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Inside China by Anna Louise Strong.

shek had announced that the vast peasant populations of the interior were China's new base. Hankow was an ideal capital, more easily accessible to all parts of the interior than either Peiping, Nanking, or Chungking. Hankow had peasant revolutionary traditions of nearly a century, dating back to the days of the Taipings. It had a larger industrial working class than any Chinese city except Shanghai. From the military standpoint, the heroic but bloody defense of Shanghai had shown China's weakness in traditional methods of war, but the sudden emergence of the Communist-led guerrillas in North China was giving new hope to the nation. All of these factors helped to create a new sense of national unity around Hankow as a center, a unity in which the Communists played an important part.

The unity attained in the Hankow period, however, was never reduced to organized form. Despite much talk of democracy and much energetic popular initiative, the Kuomintang Party never recognized as legal any popular organizations except those which they themselves initiated and controlled. The Communist Border District with its capital at Yen-an was never legally recognized. It was never clearly determined whether the Communist Party was legal or illegal. It depended on the will of the local generals, most of whom suppressed Communists. The supposed amnesty of 1937 was only partly carried out; two Americans traveling in 1940 in South Kiangsi found sixty forgotten Communist prisoners in a single prison, held since 1934. (They are still there.) In Hankow itself there were assassinations of Communists and raids on their newspaper by gangsters alleged to have ties with the secret police of the Kuomintang. When these matters reached the attention of the Generalissimo, however, he usually demanded that the aggressors live up to the new unity that had been proclaimed.

No governmental machinery had been established through which unity might be expressed and questions settled. The "National Congress" consisted of Kuomintang members elected four years previously during the period of civil war; and some of its members were and still are in Japanese puppet governments. A constitution making the Kuomintang the only legal party had been drawn up, but due to the Japanese invasion the Congress had not met to adopt it. Beginning in Hankow, the democratic forces demanded a new National Congress based on popular elections, but the government ministers who had been appointed by the previous Congress and who would be inevitably unseated by any new Congress, claimed that elections could not be held during the war. The deadlock in which the old Congress could not be summoned and a new one could not be elected was partly broken by a new body, "The People's Political Council," formed during the Hankow period in response to popular demand. It has 220 members representing practically all the different political groups in China, but its powers

Who Is Responsible?

IT is a powerful, a terribly powerful story that Anna Louise Strong has brought back from China. It is the fullest account thus far of just how the united front is breaking down, and *NEW MASSES* is happy to reprint it from the March 1941 issue of *Amerasia*. Some of Miss Strong's observations will come as news to most readers, as, for example, the iron-bound censorship that exists in Chungking, or the continuing influence of local reactionary and provincial officials in Chinese life. Other things which she recalls have been forgotten in this country, such as the dictatorial character of the Kuomintang, or the quasi-legality of the Chinese Communists, even in the last three years.

During the past week, Chiang Kai-shek is reported to have made "conciliatory" gestures to the Communists. Insisting that the dispersal of the New Fourth Army was just a matter of "discipline," Chiang offers the mediation of the Peoples Political Council now meeting in Chungking. But the situation seems to be so far gone that the six Communist representatives to the People's Political Council did not attend its sessions, which means that it cannot be considered even the partly democratic body it was. The fact is that the Chinese Communists have taken a strong stand. They will not be cajoled by mere language. They will be convinced by deeds. It is up to Chiang Kai-shek to oust all the pro-Japanese intriguers like his war minister, take firm measures toward the democratization of the nation. It is even probable that these mellifluous words from Chungking conceal measures against the Communists which are already developing in scope.

One of the big questions which Miss Strong leaves unanswered is the future of American policy. As our readers know, British and American stabilization loans to China were partly responsible for the dispersal of the New Fourth Army. Most observers agree that these loans served as a go-ahead signal in Chungking for the anti-Communist campaign; offers of similar loans have had the same purpose elsewhere, for example in Chile. But the next steps in American policy are still unclear. Last week, Lauchlin Currie, one of Roosevelt's right-hand men, returned from his flying trip to China. Currie is a fiscal expert, and the story is that he went to determine how much American gold was greasing the palms of corrupt officials in Chungking. But what were the political motivations of his mission? Does the United States really intend to give Japan still another victory in the form of finally dynamiting the united front? Is it too late for joint action by the Soviet and American governments, demanding a cessation of preparations for civil war? These are the questions which American friends of China want answered. For as Miss Strong suggests, the people of China will not be conquered by assaults or by stratagems. They will find new forms, and gather powerful new friends to resist the enemy within as well as the enemy from without.

are advisory only and its membership is hand-picked by the Kuomintang which decides even who shall represent the Communist Party. The members of the People's Political Council whom I met in Chungking seemed to be able and devoted intellectuals greatly disturbed by the growing disunity in China, but powerless to prevent it. They complained that they had formed a committee almost a year ago to investigate the Kuomintang-Communist friction but the Chungking government paid no attention to their report.

Chiang Kai-shek's power obviously does not rest upon such ineffective fronts of government. It rests upon his armies and his moral prestige as the symbol of China's unity. He has no constitutional power to reorganize the government. He is neither the president of a democracy nor a fascist dictator; his status is more like that of the early kings who emerged from feudalism through the allegiance of many rival lords. If he greatly desired, he might get rid of any individual minister in the government or any individual general in the army, but only by political combinations and pressures which might sap his power in another direction. He has no conception of what is meant by "rule of the people"; he once said, "If the people rule, then how can I rule?"

Moreover, to make changes in a democratic direction became harder rather than easier with the lapse of time. For by the time the government moved to Chungking, it was so widely accepted as the "Central Government of China" in a sense which no government had ever been before, that even those bankers of the coast who were ready to make terms with Japan felt the authority of Chungking and returned to it. They resumed their wonted sway which the fall of Nanking had temporarily broken. Even the talk of democracy, which had been so vivid during the days in Hankow, died. When I visited Chungking in December 1940 no public meetings were allowed without a representative of the police, empowered to interrupt the speech at any moment.

Ministers who had seemed slated for immediate dismissal during the Hankow period not only remained, but increased their power. The most notorious case was that of General Ho Ying-chin, Minister of War, by whom all commands to the armies are issued. For the past decade he has been famous for two things: his wars with the Communists and his agreements with Japan. The 1935 Ho-Umetu agreement, for instance, gave Japan such dominance of North China that it became the cause of student demonstrations against "Japan and Ho Ying-chin." Its terms could never be published in China proper lest they cause the fall of the Nanking government. General Ho was known to be opposed to the present war with Japan. Today he signs all the orders that carry it on. All orders to Communist armies and all complaints from Communist armies to the Generalissimo pass through his hands.

When I expressed my amazement in Chung-

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Inside China

Will there be civil war in China? Anna Louise Strong, just returned from Chungking, tells the first comprehensive story of the crucial events there. Their significance for America.

IT IS no service to China either to minimize or exaggerate the present tension between the Communist Party and the Kuomintang. The threat of widespread civil war is serious, but the situation is not yet fatal. It has reached the stage in which the actions of "friendly nations" may either ruin or save the situation—in which, for example, the actions of those in charge of American foreign loans may prove decisive. But they must first know (what Chungking censorship conceals) that there is a situation to be saved.

The January armed clash in South Anhwei in which some 2,000 of the Communist-led New Fourth Army were killed and between 3,000 and 4,000 wounded, after which the army itself was officially disbanded and its general, Yeh Ting, held for court-martial, was only the latest of many armed clashes between Communist and Kuomintang troops which have gone on for more than a year. Nor is even this particular incident settled, as Chungking officially claimed. On the contrary, it has led to far more threatening developments. The Communists have not accepted the disbanding of the New Fourth, but have organized their own "Revolutionary Military Committee" which appointed new commanders for the 90,000 men who still function under the name of the New Fourth north of the Yangtze.

An official "spokesman" for this committee immediately issued an interview in response to the January 17 announcement of the Chungking Military Council disbanding the New Fourth. He charged that the attack on the New Fourth was only one step in the plot of the "pro-Japanese elements who occupy high positions in the government and the Kuomintang" to bring about a peace pact with Japan and to have China join the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis. Nowhere in his statement does the spokesman denounce Chiang Kai-shek himself. He attacks by name Ho Ying-chin, Chungking's Minister of War, who has been for some time charged with being the present center of the pro-Japanese forces which formerly grouped around the now puppet-ruler of Nanking, Wang Ching-wei.

On the basis of these extremely serious charges, the "Revolutionary Military Committee" issued what practically amounts to an ultimatum in twelve points. The demands are of such a drastic nature that they must be considered as an attempt to break through to the Generalissimo's attention by dynamite. They include the "cessation of attacks on Communist armies," the revoking of the or-

der disbanding the New Fourth, the freeing of its general, Yeh Ting, an open apology by the government for the "South Anhwei outrage" and compensation paid to its victims, the abolition of a blockade line now maintained in the northwest against the Yen-an district, the "punishment" of Ho Ying-chin and several subordinates, and the arrest and court-martial of the "pro-Japanese elements" in Chungking. Both the charges and demands were made immediately following Chungking's January 17 pronouncement, but the news of them was suppressed by Chungking censorship, and reached America a month late.

THE PRESENT SITUATION must be seen against the background of Japanese plus German intrigue working upon all the backward and reactionary elements in China, and exploiting the never completely settled cleavage of the earlier civil war. The international setting of the present period begins with the Tripartite Pact between Germany, Italy, and Japan, and with the arrival of many new German advisers in Tokyo. These events served to stimulate Japan's desire to settle the "China incident" as rapidly as possible in order to move south against the French, British, and Dutch possessions, which she is powerless to do with a united and hostile China in her rear. . . .

No pro-Japanese or pro-peace groups would dare express themselves openly in Chungking. Behind the scenes, however, there are capitulators who express themselves either

by defeatism or by stirring up internal friction, or by actual plotting with the enemy. As a high Chungking official, who was not a Communist, said to me: "Wang Ching-wei is gone but his secret supporters remain and are at the root of the trouble." The power of these capitulators would be greatly increased if any of the following developments occurred: (1) if Japan made a big concession, such as withdrawal from the Yangtze valley; (2) if Britain and America ceased to support China's struggle for freedom and democratic progress; (3) if hoarding, speculation, and profiteering continue to demoralize internal economic conditions in Free China; or (4) if there were an increase in civil strife.

In a military sense, the Sino-Japanese war has been for some time at the stage of stalemate, in which Japan's chief weapons have become economic pressure and political intrigue. In using political intrigue Japan merely continues to wield a weapon which she used successfully in China for the entire generation preceding the present war. Cooperation with Japan only recently seemed to northern provincial governors and even to many Nanking politicians a respectable path to riches and power.

The first serious check to Japan's policy of "divide and conquer" came when the ten years' civil strife between Chiang Kai-shek and the Communists was called off in favor of resistance against the common national foe. This was a program around which all China rallied; even backward, provincial warlords were compelled to submit to the Chinese people's will for unity against Japan. General Han Fu-chu, governor of Shantung, was executed for the kind of dealing with the enemy which was political wisdom a year earlier. But it would be utopian to assume that all the former traffickers with Japan were at once converted. There is still a strong tendency among China's reactionary militarists to regard Japan as the natural military organizer of East Asia. Moreover, Japan's fifth column work has been greatly strengthened by her pact with Germany, for Germany, having given considerable help to the Chungking government in the early stages of the war, still has many friends in high places in China.

THE HIGH POINT of Chinese national unity was reached during the "Hankow period," from the fall of Nanking in 1937 to the fall of Hankow in late 1938. Nanking's fall had broken the exclusive hold of the Shanghai capitalists over the government. Chiang Kai-



Anna Louise Strong

king that a man with this past should be kept by the Generalissimo in such an important post, I was told: "Oh, but the Generalissimo could hardly do without him and it is not even certain that he could depose him. General Ho has much closer relations with all the lower generals than has the Generalissimo himself." . . .

MEANWHILE, FAR AWAY from Chungking in the north and east of China, separated from "Free China" by Japanese concentrations and Chinese armed forces alike, the Communist-led armies rapidly increased. They were assigned only to territory which the Japanese had already conquered: the Eighth Route in North China and the New Fourth on the Lower Yangtze. They were allotted pay for 45,000 soldiers in the Eighth Route and a much smaller number in the New Fourth. They were, however, allowed to organize peasant guerrillas and on this basis they grew rapidly, until by the end of 1940 they claimed from 500,000 to 600,000 armed but unpaid men. They campaigned all over Japanese-occupied China, from Manchuria to the Yangtze, from the Mongolian deserts to the sea. They penetrated Manchuria to within a hundred miles of Mukden, and established contact with 100,000 poorly organized Manchurian Volunteers. They reached the Shantung coast and held the port of Chefoo long enough to collect customs revenue and run in several shiploads of war supplies from Shanghai and Tientsin. They disrupted Japanese rail communications on all sides of Peiping and put up proclamations inside the city walls. Extending southward the Eighth Route eventually made contact with the New Fourth Army, which in its turn was expanding along the entire Yangtze Valley from the area north of Shanghai to districts almost as far inland as Hankow.

This "unruly expansion" was the chief thing held against the Communist armies by Chungking officials with whom I talked in December 1940. Both Sun Fo and Pai Chung-hsi told me that if the Communists would remain in the areas assigned them, organize only the authorized number of troops, and obey the local magistrates appointed by Chungking, there would be no trouble. But the Communists were faced with ever-increasing bands of hungry, armed peasants who demanded to be taken into their armies, and who otherwise would degenerate into local bandits or Japanese puppet troops. Their attempts to give these peasants leadership and organization against Japan were handicapped by lack of funds and food. Since Chungking refused support for such numbers, they tried to form local governments whose taxing-power could regularize the food levies on the countryside. In this they were opposed by local magistrates appointed by distant Chungking, who had no interest in giving them food. "When we got customs revenue from Chefoo," said a young woman with the Eighth Route Army, "the Shantung governor expected us to give it to



Map shows main areas of Japanese penetration of China. The area of shaded arrows is held by Japan only along the railroad lines and is under fairly constant assault from Chinese guerrilla troops. The smaller circle shows the approximate area of operations of the New Fourth Army, until it was recently attacked by troops of the Kuomintang, and subsequently by Japanese forces as well. The larger circle is the approximate area of the Border government, in which the Eighth Route Army is based. Miss Strong's article confirms reports that this area has been blockaded by reactionary officials of the Kuomintang, who hope to isolate all of North China, roughly above the Yellow River valley as a concentration point for a combined Japanese and Kuomintang anti-Communist campaign. The New Fourth Army has now been reorganized, but whether its troops are standing their ground or making their way northwest is not clear.

him. He lost Chefoo to the Japanese and we got it; we needed the food for ourselves." . . .

Under such conditions local clashes grew more frequent and widespread, with increasing participation by the authorities in Chungking. The first serious armed clash occurred late in 1939 in North Shensi. The Special Border District, with its capital at Yen-an, had declared allegiance to the Chungking Government, but the Central Government had given no legal status nor fixed boundaries to the district. General Hu Tsungnan, governor of Shensi, decided that the district was his and sent armies to occupy it; generals in Kansu collaborated. After Yen-an had lost four of the twenty-three *hsien* (districts) which it claimed, part of Ho Lung's men—Eighth Route forces operating just across the Yellow River—came back to Yen-an as home defense. From then on, Yen-an lost no more *hsien* but three concentric lines of block-houses began to be built in narrowing circles against the Border District—the tactics which squeezed the Communists out of South China in the earlier civil war. By the end of 1940 2,000 such block-houses had been built.

THE NEXT IMPORTANT CLASH occurred in the adjacent province of Shansi between the Old and New Armies of Yen Hsi-shan. Yen's original army broke very badly in 1937 under the first Japanese onslaught which they had never been equipped to withstand. Yen reorganized them, adding local peasant boys. Much of this enrollment was taking place during my visit to Shansi in 1938. Thousands of Shansi boys were applying to join the Eighth Route because of its superior prestige, but they were being told: "We have no money for soldiers; join Yen Hsi-shan." Yen's new army was therefore strongly pro-Eighth Route and followed its tactics in organizing the local peasants. Conflicting accounts exist of the clash that finally developed between the two different armies of General Yen. Chungking claims that it was inspired by the Eighth Route; Communists state that, on the contrary, it broke out in spite of them, and that, after it occurred, they "mediated" and induced the New Army to withdraw to Northwest Shansi. In any event, the New Army now operates in close conjunction with the Eighth Route in that territory, where to some extent it replaces the forces that returned to Yen-an.

Throughout 1940 an armed blockade separated all Eighth Route and New Fourth territory from "Free China." An estimated one-fifth of Chungking's total forces were diverted to "watching" the Communists. Students trying to go to Yen-an for education were detained in Sian; if they persisted in their dangerous desire they were thrown into concentration camps. For fourteen months the Eighth Route claimed to have received no munitions or medical supplies from the Central Government; if any were sent, they failed to get through. Truckloads of medical supplies sent by Madame Sun Yat-sen's organization, the China Defense League, were indefinitely detained. Even a



CHINA'S COMMUNIST LEADERS. *Po Ku, Chou En-lai, Chu Teh, Mao Tse-tung.*

foreign doctor who tried to reach Wutaishan to replace Dr. Norman Bethune was unable to pass and finally accepted medical service among Central Government troops. One occasion at least is recorded when armed men taking the payroll for the New Fourth Army were seized by other Chinese troops of the Central Government. Neither the payroll nor the soldiers were ever released. Only occasionally could this unofficial blockade be penetrated by men with high prestige.

CLASHES BETWEEN Communist-led armies and other Central Government forces became epidemic in the summer of 1940. They took place in Hopei, Shantung, North Kiangsu, East Anhwei, South Anhwei, and at the northern ledge of Chekiang. Details are impossible to verify, since each side charges the other with attacking, and though the Communists asked for an investigation commission none was sent. Meanwhile the high staffs in the Kuomintang-led armies made speeches to their subordinates urging that they must be prepared to fight the Communists. Pamphlets were published denouncing the Communists as the most dangerous element in the nation; in Hongkong I was told that 200,000 such pamphlets had been sent out to Overseas Chinese. Deadly phrases were whispered: "Japanese are only lice on the body of China but Communism is a disease of the heart." The repression spread beyond the Communists to all united front organizations; the famous "Life" bookshops of the National Salvation Movement were closed in ten cities. Many organizers of the Industrial Cooperatives were arrested, kidnapped, and even assassinated as "Reds," a term which might merely cover the jealousy of a local official who failed to get his squeeze from the cooperatives.

There seems reason to think, in at least three cases, that local generals, acting under Ho Ying-chin's orders to check the Communists, were simultaneously cooperating with the Japanese. General Shih Yu-shan, who clashed with the Eighth Route in South Hopei, was a man of a picturesquely adventurous past. He began his career as a commander under Marshal Feng Yu-hsiang and was left at loose ends when Feng was defeated by Chiang Kai-shek. When the present war with Japan began, Shih despaired of getting funds from Chiang Kai-shek so he went over openly to Japan. After receiving money and munitions for his needy troops, he declared loyalty to Chungking and gained much face for thus outwitting the Japanese. He expected to be made Governor of Hopei and was disgruntled when denied the post. He was, however, assigned the territory of South Hopei and is alleged to have had orders from Ho Ying-chin to check the Eighth Route's expansion by cutting the connections between their Shansi and Central Hopei forces.

Charges that General Shih was conspiring with the Japanese were sent to Chiang Kai-shek on July 2 in an official telegram by Chu Teh, commander-in-chief of the Eighth Route. He stated that on June 22, General Shih sent instructions to all his subordinates giving a code of signals, consisting of white sheets placed on the ground, by which Japanese planes could distinguish his troops from those of the Eighth Route. This information, plus other details of Shih's collaboration with the Japanese, had been given to Chu Teh by Shih's subordinates who did not wish to side with Japan. No answer was received from Chungking to this accusation, but later in July Shih's forces, in coordination with Japanese puppet troops and with the aid of

Japanese planes, attacked the Eighth Route near Puyan and Poshan. Shih was shot by one of his own brigade commanders and most of his troops came over to the Eighth Route. For several months no details of this clash reached Chungking, and details are still conflicting. But by the end of November it became known that General Shih was dead. Then General Wei Li-huang, commander of the war zone in which the incident occurred, announced that he had executed Shih for treason—thus removing the onus of mutiny from his subordinates. The Central News Agency in Chungking, however, announced that Shih had been executed "for expanding his territory in defiance of orders."

Similar charges of treason were made against General Miao Chen-liu, commander of the Fifty-seventh Army in South Shantung. Chu Teh sent a telegram to the Generalissimo in July, giving an exhaustive list of Miao's alleged dealings with the Japanese, as revealed to Chu Teh by Miao's subordinates. These included the exchange of signals, exchange of emissaries, joint banquets—in fact, a fully worked out system of combined attack against the Eighth Route. No answer came from Chiang Kai-shek but Ho Ying-chin telegraphed back: "Don't slander your fellow-generals." Telegrams from division commanders under General Miao next went to Chungking revealing more conferences with the Japanese and appealing over the head of their commander to the Generalissimo. On October 9, the entire staff of the Fifty-seventh Army signed a joint telegram to Chiang Kai-shek declaring their general a traitor and demanding his execution. None of these telegrams was answered, but word was spread in Chungking that "the Eighth Route is stirring up trouble in other Chinese armies." Finally Miao's staff arrested him and sent him under guard to the commander-in-chief

of the war zone who forwarded him to Chungking, where he is now busily circulating his version of the affair. Meanwhile his troops, like those of General Shih's, have augmented the forces of the Eighth Route—an indication of what may happen if civil war begins. . . .

"We interpret these incidents," said a representative of the Eighth Route to me, "as meaning that General Ho Ying-chin is ready to cooperate even with Japanese against the Communists."

To my query whether Chiang Kai-shek had the same attitude as Ho Ying-chin, he replied: "We do not even know whether the Generalissimo gets all of our telegrams. We believe that Chiang does not at present want to make an agreement with Japan. He wishes to suppress the Communists more and more but not quite to the point of civil war and not quite to the point of interfering with the war against Japan. It is a very narrow road. Until now he has been able to take it. But he cannot take it long."

The Generalissimo, however, has chosen to have a show-down and as a first step accepted personal responsibility for disbanding the New Fourth Army in the Yangtze Valley. This army consisted officially of four "units," functioning as independent groups in different areas on both sides of the Lower Yangtze, assigned to them originally by Chiang Kai-shek. After the fall of Hankow the New Fourth was augmented by 20,000 dispersed soldiers from Central Honan who formed a fifth unit, and by large numbers of peasants on the borders of Hupeh, Honan, and Anhwei who formed a sixth detachment. Later a battalion known as the Shannan Volunteers, organized south of the Yangtze, grew so large that the commander of the war zone objected to it, and it crossed the Yangtze to avoid trouble and took its sta-

tion north of Shanghai and north of the river.

Thus the New Fourth operated on both sides of the Yangtze almost from Shanghai to Hankow, in small detachments separated by some of the heaviest Japanese concentrations in China. For three years its units were in constant contact with the Japanese, attacking the Nanking-Shanghai railway, the Wuhu-Nanking railway, and the highways between Nanking and Hangchow. They wrecked trains, waylaid Japanese army trucks, stopped trade with the Japanese-held cities. In the autumn of 1938 they raided the Japanese-occupied airdrome within sight of Shanghai and hoisted the Chinese flag above its buildings. In the first year, the detachments south of the river fought more than 600 engagements, most of them small affairs but all of them wearing down the Japanese.

"We have been able to detain 50,000 Japanese in this area," claimed General Yeh Ting. "No matter how often they change their troops, they never dare lessen the number which they maintain here." The people in Chekiang called the army "the soldiers of God" and "world army No. 1." They had a saying, "as in lettuce you eat the heart, so if you join the army join the Fourth." . . .

With the general worsening of relations between Communist and Kuomintang forces, a whole series of armed clashes took place between the New Fourth and surrounding Chinese armies, beginning in February 1940. Endless details of these clashes are available, but in the absence of checking, nobody knows how accurate the details are. It seems at least clear that the New Fourth payroll was seized on one occasion, and its normal river-crossing, by which communication with Chungking and with troops on both banks was maintained, was permanently blocked. The New Fourth claims to have intercepted

No!
Wuhu



HO LUNG. He is the famous general in the Eighth Route Army with a brilliant reputation of success in battle.



CHU TEH, commander-in-chief of the Eighth Route Army, smiles for the camera while getting ready for the day's work.



AN EIGHTH ARMY SOLDIER marches a Chinese traitor, caught spying behind the lines, back to headquarters where he will be tried.



secret instructions from Chungking to local commanders to suppress all New Fourth forces by the end of the year. On the other hand, the New Fourth was plainly increasing its influence in the nearby armies, many of whose troops came over to its ranks during the armed clashes.

Despite these frictions between Chinese forces, the New Fourth continued to fight the Japanese. Major Evans F. Carlson, who visited the area occupied by the New Fourth in Southern Anhwei last October, reports in the China Defense League news letter one of their victories near Kianghsien. "I arrived in this area," he said, "shortly after a particularly aggressive Japanese drive had been turned back by the New Fourth Army. The Japanese came in two columns, one from near Wuhu. . . . They were allowed to make a deep penetration and then the mobile units of the New Fourth fell upon their flanks and rear, forcing them to withdraw with a loss which was estimated, both by the New Fourth and Central Government officials, at an aggregate of 7,000 casualties." Major Carlson was also struck by the emphasis on the "United Front"; even the small children talked to him earnestly about the "need for all people to work together for National Salvation." He adds, "There were many signs of the close cooperation between the army and the people."

Relations between the New Fourth and the commander of the War Zone, General Ku Chu-tung, were not so excellent. He maintained a blockade against the New Fourth which it was perilous to try to pass. A brilliant young intellectual, Wu Ta-kwan, took a party of Chinese journalists to the New Fourth region. General Ku asked them not to visit the New Fourth, but they replied that since they were "comforting" all the armies in this region, they would comfort the New Fourth too. On their return they were summoned before General Ku, and their young leader went alone. He was never seen afterwards. Telegrams sent by Mme. Sun Yat-sen to ascertain his fate were met by General Ku's bland statement that "he had never heard of the man."

THE NEW FOURTH was ordered to leave the Yangtze Valley and move north of the Yellow River to be amalgamated with the Eighth Route. This was given as a "proposal" in

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TOP. Captured Japanese soldiers learn what the war is about. Here they are studying with an instructor from the Eighth Route Army. Those who are illiterate are taught how to read and write. MIDDLE. New recruits pose in between drills and lectures that will make them worthy fighters in a great military-educational apparatus. Many of these recruits come from mining areas. BOTTOM. A lesson in singing. Chinese soldiers before the war were unable to sing the difficult unharmonious music of old China. Now they learn new songs expressing their struggle for liberation and songs commemorating the Eighth Route Army's past victories.

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July and as an "order" on October 19. The Generalissimo himself did not sign the order till December 10, and there is excellent reason for believing that it was originally issued by Ho Ying-chin without Chiang's knowledge, and later confirmed in the interests of army discipline. The New Fourth regarded the order almost as an instruction to commit suicide. They pointed out that only one-tenth of their army was on government pay-roll, and the rest consisted of local peasants who could not easily leave their homes. No winter uniforms had been furnished, no supplies for the long journey, and no munitions had been received for eight months. Yet they were required to cross several heavy Japanese concentrations and pass by many of the Central Government armies which were already clashing with them in armed battle and which gave no pledge of permitting them to pass. They were promised munitions and pay after they should reach the Yellow River but they had fairly good reason for assuming that they were not expected to arrive.

The Communists' most serious objection to the order, however, was that they considered it not a routine military command but a political and military splitting of China into two parts, in preparation for peace with Japan in Central and South China. None of those with whom I talked claimed that this was the Generalissimo's intention. Chiang Kai-shek himself in an interview with me indignantly denied any intention of making peace with Japan or of leaving any part of China outside his rule. But it was clear that the concentration of all the Communists in North China—which had never been under allegiance to Chiang anyway—would give Japan a heaven-sent excuse for concentrating her attacks in that region. If she should then choose to make a demonstrative withdrawal from the Yangtze Valley, the peace tendencies in Chungking would be immeasurably strengthened.

"We do not refuse to obey the military order," said the Communists, "but we want it made part of a wider political settlement which will allow democratic safeguards in all of Free China. We can trust the Chinese people to preserve their unity against Japan. But if all Communists are put in North China and prohibited elsewhere, and no people's movements are allowed, we cannot trust the Chungking bureaucrats. The result will be either civil war or the splitting of China into two parts, with neither of which alternatives can we agree."

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THROUGHOUT DECEMBER, during my visit in Chungking, the capital was buzzing with the "threat of civil strife." Scores of Chinese leaders were urging "patience" and "unity." Reactionaries were gloating: "We have them surrounded and can crush them." Meanwhile some twenty-seven divisions of Central Government troops, uncontaminated by previous contact with the "Reds," were moving eastward to surround the New Fourth Army with the obvious intent of forcing it out of the Yangtze Valley or eliminating it from the

scene. Minor clashes with local forces continued through most of December.

First news of the final clash was announced from Chungking on January 17 by the Military Council which stated that Yeh Ting had been imprisoned and was awaiting court-martial, following suppression of a "revolt" by his troops. Yeh Ting was accused of having plotted "to control the China coast from Chekiang and Kiangsu in the south to Shantung in the north"—all regions, incidentally, held by Japan. General Ku Chu-tung, commander of the Third War Area, was credited with having "successfully suppressed the rebels." A few days later, Edgar Snow reported from Hongkong that it had been the New Fourth Army's rear-guard of some 10,000 men which had been surrounded, and that they had fought for eight days, losing 4,000 casualties before they were suppressed.

Only a month later did full uncensored details arrive from China, signed by Chinese of standing who had steadily supported the united front. It seems that Commander Yeh Ting finally received in late December part of the money needed for moving his army north as ordered. Taking this as evidence of good faith, he sent his forces over the river, the last to leave being a rear-guard of 4,000 armed men protecting some 6,000 unarmed persons, consisting of families of officers, political workers, and the hospital with nurses, doctors, and wounded.

This force of 10,000, more than half unarmed, was surrounded by 80,000 Chungking troops in a narrow mountain pass near Maolin, and were attacked by troops under Gen. Shankuan Yun-hsian on January 6. They ran out of food on the fourth day, and fought without eating until their ammunition gave out on the eighth day. They telegraphed to Chungking begging that the attack on them be stopped, and were told that General Ku Chu-tung, the war zone commander, had already been told to stop it. During the sixth day of their fighting, questions were raised in the National Military Commission in Chungking, to which Ho Ying-chin replied that "everything is proceeding satisfactorily," that the New Fourth was obediently moving northward, and that a "slight difficulty" had arisen which he had directed General Ku to solve. On the seventh day of the fighting, Mme. Sun Yat-sen and others telegraphed an appeal from Hongkong. The fighting ended on the eighth day when munitions gave out. Of the 10,000 people, more than 2,000 were killed and 4,000 wounded or captured; the dead included numerous political workers, technicians, nurses, and children. The remnants of the New Fourth were arrested, and their general, Yeh Ting, held for court-martial. The second in command, Hsiang Ying, was wounded and subsequently killed. (General Yeh Ting was then taken to the headquarters of General Ku Chu-tung in Shangyao, Kiangsi Province, which is noted as the location of Ku's torture chamber where many patriotic youths have met their death. Since there are no foreign corre-

spondents in Shangyao, General Yeh's transfer there suggests that his fate is to be settled without risk of unfavorable publicity.)

On January 17, four days after the conclusion of this battle, the Chungking Military Council—it is not known whether the Generalissimo was included—issued the order disbanding the New Fourth. Ten days after this, on January 27, the Generalissimo himself assumed responsibility for the official disbanding but stated that it would not affect other Chinese troops, i.e. the Eighth Route. Thereafter, Chungking censorship shut down and Chinese representatives in this country spread the word that the Communists had accepted the disbanding and there would be no more trouble.

RELATED MATERIAL from China, however, makes plain the tremendous tensions of the past month. On January 20, three days after the official order of January 17, the "Revolutionary Military Committee" of the Chinese Communist Party—which has not been heard of since the earlier civil war—issued an "Official Order" reorganizing the New Fourth under the command of Chen-Yi, formerly the commander of the New Fourth's First Unit. A few days later—in any event before January 26, the date on which my information was mailed from China—the "spokesman of the Revolutionary Military Committee" issued his detailed charges, outlining the fifteen steps of the alleged plot by "pro-Japanese elements" in Chungking to take China into the Axis. Such accusations have been made for the past year, but never in so definite a form. Especially interesting is the fact that some of the steps in the alleged plot took place while the letter containing the charges was on the ocean.

The first step was the barrage of propaganda against the Communist armies which was going on during my December visit in Chungking. The next steps were the destruction of the New Fourth forces south of the Yangtze and the official disbanding of the entire New Fourth Army. These steps were taken in January. According to the Communist spokesman, the future development of this plot will involve the following: actions by large Chungking armies "tightly cooperating with the Japanese armies" in the regions between the Yangtze and Yellow Rivers to separate the New Fourth from the Eighth Route in order to liquidate them separately. Following this, pretexts would be sought for the official disbanding of the Eighth Route Army and the arrest of its commander, Chu Teh. Next would come arrests of Communists all over China, including Chou En-lai, official representative of the Eighth Route Army in Chungking, who is already under surveillance. Large-scale war would be launched to seize Yen-an. The Communist daily newspaper would be closed.

Japan, it is alleged, would next withdraw her troops from the Yangtze Valley, and throw them into a ruthless war against the New Fourth and Eighth Route Armies in

North China. Fifth column elements in Chungking would then celebrate the recovery of the lost territories as due to the valor of Chungking troops, and would demand a "glorious, victorious peace." If it proved impossible to call off the war officially, because of the Chinese people's objections to the Japanese terms, an undeclared truce would reign in all parts of China except the North where the plotters would obstruct the Communist armies by means ranging from blockade to armed attack. All anti-Japanese elements would, of course, be persecuted as alleged Communists—a tactic familiar from the days when the government was at Nanking. Thus Chinese public opinion would be taught to believe that victory had been won everywhere except in those northern regions where "the Communists either cannot or will not drive out Japan."

This would make possible the signing of the actual peace pact which would leave Japan or Japanese puppets in control of North China—insofar as they could clear out the Communists—and of China's ports. China would then join the Axis. (If this transition seems a bit abrupt to American readers, it must be remembered that the Germans have always been popular in China, since they lost their rights of extra-territoriality, and that Germany gave significant help to the Chinese in the early stages of this war. Granted the illusion of a "glorious peace of victory," it might not be impossible to direct considerable nationalist feeling into the channel of "clearing the rest of the imperialists out of East Asia and the South Seas.")

Regardless of whether these charges will prove correct in every detail, large-scale civil war looms behind the fact that they were made. Some 800,000 Chungking troops, one-half the government forces, are now in positions for attacking the Communists. About 80,000 are said to have been engaged in the disarming of the New Fourth rear-guard south of the Yangtze in the battle which raged January 6 to 13. Another 200,000 to 300,000 have moved into North Anhwei and Kiangsu where they separate the Eighth Route from the New Fourth, and are already reported to be engaged in attempts to defeat them. In the northwestern provinces, an estimated half million encircle the Yen-an district and blockade the Eighth Route Army in Shansi.

Meanwhile, the reorganized New Fourth Army, with 90,000 men north of the Yangtze under its new acting commander, Chen Yi, is still the pivot on which the future turns. It has been ordered by the "Revolutionary Military Committee" to continue the fight against Japan in the name of Chinese nationalism, on the basis of Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles "while always guarding against the sudden attack of the pro-Japanese elements," i.e. attacks which may be launched by Ho Ying-chin. If attempts are made to disband these New Fourth forces, the "Revolutionary Military Committee" officially states that the Eighth Route will come to its as-

sistance. This will give the Communists an estimated 500,000 to 600,000 seasoned fighters, a much smaller and worse-armed force than Chungking possesses. But Chungking contains elements that will not hold together in a war against the Communists, especially if the Communists can convince the local population and soldiers that they are being wantonly attacked.

If this struggle really begins, it will not be the mere disarming of a few Communists. It may well change the map of China and East Asia, and the balance of the present world war. Chungking exists today as the Central Government of China only because it is the symbol of unity toward which nine-tenths of the Chinese people passionately aspire. This gives it the prestige which controls recalcitrant provincial warlords who might otherwise carve restless kingdoms of their own or bargain profitably with Japan. Governors of at least two of the sea coast provinces are reputed to favor Wang Ching-wei, but are held to Chungking by the pressure of the Chinese people. Yunnan in the far South shows repeated tendencies to go off on its own. . . .

IMPORTANT POLITICAL FIGURES have already separated themselves from the actions of Chungking. Mme. Sun Yat-sen led a group of Kuomintang members in a joint message on January 12 to the Generalissimo and the Central Committee of the Kuomintang, appealing for the resumption of the national united front. On the same day, Marshal Feng Yu-hsiang, addressing a committee of the National Military Commission in Chungking, cited Poland and France as glaring examples of nations destroyed by internal dissension, and made a plea for national solidarity. The aged General Yen Hsi-shan spoke even more strongly in an interview telegraphed January 11 to Hongkong. "There are undesirable elements in the Kuomintang who directly threaten our war of resistance and indirectly give the Japanese assistance. Not only am I dissatisfied with them, but the entire nation dislikes them. . . . They arouse the progressive elements to disobedience to the Central Government." On about January 18, General Sheng Shih-tsai, Governor of Sinkiang Province, sent a telegram to Chungking in which he stated that after the military record of the Eighth Route and New Fourth armies against Japan, there is no ground or excuse for any "punitive campaign" against these armies. He declared that if civil war develops in China now, this can only help the Japanese invaders in their plan of conquering China; and that the people and armies of Sinkiang stand solidly behind a policy of unity, resistance, and struggle against all those preparing to sell out to Japan under the cover of a so-called "punitive campaign."

These significant and powerful political figures have been ruthlessly side-tracked by Chungking reactionaries throughout this present war. Their appeal—and also the appeal

from many other sections of China—indicates the widespread ferment going on in all provinces of China behind the censorship veil. Armed clashes, reported but as yet unverified, in four northern provinces, indicate that the military suppression predicted by the "Revolutionary Military Committee" is still going on. In reading news one should look for indications whether the Communist forces seem to be withdrawing to form a new northern area, or whether the agitation still goes on across all of China, looking towards a new and more democratic central government. If large-scale civil war is launched against Yen-an, we may look to see Communist forces break through the cordon of government troops which have continually blockaded them from any contact with the USSR, and which—barring the excuse of civil war—they would not dare try to force. . . .

It will never be too late to save China. She will survive. Her people will organize under some banner to cast forth Japan, even though it may not be under Chungking. But it may soon be too late to prevent a powerful Japanese attack on the Southeast Asian front, which would inevitably involve yet another area in the Second World War. Only swift action to preserve Chungking as the center of Chinese unity can do that. The quickest way to cut the Gordian knot might be an immediate conference among the American, British, and Soviet Embassies in Chungking, a pooling of information and charges from both sides of the strife, and joint pressure to stop a Chinese civil war. Acting together, these three countries might prevent a temporary crisis from becoming a national and international disaster.

ANNA LOUISE STRONG.

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They Carry On

THE dauntless character of the warriors for republican Spain is being reflected in the actions of their friends. Heroism is contagious. Those backing the Rescue Ship Mission have not been disheartened by Churchill's callous refusal of a warrant permitting the vessel to sail. On the contrary, they have redoubled their efforts to win aid for the refugees who look hopefully through barbed-wire fences for rescue. A National Emergency Conference in Washington, D. C. this weekend to map an immediate program has brought wide and enthusiastic response. Specific proposals to be discussed include an increase in relief to Spanish refugees in the Western Hemisphere; the prevention of deportation of Spaniards in this country to certain death in Falangist Spain, direct aid to the republicans in Franco's prison, and a campaign for total guaranteed amnesty. These are proposals all honest Americans must endorse.

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