a. That the nine-member committee of the Special Region Government consists of Lin Boqu, Zhang Guotao, Qin Bangxian, Xu Teli, Dong Biwu, Guo Gongtao, Gao Gang, Zhang Chong, and Du Bincheng.
   b. That the Red Army sets up a general headquarters for a certain route army with Zhu De as commander-in-chief and Peng Dehuai as deputy commander-in-chief (but be prepared to make concessions to set up, instead, a general headquarters), and at least four divisions, with Lin Biao as commander of the First Division, He Long, of the Second, Xu Xiangqian, of the Third, and Liu Bochong, of the Fourth. First announce the above-mentioned six names, and the rest will be submitted for appointment later. In order to strengthen anti-Japanese political education, the current political department system should be maintained (but be prepared to make concessions, and set up a political instruction section instead).

Our source for this text is Wenshan he yanjiu, No. 4, 1985 (pp. 214–15 of the annual compendium).

1. Here Mao indicates the time of day by a character which means between 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M.
2. The term “economic guidance” apparently refers to Japanese intervention in “autonomous” areas of China.
3. I.e., the Eighth Route Army, which had not yet been officially so designated.
c. Suppression of actions such as the brutal beating of students in Beijing by Tao Xisheng, Yang Likui, and others, the confiscation in Xi'an of Jiefang and of books, arrests in Shanghai of Communist Party members, the magazine Wenhua jianshe, sabotage of cooperation between the two parties, and so on.
d. Suppression of actions that make use of local bandits, vagabonds, and secret societies to sabotage the Red Army and the soviet areas.
e. An increase in Red Army defense sectors.


Address Given at the Evening Reception to Welcome the Central Investigation Team
(May 29, 1937)

Special to this paper: The Central Investigation Team arrived in the city of Yan'an around five o'clock on the afternoon of May 29. The city's various units and musical bands staged a welcome for them at the southern end of the city. After getting out of their vehicles, they went to the hostel to rest. Around six o'clock the Special District Government gave a welcome banquet for the gentlemen of the investigation team, and after dinner they held an evening reception in their honor. At the reception, Chairman Lin first declared the meeting open, after which Chairman Mao gave the address of welcome. The main ideas were as follows:

Today's welcoming reception is of great historic significance, because the period of the First Great Revolution was ushered in by the two parties, the Guomindang and the Communist Party, and now the times are different again from those times. Compared to that time, the nation is in even greater danger, so that today the significance and impact of unity and cooperation between the two parties has increased even further. The two parties have not been united over the past ten years, but now the situation has changed. If the two parties continue in disunity, the country will perish. This visit of the Central Investigation Team ushers in a new phase for unity between the two parties, and its significance is great. I think that the following two points should be made clear:

1. Some have doubted whether there is sincerity in the cooperation between the two parties, suspecting both sides. This visit of the investigation team has clarified today's reality. For its part, the Communist Party's political statements over the past two years, through such things as written declarations and negotiations, have been in favor of unity between the two parties, and the policy of a peaceful solution to the Xi'an Incident has also indicated that the peaceful policies of both sides are unaffected by the enemies' dissensions and have not wavered from beginning to end. This point has been proven in the past; how about the future? It will need to be proved by the work in the future. The unity of the two parties should be strengthened in the future, using democratic methods to resolve certain contradictions that must be resolved (contradictions that militate

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 5, pp. 77–78, where it is reproduced from a contemporary mimeographed publication.

1. For a report of this event, see Jiefang, no. 6 (June 14, 1937).
2. Lin Boqu, the chairman of the Border Region Government.
against unity), fusing into a solid entity to deal with our enemy, and seeking the realization of national independence, democratic rights, and the livelihood and happiness of the people.

2. There are others who suspect that in cooperating both parties have harbored hidden plots and schemes, and that cooperation merely serves temporary tactical purposes. Here too, one has to see whether our work in the past has in fact been destructive or conducive to unity. I think that, since the Xi'an Incident, the facts have shown everyone that the direction in which we are heading is toward unity. We still need to look to the future. Meanwhile, some suspect that neither party has the intention of long-term cooperation. I think all of this is only a kind of speculation. Our hope is that both parties will continue to cooperate over a long period, and will strive toward this goal.

After this, Chairman Mao gave a detailed explanation about how the Communist Party had applied the revolutionary Three People's Principles in the past and about the relationship between Communism and the Three People's Principles. Finally, he said:

The Communist Party, for its part, sincerely welcomes the Central Investigation Team, without the slightest false pretense. Today's welcome reception is an ample manifestation of cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party.

**To Guo Huaruo**

(June 4, 1937)

Comrade Guo Huaruo: (Also to Peng, Ren, and Yuan)

While in Bao'an, I received your letter, and also the letter you wrote to Comrade Luo Ruiqing. Today once again I got a letter from you. I understand your work request and your physical condition. Your loyalty and merits in fighting to the end for the revolution during the long soviet wars have been recognized and praised by all of us. The situation regarding your health being what it is, besides approving your coming to Yan'an next term, we are also buying medicine for you, and hope that before long we can get it for you. Your studies and work should be reduced to an appropriate level, so that they do not harm your health.

Mao Zedong

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Our source for this text is Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 104–5, where it is printed from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Guo Huaruo was at this time dean of studies at the Qingyang Infantry School.
2. Peng refers to Peng Dehuai, and Ren refers to Ren Bishi. Yuan refers to Yuan Guoping, who was at this time political commissar of the Qingyang Infantry School.
3. Luo Ruiqing was at this time the dean of studies at the Anti-Japanese Military and Political University.
On the Question of the Line and Traditions of the Party During the Past Fifteen Years

(June 5, 1937)

On the Party’s Line

Is the Party’s line correct? I think we must accept the following judgments:

For the past fifteen years the Party has been leading the Chinese revolution bravely and resolutely and has registered great achievements. This is the first point.

From now on the Party must, and can, continue and develop its courageous and resolute spirit of the past, and lead the Chinese revolution toward the goal of victory. We have this self-confidence. This is the second point.

In the past the Party has made rightist as well as “leftist” mistakes with regard to the general line, causing harm to the revolution; this is a fact that cannot and should not be denied. This is one aspect. But there is another side to the question, and, speaking from this aspect, first, it is not that everyone was wrong. The masses of Party members and vast numbers of cadres have never made mistakes with regard to the general line, and this is the most important reason that the Party was not fatally harmed and was able to correct its mistakes quickly. Mistakes with regard to the general line occurred in and spread only from the top leading organs, and some cadres and Party members sincerely supported them, but the rest were forced into action because of following discipline. Even in the top leading organs, only those who held dominant positions have the primary responsibility and the rest are not primarily responsible (those who were half forced) or should not be held responsible at all (those who were totally forced). Second, mistakes were made with regard to the general line only during several very short periods of time. There were only two such periods in history (the end of the Great Revolution and the Lisan era), and in these cases we quickly corrected our mistakes. This is the third point.

The reason the Party has achieved great successes in leading the revolution is, first of all, that the leading organs of the Party, the majority of Party cadres, and the majority of Party members accepted Marxism-Leninism, had a Marxist-Levinist political line, and carried it out courageously and resolutely under the guidance of the International. Without this condition there would have been no accomplishment whatsoever. The second reason is that the majority of cadres and Party members in the leading organizations studied and learned the tactics of having the Party and its members lead the masses in fighting against the enemy, tactics that were needed to accomplish the tasks described above. This includes tactics of struggle, propaganda and educational methods, relationships within the Party, and so on. Without this condition there would be no achievements either. This is the fourth point.

Apart from making “leftist” and rightist mistakes in our line during a certain number of specific periods, the Party also made a number of particular “leftist” and rightist mistakes in principle during almost every period. This happened over the issue of struggle tactics, the issue of propaganda and education, and the issue of relationships within the Party. Some of these things still exist now, and they cannot be avoided in the future either. These mistakes recur repeatedly and they are repeatedly overcome, but some of them have not been thoroughly overcome to this day. The Party has been tempered, grown, and become strong precisely through the ever-present struggle between all sorts of “leftist” and rightist mistakes in principle and the overcoming of them, and it is for this reason that it has scored such revolutionary achievements. If there were no such (which would be impossible) or fewer such (which would be possible) larger or smaller mistakes of principle, our achievements would be greater than they are today, and this is a lesson for the future. Moreover, not all of these mistakes accord with the principles of Marxism-Leninism, and in order to correct or avoid them it is necessary to rely upon a true and profound understanding of the revolutionary science known as Marxism-Leninism. This is the fifth point.

In sum, the Party has been heroically and resolutely leading the Chinese revolution and has registered great achievements. In the future it will lead the revolution further to complete victory. This is because the Party possesses a Marxist political line and Marxist methods of struggle. In the past the Party made many large, small, “leftist,” and rightist mistakes of principle that do not conform to Marxist principles, and the Party was tempered and grew stronger through the struggle against these mistakes, and its revolutionary achievements are a result of the struggle to overcome these mistakes. As for mistakes that still exist and those that will arise in the future, they must be resolved and prevented according to the principles of Marxism. This is our party’s theoretical and practical view of development.

On the Party’s Traditions

Are there certain traditions within the Party that are wrong? There are two answers: A. No (only “it seems on the surface that there are”); B. Yes. Three people have different ways of putting it, but they all recognize that there are such errors.

1. The three people referred to are Liu Shaoqi, He Kaifeng, and Li Weihan (pseudonym Luo Mai), all of whom were working at this time in the White areas.

Our source for this text is Maw Gedong wenji, Vol. 1, pp. 505–11, where it is reproduced from the minutes of the relevant meeting of the Central Politburo in the Central Archives.
I agree with the latter answer, and my reasons are as follows:

Over the past fifteen years the Party has created and is in the process of creating a revolutionary and Bolshevik tradition. It cannot be denied that this constitutes our Party’s orthodoxy and includes all positive things in politics, organization, and work style. Without this tradition there would be no way to explain how the Party could be sustained, united, and consolidated, how mistakes within the Party could be overcome, and how resolute battle could be waged against the enemy and revolutionary achievements won, leading the Party to its position as a large political party that is trusted by the classes and the people.

Several bad habits still exist, however. This is manifested in the tactics of mass struggle by “Left” isolationism and adventurism, and by arrogant factionalism; in propaganda and education it is also manifested in such behavior as an arrogant attitude, failure to connect deeply and extensively with the real situation, and the use of Party jargon; it is further manifested in relationships within the Party in the form of work styles such as an arrogant attitude, old handism, opportunism, holding factional views, commandism, and punishmentism. On all these issues there certainly exist many bad habits within our Party; this is an absolute fact. It is inappropriate to deny this fact, and it is wrong as well as impossible to say that there are no bad habits within the Party, as facts will always remain facts. This is what is called “certain mistaken traditions.” On this point my views are largely similar to those of Comrade Shaoqi, Kaifeng, Luo Mai, and Boqu.3

Why are there only “Left” traditions? There are several reasons: 1. The dual oppression, national and social, creates extreme difficulties in people’s lives and in the Party’s environment, and these difficulties oppress us (this is the origin of the view that “Left” is at least somewhat better than Right). 2. The presence within the Party of petty bourgeoisie and very young proletarian elements, and their large numbers. 3. The Party has a history of only fifteen years; the theoretical and practical tradition of Marxism is not yet deeply rooted; problems cannot always be solved according to Marxist principles; and it is not yet the case that everyone has learned materialist dialectics early and well. 4. In the course of correcting a mistaken line (mainly while overcoming the Lisan Line), mistakes in the three areas of struggle tactics, propaganda and education, and relationships within the Party were not thoroughly overcome. There was progress in some cases for a time, but then they arose again. Mistakes in these three areas were not thoroughly raised and resolved over a long period of time. For these four reasons, there still exist within our Party several bad habits or traditions that manifest themselves as being “Left.” As for rightist things, since the environment does not permit the existence of such things, and because they were rather thoroughly overcome, they never became mistaken traditions or bad habits.

Once correct traditions and habits are in place, is it permissible that mistaken traditions and habits still exist in some areas? Yes, it is. It is possible for correct things to contain wrong things, the only difference being a matter of degree. Because society has its dark side, there is sometimes a dark side within the Party as well.

Will this continue for a long time? No, it will not. Along with the changing environment and tasks, and along with increased understanding of materialist dialectics, the dark things that already exist will be expelled, and the “Leftist” traditions in these three areas will basically be eliminated. New mistakes will arise in future, but they can be prevented from becoming traditions.

Are these traditions present in every leadership organization, every cadre, and every Party member? No. Generally speaking it is an issue with some leadership organizations (primarily the responsibility of the Central Committee), some cadres, and some Party members. Why is it that certain bad habits are rather prevalent? This is because some people insist on behaving this way (and these people are the majority in the top-ranking leadership organizations), so that the rest of the people are forced or half forced to behave this way. Some are aware of the mistakes and harbor complaints but are unable to come up with convincing reasons, or they are forbidden to say anything and therefore do not dare speak up. This is the actual situation. There are also changes within some individuals: some do not make these mistakes during a certain period (during the Great Revolution, for example) but then do make mistakes during another period (during the Guomindang reactionary period, for example); some object to others’ arrogant attitudes during a certain period but during another period themselves treat others haughtily; and it is easy to become extremely cautious when meeting failure, and easy to turn conceited and lax when winning victory. This is something that happens frequently. It is possible to make certain individual mistakes even when the line is correct; the instance of the Zunyi Conference serves as proof of this. A healthy person may at the same time carry some disease; having scabies or the flu are cases in point.

Comrade Luo Fu’s analysis also proves the existence of this bad “leftist” tradition (with regard to the three issues). For Luo Fu has pointed out that the Party committed six individual mistakes on matters of principle since the Fourth Plenum: 1. failure to predict the change in a portion of the bourgeoisie; 2. underestimating the protracted, complex, and unstable nature of the revolution; 3. “Leftist” and rightist mistakes in battle; 4. mistakes of isolationism and factionalism in the mass struggle, and failure to struggle hard enough against such mistakes; 5. inability to take advantage of the schisms among the enemy; 6. serious mistakes in the
ideological struggle and the policy toward cadres. Even today, these mistakes have not been totally and thoroughly eliminated within the entire party, and some of them have been committed not only within the Central Committee alone but in many local organizations and among many cadres and Party members. Some of these mistakes (for example, failure to understand completely the characteristics of the Chinese revolution) were not just made originally after the Fourth Plenum, but also before that. This is for the reason that the ideology of dialectical materialism has not yet been popularized and penetrated deeply within the Party. Given the existence of these mistakes, one would have to ask how the formation of “leftist” habits could be avoided? And how can “leftist” habits be thoroughly overcome? To overcome these traditions Marxist methodology (materialist dialectics) must be popularized and penetrate deeply among the majority of cadres. It should be pointed out that the six mistakes analyzed by Luo Fu have basically been corrected within the current Central Committee.

Conclusion: Certain incorrect traditions exist within our Party, which include the existence of the methods, styles, and bad habits of isolationism, factionalism, adventurism, formalism, commandism, and punishmentism in the arenas of mass work, propaganda and education, and relationships within the Party. All this has not yet been totally overcome within the entire party, and some of it is just beginning to be raised systematically for solution. The new environment and tasks urgently demand that there be a complete transformation with regard to this problem, and we are now in the process of bringing about just such a transformation.

Letter to the Secretary General of the Communist Party of the United States, Browder

(June 24, 1937)

My dear Comrade Browder:

Taking advantage of a comrade’s visit, I am sending this letter to you, our respected Comrade Browder, good friend of the Chinese people and leader of the American people.

Both the Communist Party of China and the Communist Party of the U.S.A. are confronted with a historic task, the task of resisting and overthrowing the aggressive policy of Japanese imperialism. The Chinese Party is endeavoring to bring about an anti-Japanese national united front. Although our work is passing through a difficult period, we have already made progress and we are doing our best to bring about the desired result.

From several American friends, and from other sources, we learned that the Communist Party of the United States and the masses of the American people are deeply concerned with China’s struggle against Japan and have given us assistance in many ways. This makes us feel that our struggle is by no means isolated, and we are heroically assisted from abroad. At the same time we feel that when we achieve victory, this victory will be of considerable help to the struggle of the American people for liberation. The world is now on the eve of a great explosion. The working class of the world and all the people who desire liberation must unite for the common struggle.

Revolutionary greetings,

Mao Tse-tung

A note to the Chinese version of this document published in December 1937, and reproduced in Mao Zedong ji, Vol. 5, pp. 231–32, states that the original was in English. Mao’s own Chinese draft (assuming he wrote the letter himself) does not appear to exist. We have therefore followed the English text as it was published in the New York Daily Worker on September 7, 1937, rather than translating from the Chinese. Earl Browder read out Mao’s letter, together with similar missives from Zhu De and Zhou Enlai, at a meeting held on September 2, 1937, at the Coney Island Velodrome.
To He Xiangning

(June 25, 1937)

Madame Xiangning:

I have received with gratitude your gracious gifts of a brush, a collection of paintings, and Shuangqing cicao. Thank you so very much. I have nothing with which to reciprocate your kindness, Madame, so I can only work harder as a token of my appreciation for your generous gifts. Your paintings are filled with the spirit of struggle, and although I know nothing of painting, I find them excellent. In the situation which confronts us today, we can be victorious only through struggle. People of your caliber, Madame, have inherited Mr. Sun’s tradition of struggling unrelentingly and never yielding, setting an example for the Chinese nation. Those who admire and look up to you include the popular masses of the entire nation and are not limited to my humble self, Zedong, and a few others. Chengzhi is doing very well here. Everyone thinks well of him, so please do not worry about him. We have not seen you for ten years, Madame, and we know that you are somewhat older, but everyone has the feeling that your spirit is even younger than before. Seeing Mr. Liu Yazi’s inscriptions on your paintings is like seeing him in person. Please give him my regards when convenient. What a shame that such old-style scholars with integrity are so rare that there are only one or two left. Making use of an old saying, I may describe them as unicorns and phoenixes. I do not know, however, what his current political views are. There are some positive changes in current affairs, about which I imagine that you too, Madame, must also be very glad. But that bright future still requires great efforts to attain.

Respectfully wishing you the best of health!

Mao Zedong

We have translated this letter from Mao Zedong shuxin xuanji, pp. 106–7, where it is reproduced from the manuscript.

1. He Xiangning (1878–1972), a native of Nanhui, Guangdong, was the widow of Liao Zhongkai, a leading figure in the Guomindang Left in the 1920s, who was assassinated in August 1925. (See Volume II, pp. 215–16, note 3.) She herself was a member of the Guomindang Central Executive Committee and director of the Women’s Department, but resigned all her offices in protest against Chiang Kai-shek’s coup of April 1927 and thereafter opposed Chiang’s policies.

2. Here, and throughout this letter, Mao addresses He Xiangning as xiansheng, a term which normally means “sir” or “Mr.” Because this would sound odd in English, we have not translated “Mr. Xiangning,” but it should be emphasized that “Madame” here not only stands for a polite form of address to a woman, but implies respect for her as a person.

3. The Chinese word bi can mean either brush or pen (including fountain pen). It is impossible to say from the text which of these He Xiangning had sent to Mao.

4. This is the title of a book of poems by Liao Zhongkai published in 1928.

5. The reference is to He Xiangning’s son, Liao Chengzhi (1908–1983), who was working at this time in the Propaganda Department of the Chinese Communist Party.
On the Nature, Stages, and Driving Forces of the Chinese Revolution

Interview with Nym Wales (Helen Foster Snow)
(July 4, 1937)

In order to understand the nature of the Chinese Revolution, it is, of course, first of all necessary to understand the nature of Chinese society.1

The nature of Chinese society may be summarized in a single phrase: it is a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society. Different economic forms exist, but the feudal petty-commercial form is dominant, based mainly on rural economy. By petty-commercial economy I mean that stage of self-sufficient economy preceding the capitalist form and going back to the most backward stage, when goods are produced for self-consumption and not for commodity sale.

However, China is also already in a stage of capitalist economy. To deny the existence of capitalist economy in China is incorrect. But this capitalist economy is made up of three parts: (1) individual capitalists, (2) the National Government, and (3) the imperialists. These three elements combined together form the capitalist structure of Chinese economy.

This capitalist form is a new form of economy in China, and it is in conflict with Chinese feudal economy. Its power lies in the metropolitan cities, in communications, industry, mining, etc. However, capitalism is not yet in the dominant position in Chinese economy because of imperialist oppression which creates a condition under which the native Chinese individual and National Government capitalism have no possibility of further development. In many phases of production the imperialist element is greater than the Chinese. Even in the case of the National Government enterprises, such as railways and various industries, the capital resources came also originally from imperialism. Added to this is the fact that the Chinese customs are also restricted by the imperialists.

From the above analysis, it is clear that the capitalist economy in China, as a whole, is under imperialist control. Likewise, the existence of a feudal form of economy hinders the development of capitalism in China.

Looking at the economy of China as a whole, the feudal economy is in the dominant position. Looked at from the viewpoint of capitalist development, the colonial economy is the dominant form. This colonial economy, therefore, determines the nature of political and other relations with the imperialists and private capital, such as in the case of control of the customs, etc.

From the above, we must conclude that Chinese society is semi-feudal and semi-colonial.

Because these are the characteristics of Chinese society, the question of the nature of the Chinese Revolution is very easy to answer: it is an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, bourgeois-democratic national revolution.

One group does not agree to this analysis: the Trotskyists. In 1927, after the failure of the Great Revolution, they arrived at the following conclusion: that the tasks of the bourgeois revolution in China are already completed; the independence of the customs proving that the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist stage of the revolution was over. The Trotskyist theory developed further to the point of declaring that the capitalist and not the feudal, form was dominant in Chinese economy. I noticed that recently, in a Trotskyist magazine, they have changed their viewpoint on the problem of imperialism, i.e., they agree that China is still under the domination of imperialism, but still affirm that the nature of [the] Chinese economy is capitalist. That capitalism has the leading role in China is a very queer viewpoint to come out with suddenly, when referring to a society which has been for so long dominated by imperialism.

In accordance with their estimate of the nature of Chinese society, the Trotskyists conclude that the nature of the Chinese Revolution at present is not bourgeois but proletarian. Without any hesitation we are opposed to this viewpoint. We restate our position that the nature of Chinese society is semi-feudal and semi-colonial and that therefore the Chinese Revolution is anti-imperialist and anti-feudal.

It will require a long period of struggle by the Chinese people to achieve the overthrow of the imperialist and feudal forces. The completion of these tasks of the revolution means, no doubt, the clearing of the road for the development of capitalism. But at the same time we hold that there is a possibility for the Chinese Revolution to avoid the future of capitalism and to turn into a Socialist revolution. Our reasons for this follow.

Now, in our discussion, we reach the third problem—the nature of the driving forces or dynamics of the Chinese Revolution. The main forces of the Chinese Revolution are the proletariat, the peasants, and the petty bourgeoisie. Under certain circumstances the national bourgeoisie have the possibility of joining this

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1. The whole long passage beginning here consists of Mao's comments on the topic set by Nym Wales and stated above in the title.
revolution. Under certain other circumstances they have the possibility of wavering. The enemies of the revolution are the imperialists and the Chinese landlords. Sometimes the national bourgeoisie are enemies of the revolution and sometimes not.

The Chinese Revolution is led by the proletariat. Why, in a bourgeois revolution, is the proletariat in the leadership instead of the bourgeoisie? Why is the Chinese Revolution different from the bourgeois revolutions of past history? The reason is that China is in a state of semi-colonialism. Therefore, the force of the proletariat is relatively greater than that of the bourgeoisie. This is because the imperialists control the big industrial enterprises in China, instead of our native bourgeoisie. The combined workers of these big imperialist industries, together with the workers of the National Government and privately owned industries of China, are strong enough to take hegemony of the leadership over the weaker bourgeoisie.

The working class in China numbers over two millions. Compared with the whole population, it is small in numbers, but compared with the bourgeoisie, it is a superior force. Under the combined pressure of the imperialists, the Chinese capitalists, and the feudal forces, the Chinese proletariat has developed the strongest revolutionary character. Also, the Chinese proletariat is affected by the world revolutionary forces—that is, the development of proletarian revolution in the world as a whole. The establishment of the proletarian revolution in the U.S.S.R., especially, gave stimulus to the proletariat of China. After the May Fourth Movement in 1919, the Chinese proletariat rose to a politically conscious position and also began to play a role on the political stage of China. Beginning at that same time, the Chinese Communist Party was also created.

Summarizing the above, we may say that the proletariat and the Communist forces together in China, though numerically very small, are the most energetic and strongest single force.

Fortunately the Chinese proletariat has had a very strong ally in revolution: that is, the peasantry. The peasants include over 80 percent of the population of China, and because they are under the double oppression of both the Chinese feudal elements and the imperialists, their revolutionary character is very strong. Under the combined exploitation of the imperialists and the Chinese landlords, the Chinese peasantry must bear the burden of paying from 50 percent to 80 percent for land rent, and from 30 percent to 100 percent as usury interest rates. That is, if a peasant’s land produces 100 dan, he must pay 50 percent to 80 percent to the landlord. And if he borrows money, which he must, he pays from 30 percent to 100 percent to the usurer.

The problems before the peasantry are to own the land they till and to abolish the exploitation of imperialism. These problems cannot be solved by the bourgeois class. The peasant problem of China can only be solved by struggling decisively against imperialism and the feudal forces, under the leadership of the proletariat. Therefore, we say that the peasants are a strong, determined ally of the Chinese proletariat.

The third driving force of the revolution is the city petty bourgeoisie. This includes the broad mass of the students, the cultural intelligentsia, the small producers, the petty merchants, and many free professionals. The majority of these forces can stand by the side of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution.

The national bourgeoisie occupy a special position in China. They stand in a position of being either enemies of the revolution or part of the revolution itself. Sometimes they stand by the revolution. Sometimes they waver and stand by the side of the imperialists and such counterrevolutionary forces. Sometimes they stand by the side of the landlords. Sometimes they stand by the side of the petty bourgeoisie. The reason for this is that many of the capitalists have the nature of being compradors and semi landlords. We do not include comprador bourgeoisie in the class of the national bourgeoisie. The national bourgeoisie of China have their own capital for the most part, but it has a special relation to imperialist capital and also to the land. Those who rely chiefly on imperialist capital are to be classified with the comprador bourgeoisie, or, on the other hand, with the landlords. The landlords and compradors are fundamentally related with imperialism, so they become one of the main enemies of the revolution.

The nature of the present Nanjing government is an alliance of landlords, capitalists, and comprador bourgeoisie.

Under a situation of the direct occupation of China by imperialism when the landlords and compradors face a direct menace to their own interests by this certain imperialism, these two have the possibility of not opposing the anti-imperialist struggle, and in an emergency they can stand by this struggle—except, of course, those whose interests are either not affected by this aggression or whose interests are united with that particular aggressor.

From the above, it is clear why our anti-imperialist national United Front is actually national—that is, why it includes all Chinese except traitors. This is the special characteristic of our national front as compared with a “people’s front.”

The second characteristic of our United Front is that it is initiated by the political party of the proletariat, and in its later development it is only under the leadership of this proletarian party that its organization can be completed and its tasks accomplished. This is because the proletariat is the only conscious and decisive revolutionary force in China. The bourgeoisie cannot take up responsibility for this task.

Because of the nature of the political and economic conditions of China, there exists this possibility: that after the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal bourgeois-democratic national revolution succeeds in a certain degree and the democratic revolution reaches a certain stage, this revolution will conclude its victory by transforming into a Socialist revolution. We Communists believe that such a possibility exists.

The first stage of the revolution is the bourgeois-democratic revolution of the
proletariat, the peasantry, and the petty bourgeoisie. During its transformation it will pass through the Democratic Dictatorship of the Peasants and Workers.

All of the above opinions are in agreement with the analysis of the nature of the Chinese Revolution at the Sixth Congress of the Comintern.

Wales: What is the character of the bankers in China?

Mao: Many are compradors or semi-compradors, but many others have no relation with imperialism. This is the case, for example, of many middle and small bankers. (T.V. Soong [Song Ziwen] can be classed with this group.) The capital of some of the banks is purely government capital. T.V. Soong and H.H. Kung [Kong Xiangxi] are bankers of government capital. They have an indirect relation to imperialist capital because the government borrows money from foreign countries, and it is invested in these banks.

The part of the landlords and compradors whose interests are most directly allied to Japan will become the traitors. Some unemployed who are forced by the wants of life will go for hire and join in spying work. The armies of traitors are indirectly traitors.

Wales: What about the petty bourgeoisie?

Mao: The Chinese petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals also play an extremely important role in revolution. This is because of the semicolonial nature of Chinese society. The imperialists created the intelligentsia in China, and then they turned against their imperialist teachers.

2. Here Helen Foster Snow's English text inserts the words “as made in the resolutions of the Communist Party.” This is clearly erroneous, since the [Chinese Communist Party could not adopt resolutions of its own at a congress of the International. The reference could be to the positions adopted both at the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in Moscow in June-July 1928, and at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, held in August and September of the same year, but this seems unlikely. The editors of Mao Zedong zishu have simply omitted the phrase cited above, and we follow them here.

3. The balance of this interview is taken from Nym Wales, My Yenan Notebooks (Mimeographed and distributed by Helen F. Snow, Madison, Connecticut, 1961), p. 139-41. According to that source, Mao had asked her in 1937 to use this part of their discussion “only as a talk at that time,” meaning presumably without quoting him directly. In 1961, she reproduced her notes verbatim. We have identified her as Wales, rather than as Snow, in order to avoid confusion with Edgar Snow, whose 1936 interviews with Mao appear earlier in this volume.

4. While the substance of this paragraph is basically the same in the English text and in Mao Zedong zishu, the references to Song and Kong are omitted in the Chinese version. Some other points are expressed more fully and clearly in the Chinese, and we have modified the English accordingly.

5. Here My Yenan Notebooks has “with”; this is an obvious typographical error.

6. This second paragraph is omitted from the Chinese version.

Wales: Are the intellectuals separate as a class?

Mao: The petty bourgeois intelligentsia and free liberal professionals are definitely not an independent class; they belong to the proletariat or to the peasantry. The students, intellectuals, and professionals all come from the landlord, petty bourgeois, and bourgeois classes, but because they live in a semicolonial country which is unable to develop industry, they are unemployed. They join the revolution, oppose imperialism, and support democracy, because their families are daily going bankrupt, and have no future.

China’s students are a very important current in the socialist revolution, but do not play a decisive role; only the proletariat and the peasants play a leading role in the revolution.

Wales: What is the nature of the Communist movement in China? What is the task of the Chinese Communist Party?

Mao: As I explained above, because only the proletariat can lead the Chinese revolution, the political party of the proletariat must definitely play the leading role. The basic nature of our revolution is to struggle to carry out a Communist revolution, but the Communist stage can be reached only after passing through the democratic stage.

Wales: What are the nature and tasks of the Red Army?

Mao: Fundamentally it represents the interests of the proletariat, but at the same time it represents the interests of the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie. The main component of the Red Army is the peasant army, and it also includes some rural and urban proletarians. We do not have statistics regarding the percentages, but there are certainly not as many rural proletarians as there are peasants. We call the peasants who have no land at all rural proletarians. Those who do not have enough land to support themselves we call semi-proletarians.

Wales: The Trotskyists say that, because the Red Army is made up of petty bourgeois peasants, there is no assurance that they will not sell out the revolution in the future. In your opinion, can the Red Army be relied on from the beginning to end?

7. This question is omitted in the Chinese text, and the answer to it is run together with the previous paragraph. The passage which follows is much clearer and more complete in Mao Zedong zishu, and we have modified it accordingly.

8. This question and Mao's response have been modified to correspond to the Chinese text.

9. Once again, this question and answer have been revised to correspond to the Chinese text.

10. Again we have replaced Nym Wales' version by a translation from the Chinese. In the case of this exchange, the differences are somewhat greater than in the preceding two. In particular, the English text as published contains no reference to the Trotskyists.
Mao: The viewpoint of the Trotskyists is not a Marxist viewpoint. The peasantry is a class between the bourgeoisie and proletariat. At times when the bourgeoisie exercises the leadership, they can go along with them; at times when the proletariat is in a leading position, they can go along with the proletariat. The main component of society in the U.S.S.R. is also that of the peasants, but now in the U.S.S.R., except for the rich peasants, the peasants are all going toward Communism. So it is nonsense to say that the peasants are going over to the bourgeoisie, or that they are going to become reactionary.

The Red Army in China is under the leadership of the proletariat, just as it is in the Soviet Union. The Chinese Red Army upholds Communism. This is because the Red Army, the agrarian revolution, and the revolution as a whole are under proletarian leadership, as I have already said. It cannot be under the leadership of any other class. The bourgeoisie cannot solve the problem of the Chinese peasants, nor can the peasants solve it themselves. This problem can be solved only under the leadership of the proletariat.

The land problem can be solved in the bourgeois revolution, as in the case of the French revolution. It can also be solved in the proletarian revolution, as it was solved in the U.S.S.R. after the October Revolution. At present in Spain, this question is being solved under the leadership of the united front of the peasants, the bourgeoisie, and the petty bourgeoisie. In countries like China, including Japan and Germany, the bourgeoisie cannot solve the land problem, although they are tricking the peasants into believing that they can.

Wales: What is the nature of the Guomindang?

Mao: The Guomindang is an alliance of the landlords, the bourgeoisie, and part of the upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie. So long as the Japanese imperialists continue their aggression against China, they have the responsibility for resisting Japan. Guomindang elements can compromise with the imperialists, but they can also split with the imperialists. This depends on the attitude the imperialists adopt. Before 1927 the Guomindang was an alliance of the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, and the proletariat, but in the main it represented the interests of the bourgeoisie. After 1927 the Guomindang continued to have some contradictions with the imperialists, but in the main it compromised with the imperialists. Chiang Kaishek represents the landlords and the bourgeoisie together, including the comprador and national bourgeoisie. When the Guomindang and Communist Party cooperate in driving out Japanese imperialism, there is the possibility that class relations in China may change. The force of the pro-Japanese clique and the "subjugation clique" may decrease.

Wales: If the Guomindang and the Communists truly unite, will the landlords then split with the Guomindang?

Mao: This depends on future developments. If Japanese aggression becomes more serious, the Guomindang may realize the necessity of land reform, for the sake of improving the livelihood of the people. The landlords dislike this, but they also dislike having their land occupied by the Japanese.

When the mass movement develops and the demands of the peasants reach a level at which compromise is impossible, such a split may take place.

Wales: As you see it, sir, what elements are likely to become Chinese traitors during the Anti-Japanese War?

Mao: Those landlords and compradors whose interests are most directly linked to those of Japan may become Chinese traitors. There are also some unemployed people, who have difficulty in making a living, and are hired by the Japanese to carry out espionage on behalf of the Japanese army. The armies of the Chinese traitors are indirect Chinese traitors.

Wales: What about the feudal elements? The Red Army has fought them for ten years, have they destroyed their influence?

Mao: There has been a change. In places under the influence of the Red Army, feudal forces suffered a blow from the revolutionary forces. Feudal influence has somewhat decreased.

Wales: What is the nature of the feudal forces? Wittfogel et al. suggest a "quadrilateral being," etc.

Mao: Yes, the landlord is four-sided—he is landlord, merchant, and tax collector, but not necessarily a usurer. At times he may be linked to Chinese commercial capital.

Wales: In the light of your direct experience of the peasant problem over a long period, what is the most vicious form of oppression in the Chinese countryside?

Mao: (1) rent; (2) high rates of interest; (3) taxes and levies; and (4) traffic in commodities.

11. Here Nym Wales’ English version has “proletariat” instead of “bourgeoisie.”
12. This sentence does not appear in the Chinese text.
13. The term "subjugation clique" does not appear in the Chinese text.
14. This question and Mao's reply do not appear in My Yenan Notebooks.
15. This question and Mao's reply do not appear in the Chinese text.
16. The reference to Wittfogel may appear odd, in the light of his later history, but Nym Wales was obviously thinking of his writings in the late 1920s, when he was one of the Comintern’s principal China experts. His name does not appear in the Chinese text.
Wales: You, sir, are very familiar with the theory of the so-called “Asiatic Mode of Production.” Do you consider that China’s feudal system is a peculiar Asiatic form of feudalism?17

Mao: Basically China’s feudal system is in no way different from that of Europe as regards the particular point of using the land to exploit the peasantry, but China’s feudal forces have their own special characteristics.

Wales: The Red Army has carried out ten years of struggle against feudalism. Do you consider, sir, that this struggle has achieved great successes?

Mao: It has achieved considerable successes. In those places which have been influenced by the Red Army, the feudal forces have been battered by the forces of revolution. The strength of feudalism has been greatly weakened.

Wales: Is imperialism destroying the feudal system in China by opening the way to a capitalist market?

Mao: Yes, the feudal system has been partly destroyed by imperialism. That is why China has become a semi-feudal country. The imperialist forces, the Chinese national bourgeoisie, and commercial capital have all had destructive effects on Chinese feudalism.

Wales: Do the Japanese want China to retain a semi-feudal colonial character?

Mao: It is apparent from historical experience that none of the imperialists like to see the development of capitalism in a colony; they develop it exclusively for their own use. If the imperialists do not support the feudal system, what would they support? Nanjing is not only comprador—so England must support all elements, not only bourgeois, comprador, or landlord elements. Song Ziwen and Kong Xiangxi are of the Nanjing government.18

Wales: Does England want a comprador policy to control China?19

Mao: The answer is above.

Wales: Does Japan want to utilize the ruling class to control China?

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17. The substance of this question and Mao’s reply as they appear in My Yenan Notebooks are similar to those which appear here, but we have revised them in the light of the version in Mao Zedong zishu.

18. The last two sentences, which appear in My Yenan Notebooks, are omitted from the Chinese version.

19. This question and Mao’s answer are omitted from the Chinese version.

Mao: Possibly. Otherwise there would be no traitors.20

Wales: In my opinion, Japanese imperialism’s success in invading China can only be limited to making use of the Chinese ruling class; Japan can absolutely not conquer China with military might. Consequently, is Hirota’s policy not their best method?21

Mao: Militarism is a characteristic of Japanese imperialism, and in the future Japan will be forced onto the road of military adventures.22 The other imperialisms, however, will wait, developing along the regular path. This is because Japanese imperialism is weaker financially than any other imperialism, and this is Japan’s tragedy. Japan has already reached the stage of the concentration of capital, but just as before, it has no surplus capital.

The Manchurian expedition has already weakened Japan’s domestic economy, because Japan originally had no surplus capital for operations in Manchuria, and had no new surplus at home.

After Japan seized Manchuria, it was no longer a foreign market; economically and politically Manchuria became part of Japan. In reality, this was not advantageous for Japan. Japan could no longer carry out imperialist exploitation, or obtain the usual high rates of return. Moreover, they also had to meet heavy military expenditures, because economically Manchuria now belonged to Japan. Manchuria has already ceased to be Japan’s external colony, and Japan can no longer exploit it as external colonies are exploited. Manchuria is a kind of internal market, not an external market.

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20. This response of Mao’s is followed in My Yenan Notebooks by the following brief paragraph:

Mao ended by saying: “This is the Party’s resolution in the past and also the writing of many comrades. It is already established opinion. It is contained in the resolutions of the party’s Sixth Congress, which analyze the nature of Chinese society, etc.”

This passage does not appear in the Chinese text. It is followed, in Nym Wales’ account, by the statement: “On the page following the above Mao interview, I find some further comments, which appear to have been added by Mao Zedong, but I am not sure of this.” In fact, the passage which she then goes on to quote is similar in substance to Mao’s reply to the last question in the interview as it appears in Mao Zedong zishu and is translated below.


22. Three days later, on July 7, 1937, Japan did indeed embark on that road.
Basic Guidelines on the Elimination of Bandits
(July 6, 1937)

To [Liu] Jingfan and Li Lin,¹ and to be transmitted to the subdistrict [Party] Committee:

We have taken note of your telegram.

1. The victory in eliminating bandits is very good; please make further efforts. The scattered bandits in northern Shaanxi have already been eliminated. Li Qingwu’s bandit gang has surrendered.² Five out of six gangs of local bandits in Guanzhong have been wiped out. Therefore we ask that you hasten to complete the task of eliminating bandits.

2. On the basis of experience in eliminating bandits, the basic orientation should be to use military force actively to strike back at the threat from bandits and, at the same time, to carry out the tactics of politically winning over, splitting, reforming, reorganizing, and dismantling them, so as to achieve the goal of eliminating bandits.

3. Military attacks on Old Zhao Number Five’s³ bandit gang may be halted temporarily, and instead the work of actively carrying out political winning over and dismantling may be done. Particular attention should be paid to mass work around the Tianshubiao area so as to achieve the goals of winning over, splitting, dismantling, and eliminating the bandits. At least they should be temporarily neutralized so that our side may concentrate on getting rid of the worst of them first and then eliminating them altogether by catching them unprepared.

4. There are no bullets right now. Please send people to get them when needed in the future.

Mao [Zedong] Zhu [De]

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Telegram of July 8 to Chairman Chiang
from the Senior Commanders of the Red Army
Concerning the Attacks on North China
by the Japanese Invaders
(July 8, 1937)¹

For the perusal of Chairman Chiang at Lushan:

The Japanese bandits have attacked Marco Polo Bridge as a step in carrying out their established plan of taking North China by military force. Our grief and indignation upon hearing this news are beyond description! Beiping and Tianjin are key cities in North China, and it is absolutely impermissible that there be further losses. We respectfully implore you to issue strict orders to the Twenty-ninth Army to put up resistance with all its courage and might, and to carry out the general nationwide mobilization, based on the Third Plenum’s objective of fighting a war of resistance against foreign invasion, to defend Beiping and Tianjin, defend North China, and to recover the lost territories. The officers and men of the Red Army sincerely wish to give their all in the service of their country under your leadership, Mr. Chairman, to fight against the enemy in order to attain the goal of defending our territory and our country. We make this statement with greatest urgency, and can hardly bear to remain encamped awaiting orders.

With utmost respect,

Mao Zedong Zhu De Peng Dehuai He Long
Lin Biao Liu Bocheng Xu Xiangqian

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Our source for this telegram is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 797–98, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Liu Jingfan was the head of the military department of the Third District Special Committee; Li Lin was the head of the military department of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Provincial Committee.
2. Li Qingwu was a bandit leader in Yichan xian in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region.
3. This was the popular name for a local bandit chief by the name of Zhao Sizhong, who was active in Yanchi xian and Huan xian in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region.

Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 2, pp. 1-2, where it is reproduced from *Jiefang*, no. 10 (July 12, 1937).

1. The time of dispatch of this telegram is indicated by a character signifying from 9:00 to 11:00 P.M. 695
Telegram of July 8 to Song Zheyuan and Others from the Senior Commanders of the Red Army Concerning the Attacks On North China by the Japanese Bandits

(July 8, 1937)¹

Respectfully submitted for the perusal of Mr. Song Mingxuan in Beiping, Mr. Zhang Zizhong in Tianjin, Mr. Liu Ruming in Zhangjiakou, and Mr. Feng Zhi’an in Baoding:²

The whole nation was shocked and enraged at the attacks by the Japanese bandits. In the battle at Marco Polo Bridge, the Twenty-ninth Army put up a valiant resistance, and when the news spread throughout the country, the people pledged their firm support. We venture to entreat you to spur your entire army ahead in the fight for the defense of Beiping and Tianjin and for the defense of North China, and to shed every last drop of blood to defend our territory and not let the Japanese bandits occupy an inch of our motherland! The officers and men of the Red Army, filled with righteous indignation, are prepared to move into action at any time and to follow the lead of your distinguished army in fighting the Japanese bandits to the death. In addition to the telegrams sent to Chairman Chiang and other friendly armies nationwide requesting orders to fight the enemy, we hereby wish to transmit our message to you, and beseech you to give us clear instruction.

With utmost respect,

Mao Zedong    Zhu De    Peng Dehuai    He Long
Lin Biao    Liu Bocheng    Xu Xiangqian

¹ Our source for this text is Mao Zedong ji, Vol. 5, p. 235, where it is reproduced from a collection published in Yan’an in 1938.
² Regarding Song Zheyuan, see above, the note to Mao’s letter of August 14, 1936. Zhang Zizhong (1891–1940), a native of Shandong and a lieutenant general in the Guomindang army, was at this time mayor of Tianjin. Liu Ruming was chairman of the Chahar provincial government, and commander of the 143rd Division of the Guomindang Twenty-ninth Army, stationed in Zhangjiakou. Feng Zhi’an (1896–1954), a native of Hebei, was chairman of the Hebei provincial government and military commander in Ba’an.

An Inscription Regarding the Basic Orientation in Our Fight Against Japan

(July 13, 1937)

To defend Beiping and Tianjin, to defend North China, to defend the whole country, and to fight resolutely to the end against Japanese imperialism—this is now the basic orientation in our fight against Japan. The method for putting this orientation into practice is to mobilize and make efforts in all respects. Any vacillation, wavering, passivity, and failure to make an effort will not do at all.

Mao Zedong

² Our source for this inscription is Mao Zedong ji. Bujuan, Vol. 5, p. 81, where it is reproduced from a collection published in China in 1959.
The Decision on Political Work
Within the Red Army
Needs to Be Redrafted

(July 15, 1937)

Peng [Dehuai], Ren [Bishi], Yang [Shangkun], and Deng [Xiaoping]:¹

1. In view of present circumstances, the decision on political work within the Red Army needs to be revised so as to make political work once again more directly oriented toward resisting Japan. We hope that it will be redrafted immediately.
2. The decision on organization is usable [as it stands].
3. In principle, the above two items should be brought to Yunyang² by Comrade Lin Biao.

Mao

Concerning the Organization and Preparation of the Red Army

(July 16, 1937)

To Peng [Dehuai] and Ren [Bishi], and to be transmitted to Ye [Jianying], Liu [Bocheng], and Zhang [Hao]:

Concerning the organization and preparation of the Red Army:

1. Under the condition that the main force of the Red Army is permitted to take part in combat, it is proposed that the original First, Second, and Fourth Front Armies be mobilized, with the front army reorganized as a division, the army as a brigade, and the division as a regiment. The five units totaling five thousand men and composed of the Twenty-seventh, Twenty-eighth, Twenty-ninth, Thirty-ninth, and Thirty-first Armies, together with local forces, will be reorganized as the Fourth Division and stationed in the rear to defend the soviet base areas. If and when it is necessary and permitted, some more units may be sent to the front to augment the forces there. Organization in such a fashion facilitates taking care of both the front and the rear.

2. Under the condition that the main force is not permitted to take part in combat but some units are allowed to do so, the more than three thousand men of the Twenty-seventh, Twenty-eighth, and Thirty-second Armies, along with the cavalry regiment, are to be reorganized into a guerrilla division and sent to maneuver between Rehe, Chahar, and Hebei. In addition, more cadres from the Red Army University should be sent to follow along so as to expand the volunteer army movement. The organization of the main force of the Red Army is to be as above. The shortcoming of this plan, however, is that the main force may take part in combat afterward, so that with the guerrilla division already gone to the front, there may be too few troops left in the rear. Hence caution is required. Or it would be appropriate to send only a few hundred men as seeds for the creation of a volunteer army, relying mainly on sending more cadres. No matter what, reorganization shall be done in accordance with point 1.

3. All of Chen Xianrui’s units and the main force of Wang Zhaoxiang’s units¹ will be turned into regiments and will be prepared to be sent out and used as detachments.

We have translated this text from Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 2, pp. 3–4, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

¹ This telegram was addressed to the Frontline Headquarters, where Peng was commander-in-chief, Ren was political commissar, Yang was head of the Political Department, and Deng was deputy head of the Political Department. The new decision in question was issued on August 1, 1937.
² Yunyang was the town in the northern part of Jingyang xian, Shaanxi, where the Frontline Headquarters was located at this time.

Our source for this text is Mao Zedong junshi wenji, Vol. 2, pp. 5–6, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

¹ Chen Xianrui was at this time the commander of the Seventy-fourth Division. Wang Zhaoxiang was commander of the Second Independent Division of the Shenzhou Special District in northern Shaanxi.
4. Please consider the above plan, discuss it with the comrades who attend
the meeting, and reply by telegram with your views.

Mao [Zedong]  Zhu [De]

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No More Negotiations If Chiang Kaishek
Refuses to Compromise

(July 20, 1937)

To Zhou [Enlai] and to be transmitted to Lin [Boqu]:

1. Invasion by the Japanese army has already occurred, and it is possible that
   the war of resistance may become a reality.
2. We have decided to adopt the policy of holding no more talks with Chiang
   if he refuses to compromise.
3. Please return to discuss this in person.

Luo [Fu]  Mao [Zedong]

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We have translated this text from *Wenxian he yanjiu*, p. 220 of the 1985 annual volume.
Telegram to Yan Xishan Calling for an Effort to Defend Beiping, Tianjin, and Zhangjiakou
(July 20, 1937)

Mr. Baichuan:

Your estimable telegram has been received. Your longstanding devotion to the country is very much to be admired. The Japanese bandits are already set to launch a massive attack, and nothing can be done to stop it. If they are allowed to occupy Beiping and Zhangjiakou, then Shanxi and Suiyuan will be in danger. We plan to demand with all our force that the Hebei and Chahar authorities fulfill their obligation to defend firmly Beiping, Tianjin, Zhangjiakou, and other places. It seems that some troop units should be sent toward Zhangjiakou to provide reinforcements to Liu Ruming, while we forcefully demand that Mr. Chiang send reinforcements northward to assist. It is just as you, sir, have pointed out: There is no way to survive without waging a war of resistance. Today the crucial moment has arrived in the defense of Beiping, Tianjin, and Zhangjiakou. We beg you to consider our foolish views. When Zhou Xiaozhou and Peng Yufeng arrive, we beseech you to grant them the favor of receiving them in person.

Mao Zedong

On the Policies, Measures, and Perspectives for Resisting the Japanese Imperialist Invasion
(July 23, 1937)

I. Two Policies

On July 8, the day after the Marco Polo Bridge incident, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued a manifesto to the whole nation calling for a war of resistance. The manifesto reads in part:

"Fellow-countrymen! Beiping and Tianjin are in peril! North China is in peril! The Chinese nation is in peril! A war of resistance by the whole nation is our only way out. We demand an immediate and resolute counterattack against the invading Japanese armies and immediate preparations to meet all emergencies. From top to bottom the whole nation must at once abandon any hope or expectation of being able to live in submissive peace with the Japanese bandits.

"Fellow countrymen of all China! We should acclaim and support the heroic resistance of Feng Zhi'an’s troops. We should acclaim and support the declaration of the local authorities of northern China that they will defend the homeland to the death. We demand that General Song Zheyuan immediately mobilize the entire Twenty-ninth Army and send it into battle at the front. Of the Central Government in Nanjing we demand that effective aid be given to the Twenty-ninth Army; that the ban on the patriotic movement among the popular masses be lifted immediately, and the spirit of armed resistance be given full play among the people; that all naval, land, and air forces be mobilized at once for action; that all Chinese traitors, elements selling out their country, and agents for the Japanese bandits hidden within China’s borders be purged right away so that our rear may be consolidated. We call upon the people of the whole country to throw all their strength behind the sacred resistance war of self-defense against Japan. Our slogans are: Armed defense of Beiping, Tianjin, and North China! Prevent Japanese imperialism from occupying an inch of China’s territory! Defend our homeland to the last drop of blood! Unite all compatriots, governments, and armed forces throughout China to construct a national united front as a solid...

Our source for this telegram is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 2, pp. 7–8, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. Zhou Xiaozhou was at this time Mao’s secretary, who had been sent to Taiyuan to discuss collaboration with Yan Xishan. Peng Yufeng (alternate name for Peng Xuefeng) had also participated in negotiations regarding the passage of the Red Army through Shanxi. (See above, Mao’s letter to him dated December 20, 1936.)

This text was first published in *Jiefang*, No. 12 (August 15, 1937). Our source is *Mao Zedong jiji*, Vol. 5, pp. 237–47.

1. Throughout this text, the term translated “policy” is *fangzhen*, which refers to the general policy orientation, rather than to specific policies for dealing with particular issues.
2. Counterattack → Resistance
3. Hope or expectation → Idea
Great Wall of resistance to the Japanese bandits’ aggression! Guomindang and Communist Party, cooperate closely to fend off the new attacks of the Japanese bandits! Drive the Japanese bandits out of China!”

This is a matter of policy.

On July 17 at Lushan, Mr. Chiang Kaishek issued a statement calling for a war of resistance. Setting out as it did a policy of waging a resolute war of resistance, this statement was the Guomindang’s first correct and firm declaration on foreign affairs for many years, and it has consequently been welcomed by all our countrymen as well as by ourselves. To quote the statement:

“Since we are a weak country, if the final moment arrives the only way to assure the survival of the state is through a fight for life by the whole nation. At that time we shall no longer be permitted to compromise midway. It must be made known that the consequence of compromise midway is complete surrender and complete destruction. All this is the significance of the so-called final moment, and it is something that the people of the whole country most need to understand clearly. When the final moment arrives, we have no choice but to fight with our lives to the end and wage a resistance war to the end. The determination to fight with our lives to the end is the only way to gain final victory. Hesitation, vacillation, and attempts at temporary security will sink the nation into irrecoverable great disaster.

“The course of this incident shows that these people are bent on plotting against us and that peace can no longer be attained easily, that at present the only way to stay safe and sound is to allow their troops to come and go without restriction in our country’s territory, and rather to limit the freedom of our own country’s armies in being stationed on our own soil, or to let others fire at Chinese troops and not let us return fire. In other words, to offer ourselves up as the meat on someone’s chopping block. We are already perilously close to such an extremely tragic point, a situation that cannot be tolerated by any nation in the world with a modicum of dignity. It has already been six years since the loss of our Four Northeastern Provinces, which was followed by the Tanggu Truce, and now the area of conflict has extended to the Marco Polo Bridge, right at Beiping’s doorstep. If we can allow people to take the Marco Polo Bridge by force, then Beiping, our ancient capital with a five-hundred-year history, the northern political and cultural center and key military area, will become the second Shenyang. If today’s Beijing is turned into yesterday’s Shenyang, then today’s Hebei and Chahar will likewise become yesterday’s Four Northeastern Provinces. If Beijing turns into Shenyang, then why cannot Nanjing become Beiping? Therefore, the outcome of the Marco Polo Bridge incident is relevant to the whole question of the Chinese nation. Whether or not this incident can be resolved is the demarcation of the final moment.

“True, we are a weak country, yet we have no choice but to maintain the life of our nation and to fulfill the historical duty bestowed upon us by our ancestors and predecessors. Therefore, when faced with no way out, we have no choice but to fight back. After the war breaks out, precisely because we are a weak nation, there is no room left for compromise. Whoever gives up an inch of land or sovereignity stands condemned for all time by the Chinese nation.”

This statement listed four conditions for the settlement of the Marco Polo Bridge incident:

1. No settlement may infringe upon China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity;
2. No unlawful changes are permitted in the administrative organization of Hebei and Chahar;
3. Local officials appointed by the Central Government may not be dismissed or replaced on demand;
4. There may be no restrictions upon the area in which the Twenty-ninth Army is now stationed.

This statement’s conclusion reads:

“Concerning the Marco Polo Bridge incident, the government has decided on a policy and a stand to which it will adhere from beginning to end. We know for a fact that when the whole nation goes to war, sacrifices to the bitter end are called for, and there is not the faintest hope of an easy way out. Once war breaks out, then every single person, whether located north or south, be he young or old, bears the responsibility of defending our land and fighting a war of resistance.”

This is a matter of policy.

Here we have two political declarations on the Marco Polo Bridge incident by the two parties, the Guomindang and the Communist Party, which are of enormous historical significance. The two declarations have this point in common: They advocate a resolute war of resistance and oppose compromise and concession.

This is the first kind of policy for dealing with the Japanese imperialist attack, the first correct policy.

But there is the possibility of a second kind of policy. In recent months, there has been much activity among the Chinese traitors and elements of the pro-Japanese faction in Beiping and T Jensin as they try to get the Beiping and T Jensin authorities to acquiesce in the demands of Japanese imperialism, undermine the policy of resolute armed resistance, and advocate compromise and concession. These are extremely dangerous signs.

This sort of policy of compromise and concession is in fundamental contradiction to the policy of resolute armed resistance. If such a policy of compromise and concession is not quickly changed, then Beiping, T Jensin, and the whole of North China will fall into the hands of the enemy, and the entire nation will be seriously imperiled. Everyone should pay close attention to this matter.

All patriotic officers and men of the Twenty-ninth Army, unite, oppose compromise and concession, and carry out resolute armed resistance!

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4. Waging a resolute war of resistance → Preparing for a war of resistance

5. Of a second kind of policy → Of adopting a second kind of policy
All patriotic fellow countrymen in Beiping, Tianjin, and North China, unite, oppose compromise and concession, and support resolute armed resistance! Patriotic fellow countrymen throughout the nation, unite, oppose compromise and concession, and support resolute armed resistance!

Mr. Chiang Kaishek and all patriotic members of the Guomindang, the hope is that you will adhere to your own policy, fulfill your promises, oppose compromise and concession, conduct resolute armed resistance, and answer the outrages of the alliance with actual facts.

All armed forces in the country, including the Red Army, support Chairman Chiang’s call, oppose compromise and concession, and carry out resolute armed resistance!

The Communists are wholeheartedly and faithfully carrying out our own manifesto, and at the same time firmly support Mr. Chiang Kaishek’s declaration, and, together with Guomindang members and compatriots throughout the country, are ready to defend the homeland to the last drop of blood, oppose any hesitation, vacillation, compromise or concession, and will conduct resolute armed resistance.

II. Two Sets of Measures

In resolutely waging the War of Resistance, a whole set of measures, including regulations, plans, and policies, is required in order to carry out this general policy. The whole set of things are called measures.

What measures are they? The principal ones are the following:

1. Mobilization of all armed forces in the country. Mobilize our standing armed forces of well over 2 million men, including the land, sea, and air forces, the Central Army, the local troops and the Red Army, and immediately send the main forces to the national defense lines, keeping some forces in the rear to maintain order. Entrust the command on the various fronts to generals loyal to the national interests. Call a national defense conference to decide on strategy and to achieve unity of purpose in military operations. Overhaul the political work in the army to achieve unity between officers and men and between the army and the people. Establish the principle that guerrilla warfare should carry the responsibility for one aspect of the strategic task, and ensure proper coordination between guerrilla and regular warfare. Weed out Chinese traitor elements from the army. Call up an adequate number of reserves and train them for service at the front. Adequately and rationally plan to replenish the equipment and supplies of the armed forces. Military plans along these lines must be made, in close keeping with the general policy of resolute armed resistance. China’s military strength is actually superior to Japan’s military strength, but unless these plans are executed, they will not be able to defeat the enemy. If political and material factors are combined, our armed forces will be unmatched in East Asia.

2. Mobilization of the whole people. Lift the ban on the patriotic movement, release political prisoners, annul the Emergency Decree for Dealing with Actions Endangering the Republic and the Press Censorship Regulations, grant legal status to existing patriotic organizations, extend patriotic organizations among the workers, peasants, businessmen, and intellectuals all over, and arm the people for self-defense and for support of battle operations. In a word, give the people freedom to express their patriotism. By their combined strength the people and the army will deal a deathblow to Japanese imperialism. Beyond doubt, not to rely on the great masses of the people runs entirely counter to the logic of a national war. Let us take warning from the fall of Abyssinia. No one who is sincere about waging a resolute war of resistance can afford to ignore this point.

3. Reform the political structure. Include all political parties and groups and people’s leaders in joint management of the affairs of the state, and weed out the hidden pro-Japanese faction and Chinese traitor elements in the government, making the government one with the people. Resistance to Japan is a gigantic task which cannot be performed by a few individuals alone. If they insist on keeping it in their own hands, they will only bungle it. If the government is to be a real government of national defense, it must be reorganized in a democratic centralist form. Such a government is at once democratic and centralized; this is the most powerful kind of government. The National Assembly must be truly representative of the people; it must be the supreme organ of authority, determine the major policies of the state, and decide on the policies and plans for resisting Japan and saving the nation.

4. Anti-Japanese foreign policy. Accord to Japan no advantages or facilities but on the contrary confiscate its property, repudiate its loans, weed out its lackeys, and drive away its spies. Immediately conclude a military and political alliance with the Soviet Union, and closely unite with that country, which is most reliable, most powerful, and most capable of helping China to resist Japan. Enlist the sympathy of Britain, the United States, and France for our resistance to Japan, and secure their help provided that it entails no loss of our territory or our sovereign rights. One relies mainly upon one’s own strength,

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6. The alliance → The enemy. ("The alliance" would appear to refer here to Japan’s alliance with Manchukuo and other puppet political entities in North China.)
7. Chairman Chiang’s call → Mr. Chiang Kaishek’s declaration

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8. China’s military strength is actually superior to Japan’s military strength → China’s military forces are not inconsiderable
9. Runs entirely counter to the logic of → Makes it impossible to achieve victory in
10. It must be changed into democratic centralism → It must rely on the people and practice democratic centralism
11. To Japan → The Japanese imperialists
12. One relies mainly upon one’s own strength → One relies mainly upon one’s own strength to defeat the Japanese bandits
cannot be dispensed with, and an isolationist policy will in reality play into the enemy’s hands.

5. Proclaim a program for improving the livelihood of the people and immediately begin to put it into effect. Start with the following minimum points: abolish exorbitant taxes and miscellaneous levies, reduce land rent, restrict usury, increase the workers’ pay, improve the livelihood of soldiers and junior officers, improve the livelihood of office workers, and provide relief for victims of natural calamities. Far from making a mess of the country’s finances, as some people argue, these new measures will increase purchasing power and lead to thriving commercial and financial conditions. These new measures will add immeasurably to our strength for resisting Japan and consolidate the government’s foundations.

6. National defense education. Radically reform the existing educational policy and system. All projects that are not urgent and all measures that are not rational must be discarded. Newspapers, books and magazines, films, plays, literature, and art should all serve national defense. Treacherous propaganda is to be prohibited.

7. Financial and economic policies for resisting Japan. Financial policy should be based on the principles that “those with money should contribute money” and that “the property of Japanese imperialism and Chinese traitors should be confiscated,” and economic policy should be based on the principles of “boycotting Japanese goods” and “promoting domestic products” —everything for the sake of resistance to Japan. Financial strain is the product of wrong measures and can surely be overcome under the new policies. It is sheer nonsense to say that a country with so vast a territory and so huge a population is financially and economically helpless.

8. Finally, there is the question of “unifying the entire Chinese people, the government, and the armed forces to build up the national united front as our solid Great Wall.” The application of the policy of armed resistance and of the above measures depends on this united front. Here the key is close cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party. Let the government, the troops, all political parties, and the whole people unite as one on the basis of such close cooperation between the two parties. The slogan “Unity in good faith to meet the national crisis” must not be limited to fine words but must be demonstrated in fine deeds. Unity must be genuine; deception will not do. There must be more large-mindedness and a broader sweep in the conduct of affairs. Petty niggling, mean tricks, bureaucracy, and Ah Q-ism are actually of no use at all. These things are of no avail against the enemy and simply ridiculous if practiced on one’s own compatriots. There are major and minor principles in everything, and the minor principles are all subordinate to the major ones. Our compatriots must think things over carefully in light of the major principles, for only then will they be able to situate their own thought and methods properly. Today, anyone who has not begun to have some genuine desire for unity ought to examine his conscience in the stillness of the night and feel some shame, even if no one else censures him.

This set of measures to bring about resolute armed resistance may also be called the Eight-Point Program.

The policy of resolute armed resistance must be accompanied by this set of measures, or else the policies will never be realized and Japanese aggression against China will never be ended, while China will be helpless against Japan and hardly be able to escape the fate of Abyssinia.

Whoever is sincere about the policy of resolute armed resistance must put this set of measures into practice. And the test of whether or not he is sincere about resolute armed resistance is whether or not he accepts and carries out this set of measures.

There is another set of measures which is contrary to this set in every respect.

Not the total mobilization of the armed forces, but their immobilization or withdrawal.

Not freedom for the people, but oppression.

Not a government of national defense based on democratic centralism, but an autocratic government of bureaucrats, compradors, and big landlords.

Not a foreign policy of resisting Japan, but one of fawning on it.

Not the improvement of the people’s livelihood, but continued exploitation so that they groan under their sufferings and are powerless to resist Japan.

Not education for national defense, but education for becoming slaves without a country.

Not financial and economic policies for resisting Japan, but the same old financial and economic policies, or even worse policies, that benefit the enemy rather than ourselves.

Not building up the Anti-Japanese National United Front as our Great Wall, but tearing it down, or talking glibly about unity while never doing anything to advance it.

Measures stem from policy. If the policy is one of nonresistance, all measures will reflect nonresistance; we have been taught this lesson over the past five years. If the policy is one of resolute armed resistance, then it is imperative to apply the whole set of appropriate measures. It is imperative to apply the Eight-Point Program.

13. Purchasing power → The people’s purchasing power
15. Under the new policies → after the adoption of the new policies, which serve the interests of the people
16. Policies will never be realized → Victory will never be achieved
17. Ourselves → Our country
18. Five → Six
III. Two Future Outcomes

What are the possible future outcomes? This is what everyone is anxious about.

Carry out the first policy and adopt the first set of measures, and the outcome will definitely be the expulsion of Japanese imperialism and the attainment of China’s freedom and liberation. Can there still be any doubt about this? I think not.

Carry out the second policy and adopt the second set of measures, and the outcome will definitely be the occupation of China by Japanese imperialism, with the Chinese people being turned into slaves and beasts of burden. Can there still be any doubt about this? Again, I think not.

IV. Conclusion

It is imperative to carry out the first policy, to adopt the first set of measures, and to strive for the first outcome.

It is imperative to oppose the second policy, to reject the second set of measures, and to avert the second outcome.

All members of the Guomindang and all members of the Communist Party, unite and steadfastly carry out the first policy, adopt the first set of measures, and strive for the first outcome. Steadfastly oppose the second policy, reject the second set of measures, and avert the second outcome.

Patriotic fellow countrymen, patriotic armed forces, and patriotic parties and groups all over the country, unite as one and steadfastly carry out the first policy, adopt the first set of measures, and strive for the first outcome. Resolutely oppose the second policy, reject the second set of measures, and avert the second outcome.

Long live the national revolutionary war!

Long live the liberation of the Chinese nation!

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19. All members of the Guomindang → All patriotic members of the Guomindang

Convey to Chiang Kaishek the Plan to Reorganize the Red Army

(July 28, 1937)

Zhou [Enlai], Bo [Gu], and Lin [Boqu]:

1. Please go to Yunnan immediately to discuss and decide on reorganization.
2. After returning from Yunnan to Xi’an, inform Jiang Dingwen 2 of the following points, based on the views of commanders Zhu [De], Peng [Zhen], Lin [Biao], He [Long], Xiao [Jingguang], Liu [Bocheng], Zhang [Hao], and Xu [Xiangqian], and ask him to convey them to Chiang Kaishek:
   a. Reorganization to be completed before August 15, setting out for resistance against Japan on the 20th.
   b. There must be a general headquarters established if there are more than three divisions, with Zhu as commander-in-chief and Peng as deputy commander. A Political Department will also be established, with Ren Bishi as its director and Deng Xiaoping as deputy director (not Kang Ze). 3 for the purpose of facilitating combat command.
   c. The total strength of the three divisions is 45,000 men. In addition, there are 10,000 local troops, and a chief and deputy chief of security are to be

Our source for this text is *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 2, pp. 18–19, where it is reproduced from a copy in the Central Archives.

1. The time of dispatch of this telegram is indicated by a character which signifies between 9:00 and 11:00 A.M.
2. Jiang Dingwen (1895–1974), zi Mingsan, was a native of Zhejiang. In 1924 he became an instructor at the Huangpu Academy and was closely associated with Chiang Kaishek thereafter. He served as an intermediary in the negotiations between Zhang Xueliang and the Nanjing Government following the Xi’an Incident and in July 1937 was appointed director of Chiang Kaishek’s headquarters in Xi’an.
3. Kang Ze (1904–1967), a native of Sichuan, was a graduate of the Huangpu Academy, and had studied at Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow. Following his return to China in October 1927, he had pursued a career as a military man and as a journalist. At this time, he was one of the four or five most influential figures in a secret organization, the Liangshui, commonly known as the Blue Shirts, which had as its primary aim the struggle against Communism. It appears that Chiang Kaishek intended at this time, in the context of the arrangements for bringing the Red Army under the supervision of the Guomindang military authorities, to appoint Kang deputy head of the Political Department of the Eighth Route Army. In light of the facts just mentioned, it is not surprising that Mao refused to accept this proposal.
appointed. Gao Gang is the chief and Xiao Jingguang the deputy. Soldiers' pay and provisions are to be provided as usual.
d. After setting out, the main force is to concentrate for battle and may not disperse.
e. Take responsibility for a line at the Suiyuan front.
f. Replenish the supply of bayonets, tools, bullets, hand grenades, and so on.

Luo [Fu] Mao [Zedong]

Open Telegram of the Red Army Senior Commanders Celebrating the Victory at Beiping and Tianjin
(July 29, 1937)

For the perusal of Chairman Lin [Sen], Chairman Chiang, the Guomindang, and the National Government in Nanjing, Chairman Song Zheyuan, Division Commander Feng Zhi'an, Division Commander Zhang Zizhong, Division Commander Zhao Dengyu, Division Commander Liu Ruming, Division Commander Zheng Dazhang, Army Commander Sun Lianzhong, and Army Commander Pang Bingxun in Beiping, Director Yan and Chairman Zhao of Shanxi, Chairman Fu of Suiyuan, Chairman Han of Shandong, Director Liu and Chairman Shang of Henan, Director Gu, Acting Director Jiang, and Chairman Sun in Xi'an, Chairman He in Lanzhou, Chairman Ma of Ningsha, all commanders-in-chief and deputy commanders-in-chief nationwide, all provincial and municipal [Guomindang] party headquarters, all provincial and municipal governments, all commanders at the army, division, and regimental levels, all officers and men in service, all newspaper offices nationwide, and all organizations and groups:

The attack of the Japanese bandits cornered the Chinese nation and landed it in an impasse. The battle of Beiping and Tianjin unleashed an accumulated anger that has been building for years and struck terror into the heart of the enemy, who has been running rampant for years as well. Our officers and men on the front lines have performed extraordinary meritorious feats in resisting Japan, winning recognition both at home and abroad. They enjoy not only the active support of colleagues in our humble army but also the love and respect of people across the country, men and women, young and old. It has been six years now since the loss of our Northeast. Our compatriots all over the country are filled with bitter hatred. The latest attack by the Japanese bandits put North China in a crisis. Thanks to the sincere cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party, Chairman Chiang's call for resolute resistance against Japanese aggression in his talk on the 17th, Mr. Song Mingxuan's thorough understanding

4. Gao Gang (1905–1954) was a native of Shaanxi and studied at the Zhongshan Military and Political Academy in Xi'an, where Deng Xiaoping was one of his teachers. With Liu Zhidan, he had been one of the central figures in establishing a Communist base in that province and became a leader of the Twenty-sixth Red Army.

1. The timing indicated for this telegram is rather singular, since Beiping was in fact lost on July 29, and Tianjin on the 30th. The date of the issue of Jiefang zhoukan in which it appeared is not in itself decisive, since Chinese periodicals were often not published on the day indicated on the cover. Probably the telegram was sent late on the 28th or early on the 29th, before a true report of the battle for Beiping had been received.
of the important and principal issues, the courageous fighting of the officers and men on the front lines, and the united support of all circles and all armed forces nationwide, the brilliant victory of the 28th of this month came about. Because of this the army's morale rose dramatically and public opinion is becoming aware that the Japanese bandits are not impossible to fight, as long as the policy is appropriate, and that the nation is not lacking in actual strength, as long as proper measures are taken. Now that the policy has been set and measures improved, the whole nation is of one mind, and the army and civilians are united, it will certainly not be too hard to proceed to recover eastern Hebei, northern Chahar, and the Four Northeastern Provinces. Having suffered this defeat, however, the Japanese bandits will necessarily muster up all their strength to bring great pressure to bear on us, guarding the territory they have gained, on the one hand, and launching attacks in various parts of North China on the other. The only way out for our entire country's soldiers and civilians is, on the basis of close cooperation between the Guomindang and the Communist Party, to carry out solid national unity and start a large-scale war of resistance in order to achieve the objectives of safeguarding our motherland, recovering lost territories, driving out the Japanese bandits, and eliminating the Chinese traitors. Our humble army is now undergoing an intense process of reorganization and will set out in a few days to join in the war. We hope for your frequent and timely instructions, which would be of great benefit to the national revolution.


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