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China's Politics In War's Crisis Seen On Move.

## China's Politics In War's Crisis Seen On Move

Following last week's preliminary generalized finding on Chungking today, the Editor of the Shanghai Evening Post deals this week with the political situation. Mr. Gould left Chungking by air on Dec. 1.

By RANDALL GOULD

"Politics" is a nasty, necessary word. It is the no doubt unfortunate fact that in every country of the world today, including and perhaps especially China, a universally expressed dislike for politics and politicians can't cancel off the necessity for implementing all sorts of necessary things—such as shooting at the enemy and buying one's daily nourishment—through political channels.

So in tackling China today in detail let's start off with politics and see what we can make of it.

### Nationalist Role

At the top of China's national life is the National Government in Chungking. This Government is recognized by all other save Axis governments, including those seated in Washington, London and Moscow. Despite loose talk of the merits or otherwise of Chinese other than the Kuomintang, who operate the National Government, there is today no question of diplomatic recognition of (say) Yen-an by even Moscow. Nor is there any talk of special pacts by friendly nations to safeguard the National Government at Chungking.

The foregoing may seem childishly simple, but I find that a great many people remote from the firing line have very complicated ideas for helping or improving China. They seem not to realize that the political game is operated under international rules not so easily amended as one might think.

### Generalissimo at Top

In considering China's National Government, an outstanding first topic is the Generalissimo. At the outset let me declare that nothing in any present development seems to menace Chiang Kai-shek's position. The minority groups don't challenge him; they know there is no one else to fill his shoes, and they recognize him as not only China's supreme leader, but the instigator of the United Front—also the man who in September, 1943, quashed Kuomintang talk of an all-out military attack on the Communists and who insisted on continued efforts (still in progress) to find a solution by political means.

There are points of opposition not to the Generalissimo himself, but certain of his attitudes and policies. He is felt in many quarters to have centered too much power in himself. The criticism is not so much that he wants to be a dictator as that no one can keep closely informed on every subject, and that even the wisest of men must sometimes go wrong in dealing with problems known only at second or third hand. Also it is dangerous to risk confusion in the

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## China's Politics Held Moving In War's Crisis

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event of Chiang's sudden death. (I had tea with him Nov. 28 and was astonished at his keen, poised attitude and apparently robust health after many years of strain.) But accept the Generalissimo as a relatively permanent factor whatever happens, so long as he remains fit to serve.

### Role of Kuomintang

Next we come to the question of the Kuomintang. Many in America seem to think that there is challenge of the predominant position of the Kuomintang in the National Government, or even of the right of the National Government to represent China. Let me say emphatically that neither of these things is true, even from the viewpoint of the most extreme Communist demands. The Communists don't ask that the Generalissimo retire, or that the Kuomintang give up its majority position, or that Yen-an be recognized diplomatically in place of Chungking.

Where, then, lies the challenge and the urge towards change?

Partly in the objections, not merely outside the Kuomintang but also within the Kuomintang, to the long-time supremacy of certain individuals in the National Government. Already, during the very time that I was in Chungking last month, there was a certain amount of shakeup designed to meet this criticism. I shall not go into detail in discussing what happened in the recent shake-up (affecting among others Gen. Ho Ying-chin, Dr. H. H. Kung and Chen Li-fu, and changing six ministerial posts in all) for the simple reason that one could almost write a book on this very point.

### Soong's Appointment

During the very time I was flying to America, a short six days, one further change materialized through the appointment of Dr. T. V. Soong to be Premier and acting President of the Executive Yuan. Again, a lengthy discussion would be required to place this event at all accurately—and even then one might go wrong. It is amazing how much after nonsense has been whispered around with regard, for example, to what I may sum up as "Soong-Kung-Chiang." Those three names include a considerable number of people, all closely related by blood or marriage or politics, and with certain personal enmities and ties complicating the picture. My advice about loose discussion of this matter is like Punch's famed advice about marriage—"Don't!"

But about "T. V." I will say this. His re-emergence in a new and strikingly conspicuous role may be taken as evidence and implementation of the process of change which is under way. I lunched with him on Nov. 29 and while our talk was not designed for publication, I feel free to report that among other things he said in substance the following, speaking with utter impersonality and deliberately steering away from any revelation of what he himself might be up to:

"The forces of change are in motion. We can't say what the immediate developments will be, but finally those forces will prevail. To be realistic, perhaps it doesn't much matter as to the immediate outcome. Whatever happens, there will still be China."

## 'Hump' Air Smuggling Involves Americans

Scores of American soldiers and civilians in the China-Burma-India theater have been court-martialed or arrested for air smuggling operations over the "hump" which in two years netted an estimated \$4,000,000, according to a New Delhi dispatch.

The vast trade is reported to have involved British, Chinese and Indian racketeers, while the Americans were only "small fry"—mostly "fall guy go-betweens"—who transported contraband. Americans participated in 87 major cases (\$5000 or more) and 213 minor cases.

These cases involved, the Army said, "Flying Tigers," employees of the China National Airways Corp., U. S. Army personnel, American Red Cross workers, technical representatives of American manufacturers and British, Indian, Chinese and other civilians. The Army withheld their names.

A representative then in Chungking for negotiation, told me on Nov. 17 that the only alternative to a piecemeal and generally unsatisfactory settlement of Communist-Kuomintang difficulties was—to quote from my notes taken immediately afterward—"a coalition government including other minority

parties but with a Kuomintang majority, and ruling all China's armed forces."

### Kuomintang Majority

The points requiring special emphasis, in my opinion after talking with friends in America, are that the Communists accept a Kuomintang majority in such a Government, and would regard their own troops as subject to such a coalition even though the Kuomintang dominated it.

As to the probable make-up of such a coalition, Dr. Sun Fo told me that he estimated it might be constituted substantially as follows: 50 to 60 per cent Kuomintang, 25 to 30 per cent Communist, 15 to 20 per cent other minority parties. It is my impression that the foregoing is about what the Communists—and others as well—have in mind. There are certain solid blocks including a strong prejudice on the part of the Generalissimo to the very word "coalition."

If discussion of this coalition problem were as acrimonious and unreasonable in China as it seems to be in the United States, I would have no hope for anything but continuation of the past deadlock drifting towards disaster. But in China, where historic background is fresher and the present realities more obvious, there is what seems to me a growing clarification born of crisis. It is becoming a matter of sink or swim. So the realistic Chinese are starting to swim.

(Continued next week.)

### Health Indications

Although he confessed that his health was not wholly robust, and he took some digestive medicine at the conclusion of the meal, Dr. Soong seemed to me essentially strong, cheerful and determined. That he accepted a position of greatly enlarged personal responsibility a week later seems to me to speak for itself. Like others increasingly to the fore, Dr. Soong stands for what may be called the modern, and certainly the democratic and non-isolationist, outlook. If he felt himself whipped in advance he would never take on such new heavy burdens.

Finally we come to the demand for a coalition government, openly advocated by Dr. Sun Fo, president of the Legislative Yuan and son of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. The Communists want a coalition, including not only their own participation but that of other minority groups such as the National Socialists (in no way to be confused with Europeans under the same title), the National Salvationists, the Youth Party and the Society of Rural Reconstruction, all of which are now merged in a "Democratic Federation."

Chao En-lai, the Communist rep-