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Sixty Million Lost Allies by Edgar Snow.



One unit of the world's largest guerrilla organization—the Chinese partisan movement. Not helped by Chungking, not recognized by the United States, these North China troops fight the Japanese tirelessly, effectively.

TRIANGLE PHOTOS

# Sixty Million Lost Allies

By EDGAR SNOW

Why can't we bomb Japan from North China? Here is the sobering answer by a Post editor who writes from firsthand knowledge of his subject.

AMERICANS tend to think of China now as divided into two parts, one under the Kuomintang regime at Chungking, headed by Chiang Kai-shek, and the other under Japanese domination, with its own system of puppets in the Nanking government. But there is a third China, made up of areas recovered from the Japanese in the northern provinces, and organized under native administrations of a type new to Chinese history. I mean partisan China, which contains bases only a few hours' bomber flight from Korea and Japan.

Most people know vaguely that there are Chinese guerrillas fighting the enemy, but few realize the extent of the territory they already rule. Fewer still understand that these troops have won their influence without help from the Chungking government, but rather in spite of a tight economic and military blockade enforced against them since 1939. The situation in China is somewhat similar to that in Yugoslavia, with the Chinese partisans led by Generals Chu Teh and Mao Tse-tung corresponding to Marshal Tito and his following, and the policy of Chungking toward them being about the same as that which Mikhailovitch and King Peter tried to enforce toward the Yugoslav guerrillas.

In Yugoslavia, we and the British and Russians now actively aid Tito, simply because his forces actively fight the Axis, but in Asia we have so far given no official recognition to the Chu-Mao armies which offer

virtually the only armed opposition to the Japanese in North China. Yet the Chinese partisan movement is actually much the largest guerrilla organization in the world. What makes it of special interest to us today is the changing strategy of the Pacific war implied by the rapid westward advance of our naval and air forces.

Last February, Admiral Nimitz revealed that the Navy intends to capture bases on the China coast from which it will attack Formosa and Japan. Hong Kong and Canton may be the first Chinese ports recovered, but they will still be a long bomber flight from Tokyo and Osaka. It is farther north that China lies closest to Japan; and the Chinese partisans there are hence potentially very important to us.



Chinese guerrillas returning with equipment furnished them—involuntarily—by the Japs.

Stretching from the Yangtze Valley to the Mongolian steppe, and to the mountains and rivers of Southern Manchuria, thousands of villages make up the pattern of this people's war. Its organizers are enterprising youths chiefly inspired and trained by the 18th Group Army—the combined 8th Route and New 4th armies. These forces are led by veterans of the former Red army of China, who have behind them an amazing record of survival and growth through seventeen years of continuous civil and national war.

Foreign observers who have visited the guerrilla districts estimate that behind the Japanese lines they have organized and given crude training to militia numbering several million people. These are the reserves of the main fighting units. In addition, there are said to be many million members of various anti-Japanese associations which help to clothe, feed, house, equip and transport the regular troops, and are their eyes and ears. Official data show partisan penetration is 455 *hsien*, or counties, of North China and in 52,800 villages, with a population of more than 60,000,000 people. From three fifths to two thirds of the so-called "conquered territory" is asserted to be in guerrilla hands most of the time.

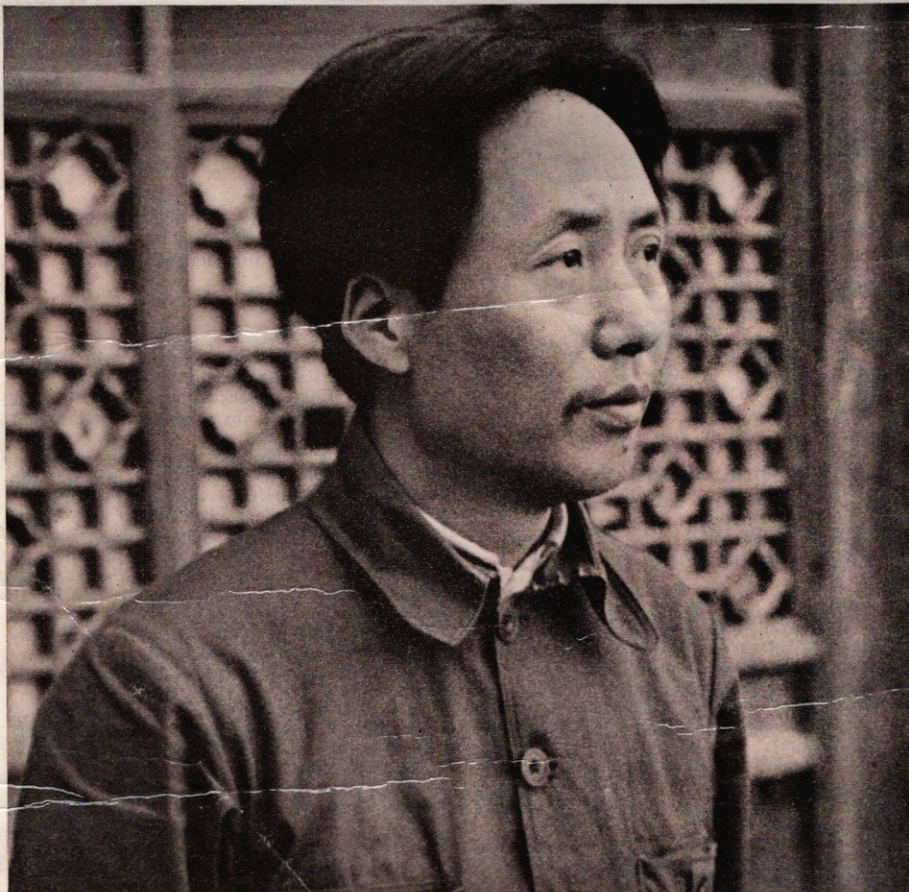
For nearly seven years the Japanese have been trying to exterminate these tireless enemies. Eighth Route Army regulars numbered hardly 50,000 men in 1937, and diverted only a few divisions of Japanese troops. But that vanguard multiplied in every direction. More than half of Japan's 350,000 troops in China and some 200,000 puppet troops are now occupied in defending fortified areas and in fighting punitive actions against the 18th Group Army. Recent Japanese military reports put its strength at from 500,000 to 600,000.

What is certain is that in every one of the provinces occupied by the Japanese, which cover an area three times the size of France, partisans have set up village and county councils. They have established four border governments in bases which have been held throughout the war except for brief intervals; and each of these regional governments represents liberated areas of several neighboring provinces. Wherever practicable, there are elections by direct or secret ballot—which is almost invariably the case in the village and county councils.

These behind-the-lines regimes perform nearly all the functions of normal administration. They have their own postal system and radio communications. They publish their own newspapers, magazines and



Chu Teh, right, commander in chief of the patriotic 18th Group Army, with Ting Ling, China's most famous woman author.



Mao Tse-tung, for years a Red war lord, is the acknowledged political leader of millions of partisans throughout North China.

books. They maintain an extensive system of schools and enforce a reformed legal code recognizing sex equality and adult suffrage. They regulate rents, collect taxes, control trade and issue currency, operate small industries, maintain a number of experimental farms, extend agricultural credit, have a grain-rationing system, and in several places have undertaken fairly large afforestation projects.

If the world has recently heard little of these achievements, it is not entirely the fault of the press. In addition to military and economic blockade, there has been a strict and highly effective news blockade at Chungking. Since 1939, virtually all news of activities of the 18th Group Army has been under ban by the Kuomintang's ministry of information, which monopolizes China's overseas publicity.

The facts are well known to millions of Chinese, and are available to anybody who cares to run the risk of getting them. Among that small band of inquirers who have been in the guerrilla areas none was more impressed, and certainly none learned more, than one American marine officer. He spent many months with units of the 8th Route Army, crossed and recrossed the Japanese lines, and finally emerged to write a valuable book about it.

Not long afterward, we were at war and he was given a chance to apply what he had learned. Assigned to organize and train battalions of picked American youths for special tactical tasks, he incorporated many ideas avowedly borrowed from the Chinese guerrillas. He was Col. Evans Fordyce Carlson. Marine Raiders who have been led by this son of a Connecticut clergyman are now carrying the Chinese cry of "Gung Ho!"—"work together"—across the Pacific.

#### A Nation Within a Nation

**A** FEW other foreigners have become observers of life in this nation within a nation. I have talked to most of these "returned students," as one of them called himself, and found that their impressions tally in major respects with my own. They include, besides Carlson, a British army officer, an American bank manager, an American doctor, several American and British professors, a Belgian businessman, a few missionaries and half a dozen journalists. They agree on these central facts:

Guerrilla China has become the scene of the broadest efforts at mass mobilization and mass education in Chinese history. The partisan regimes carrying out that effort have been able to survive and flourish because they have won the devoted support of the farmers, and particularly of youths, hundreds of thousands of whom have died in this little-publicized struggle. This fighting nation constitutes the closest approach to political and economic democracy the Chinese have ever known and has a government which, so far, may honestly be called incorruptible.

How did it begin? In 1937, Japanese troops swept across North China and up the Yangtze Valley with record speed. By the end of 1938 they had established the lines which they have held, with little change, until today. Contrary to popular impression in this country, there is no evidence to suggest that any of the minor Japanese forays made into Hunan and elsewhere during the past five years were seriously intended to annex additional large territories in the south and west.

With the outbreak of the European war, the Japanese became relatively quiescent along a fairly well-stabilized frontier which they maintained with garrison troops thinly spread out for more than 2000 miles. Japan had secured her main objectives in China—control of the coast, a protected flank and possession of the economically developed areas. After 1939, she concentrated on the coming Pacific war, and attempted to reduce her commitment in China to a mere policing force. What made that impossible to do was the development of partisan warfare behind her stabilized front.

When the Japanese originally moved into China, most of the old officials of the Kuomintang government, as well as its troops, withdrew to the west, and the administrative machinery collapsed. But in the tens of thousands of villages and hundreds of towns the people remained behind, hardly aware of what the war was all about. Into this political vacuum moved the 8th Route Army, with arms, with teachers and with faith in the people's strength.

Just before the invasion, a truce between the Chinese Red army and the Nationalists had brought a formal end to a decade of civil war. The northern Red forces were recognized as part of the (Continued on Page 44)

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### SIXTY MILLION LOST ALLIES

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National army and were given the designation "8th Route," while southeast of Shanghai other Red troops were regrouped as the "New 4th army." The Kungchintang—or Communist—Party continued to direct the reorganized forces. But it promised that whenever the Kuomintang—or Nationalist—Party dictatorship of the central government was modified to admit the legal existence of other parties, and when control of the National army was transferred to a representative government, the Communists would surrender complete command of all their troops to such a regime.

For Americans with little background on China, the term "Communist" may here be misleading. The fact is there never has been any Communism in China, even in Communist areas. Long before it became defunct, the Comintern ceased to have much direct contact with the Chinese Communist Party. It became a purely Chinese offspring of Marxism, and in practice won its following, chiefly among the peasants, by working out a program of agrarian democracy, with Socialism as an ultimate, but, admittedly, quite distant goal.

Both the main Chinese parties claim to adhere to the Three Principles of the late Dr. Sun Yat-sen—who himself brought the Communists into the Kuomintang. In 1927, after Sun's death, they were purged from the Kuomintang, however, which tried until 1937 to exterminate them. Differences between the two parties still lie in the interpretation of Sun's principles. Briefly, the Communists say, they want a thoroughgoing democratic revolution, with all the reforms, including adult suffrage and constitutional government, that have accompanied the overthrow of feudalism elsewhere. But the Kuomintang draws its main internal support from landlords and wants to keep the land system and most of the old Chinese semifederal structure intact. If it admitted the legality of other parties and granted suffrage, that structure would collapse.

Fortunately for China, the two parties were able to agree at least on the principle of nationalism when Japan invaded the country. The Reds then took their military orders from the Generalissimo. In 1937, he sent them into the battle line in North China. They did not disintegrate under the Japanese attack, however, as the northern war-lord armies did. Instead, they held together and re-formed behind the enemy's advance.

Infiltrating all the northern provinces with experienced partisan leaders and political organizers, they soon enlisted valuable reinforcements from a thickening stream of refugees fleeing from the cities—students, workers, various intellectuals and some educated men and women belonging to non-Communist political minorities, long suppressed by both the Chinese and the Japanese regimes. Whole divisions of defeated Chinese troops, cut off from the rear, came under their leadership. Their rifle power grew.

By 1939, their strongholds had become so formidable that the Japanese were compelled to launch a full-dress offensive against them. They have been doing so semiannually ever since.

The first partisan regime entirely inside occupied territory was set up in the mountains of Northeastern Shansi, and now includes areas as far north as Jehol or Inner Mongolia. Another regime, with its capital in Southeastern Shansi, directs operations in recovered territory which stretches for more than 300 miles across Southern Hopeh and Shantung to the Yellow Sea. There is a third border region centering in Northern Kiangsu, above Shanghai, which is controlled by the New 4th army. A fourth regional government was recently established in the mountainous country above Hankow, where the borders of Anhwei and Hupeh enclose the southern extremity of Honan.

Political and military methods used to organize the people borrow heavily from the pattern developed in the only base inside free China which the Communists now hold, the original border government that lies across the Yellow River opposite Japanese forts. It includes Northern Shensi and small parts of Kansu and Ningsia provinces. This regime came into existence after 1937, when the old Chinese Soviet government renounced class warfare and legalized anti-Japanese, pro-democratic parties and organizations. Suffrage was extended to citizens over the age of eighteen and private enterprise was encouraged, along with state-managed industry and co-operatives.

The capital of this mother of Chinese partisans is in Yen-an, Shensi, which I have seen under two different governments. I found it vastly changed on my last visit, after the present regime was established, for no part of China has been mobilized more effectively than this whole region. In seven years, the Yen-an government has built up an intelligent, prosperous community life in an area which formerly was one of the poorest and most backward on earth.

Free compulsory education has been introduced and four colleges established. There is a public-health service, several hospitals and many industrial co-operatives. Peasants here have opened up 600,000 acres of new land and the area has absorbed more than 100,000 refugees. Thousands of youths have walked hundreds of miles to reach Yen-an and study there. Opium has been extirpated; prostitution and child slavery are effectively prohibited. There are no beggars; the idle are put to work. Every village has its elected council and every county likewise, while the regional government itself has held elections since 1939.

On the other side of the Yellow River, behind the Japanese lines, organization of the social, political and economic life is naturally more difficult than in Yen-an, but, in general, the goals are similar. Village and county councils carry on nearly everywhere. Villages are grouped in electoral districts for the *hsien*, or county, elections, which are preceded by meetings and debates. Voting is by secret ballot, and there are rights of recall and referendum.

Border governments behind the lines are also elected directly. Anyone is free to stand for election. Although the Communist Party in North China admittedly holds the military power, several other parties are recognized. There are Kuomintang officials in the Yen-an area, and in the Shansi-Chahar-Hopeh border government the present vice-chairman is a Kuomintang Party member.

The Chinese partisans aim to establish a united front of all groups, and hence

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### CELEBRITIES

A celebrity hound approached Groucho Marx at a party. "You remember me, Mr. Marx? We met at the Glynthwaites' some years ago."

"I never forget a face," Groucho replied, "but I'll make an exception in your case."

—THE SAURUS OF ANECDOTES, Fuller; Crown Publishing Company, 1942.

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the Communist Party limits its own members to one third of the total of any elected body. This peculiar policy is vigorously enforced, according to Prof. Michael Lindsay, of Yenching University, who has toured most of the guerrilla area. The purpose is to bring into the government both landowners and merchants, and above all to develop political leaders among the poor peasants and workers.

In the mass organizations there are no such limitations on leadership, however; and these organizations are the guerrillas' sinew and life. They include separate unions or associations for farmers, workers, youth, children and women. Membership in each runs into the millions. Most important of all such organizations are, of course, the self-defense corps, the militia and the Youth Vanguards, crude but basic military-training organizations.

The hold of the allied partisan leaders on all these organizations, and the extraordinary morale of the troops, trace to their disciplined and democratic personalities rather than to any political propaganda, as such. G. Martel Hall, of the National City Bank, an American recently returned from the partisan areas, says that there is "simply no way to explain the success of the partisan leaders with the peasants except through their own honesty, their energetic patriotism, their devotion to practical democracy, their faith in the common people and the continuous effort they make to arouse them to action and responsibility."

Mao Tse-tung is the acknowledged political leader of this crusade of youth. Now about fifty, he has been a "Red war lord" in China for twenty years, but he still owns no property and is penniless. The army feeds and clothes him, as it does all partisan fighters. Colonel Carlson describes Gen. Chu Teh, commander in chief of the 18th Group army, as a man who "has the kindness of a Robert E. Lee, the tenacity of a Grant and the humility of a Lincoln." He was one of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's earliest disciples and once was a rich man, but he gave all his wealth to the army, and today owns nothing. Such stories are typical of many of their followers whom I have known, eaten rice with and slept side by side with for days.

### Democracy in Arms

Nobody in the 18th Group army is making money out of the war. Commanders and enlisted men are paid only a few dollars a month for their personal needs. Officers and men live alike, eat the same food, wear the same kind of uniforms, and share their hardships in common with the peasants. It isn't asceticism such as Gandhi practices, and they would all like the richer life. But the problem is to make every dollar and every bowl of rice go as far as possible.

Mutual hatred of the Japanese provides the atmosphere in which these zealots exploit the people's patriotism, but side by side with political reforms have gone economic and social changes. In the case of women, the enforcement of laws like monogamy, freedom of marriage at the age of consent, free education, and suffrage at the age of eighteen, has won a surprising response. There are said to be more than 3,000,000 members of the women's organizations in the partisan areas. Many women have been elected to village and town councils, and large numbers of young girls carry serious political and military responsibilities. The primary-school system operates widely in all the permanent guerrilla bases, and education is free and compulsory. In some places as high as 80 per cent of the younger children of school age are now literate.

Space does not permit any detailed description of the economic fabric which supports these areas; the basic reform is

a drastic reduction in land rent. Taxes are collected mainly in grain, and are kept at a small percentage of those demanded by the Japanese. Consumers, marketing and industrial co-operatives are very widespread. Professor Lindsay reports they number more than 4000 in Shensi and 5000 in Central Hopeh alone.

Unimaginable hardships have accompanied the growth of partisan organization at every step. Though it is true the Japanese have failed to destroy their forces, they have carried out literally thousands of large and small scale punitive expeditions against them. They have looted and burned tens of thousands of homes, raped the womenfolk and slaughtered countless civilians, in a terror aimed to wipe out all thought of resistance. The guerrillas have always found ways to overcome the demoralizing effects of these tactics, but not without sacrifices as bitter as any endured in Russia. It is true the Japanese are now unable to control any village much beyond the range of their garrisons along North China's

"We are the fish, and the people are the waters through which we swim," I was once told by the field commander of the 18th Group army, Gen. Peng Teh-huai. Only by the skillful use of their two main advantages, numbers and space, have his forces won their power. The millions behind them simply increase their mobility.

Very much more could be accomplished and the enemy might be reduced to a state of siege throughout North China, if the 18th Group army were not deprived of all support by Chungking.

In 1939, the Chungking government became alarmed at the rapid growth of partisan activity. Officials told me that such operations were "illegal"; only the Kuomintang had a right to recover lost territory and political power from Japan. In 1940, Chungking's forces attacked the New 4th army and tried to disband it. Probably only the unfavorable effect on public opinion in China, and particularly abroad, prevented the resurgence of a major civil war at that time. A truce was

front in the north and the blockaded areas, questioned a Chungking spokesman about Mme. Sun's statement. When he denied its charges, ten correspondents sent a joint letter to Chiang Kai-shek, asking for permission to visit Yen-an to investigate for themselves. Back came Chiang's answer. Certainly they could go—"when the time comes."

The country's political future is China's problem, and Americans do not want to intervene in her internal affairs. Inevitably, the war has caused us to intervene in support of the Kuomintang, but war may also compel us to reconsider that policy.

Bases in North China will become more and more necessary to us, but it will avail little if we have to back the Kuomintang troops in a civil war against the Communists in order to secure access to them. The Kuomintang once spent ten years at that enterprise and failed; even with the use of our bombers and fighters, they would find their foe far more formidable today than in the past. And no one knows how Soviet Russia, once she turns her eyes eastward, would feel about such a conflict.

### The Road to Japan

If, on the other hand, Chungking be reconciled to the idea of a representative government and re-established co-operation with the other major Chinese party, we might quickly increase the tempo of warfare throughout North China and Manchuria. It is perfectly feasible to fly into the recovered areas large amounts of ammunition and explosives, technical experts to help the partisans wreck Japanese communications, and the means to force the enemy to double or treble his garrisons in China. Even with their present strength, the partisans could hold airfields in Shantung and Kiangsu where our bombers could refuel on shuttle flights to Japan.

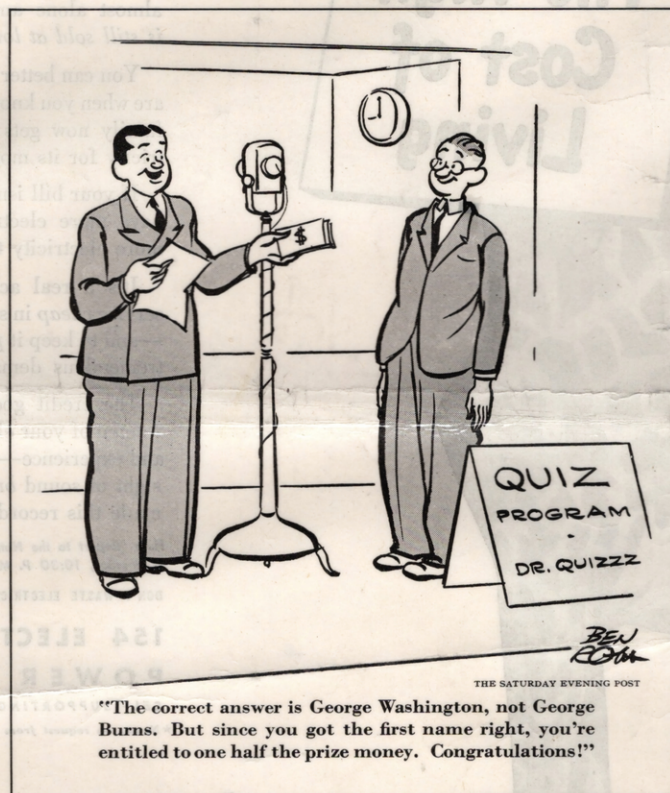
It is not unnatural to suppose that such possibilities were discussed at the Cairo Conference.

According to dispatches at the time, "the conference took cognizance of the fact that internal differences between Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Communist army must be overcome before China could be opened as the primary base for direct attack against Japan itself."

The changing international picture seems increasingly unfavorable to those in China who want to have another try at "annihilating" fellow countrymen whose politics differ from their own. Recent reports indicate that Chungking officials are now seeking a basis of compromise and may, before this appears, begin negotiations with Communist delegates from Yen-an. I do not believe the Generalissimo would now risk his international prestige by assuming responsibility for a major fratricidal conflict. Despite pressure from some of his generals, he has stated that he will solve this problem "purely by political means." He is at bottom a realist, and certainly must have taken careful note of Winston Churchill's declaration of support for Marshal Tito.

"The sanest and safest course for us to follow," said the Prime Minister, "is to judge all parties and factions dispassionately by the test of their readiness and ability to fight the Germans and thus lighten the burden of Allied troops. This is not a time for ideological preferences for one side or the other."

Some think we should have applied a similar test in China long ago, with the change of only one word in the above text—that is, for "Germans" read "Japanese." Meanwhile, the combat efficiency of important anti-Japanese armies is minimized in North China. We remain cut off from millions of useful allies. The Japanese benefit by gaining time and strength.



railways and roads. But it is also true that their fortified points have greatly increased, and can now be seized only at very heavy costs.

Partisan leaders are sometimes disparaged because they do not more often attack large fortified enemy strongholds. Such criticisms are usually based on ignorance of their circumstances. Lack of a munitions industry is a basic weakness which ingenuity and improvisation cannot wholly overcome. Although the main forces of the 8th Route and New 4th armies are relatively well equipped with mortars, machine guns and rifles, they are always short of ammunition and high explosives. Consequently, they must select engagements which can be quickly terminated and promise the capture of more supplies than are expended.

Judged on the basis of the millions they have mobilized, their combat efficiency may seem low, but if it is contrasted with the inactivity of other troops in China sitting in secure bases and receiving important Allied help, then their performance is impressive.

effected, but afterward the 18th Group army was never paid, and hence set up its own revenue system.

Meanwhile Chungking's best-trained troops have been blockading the partisan regions from contact with Free China. These troops include the Generalissimo's 37th and 38th Group armies; thus engaged, they have been kept from participation in war against Japan.

It was against this anomaly that Mme. Sun Yat-sen, the Generalissimo's sister-in-law, and revered widow of the founder of the Kuomintang, protested in a recent statement of extraordinary candor. "Reaction and fascism are strong in China," she warned. "This is proved by the diversion of part of our National army to the blockading of the guerrilla areas, by the oppression of the peasantry, and by the absence of a true labor movement. . . . Some Chinese are preparing to destroy the guerrilla bases in North Shensi."

Foreign correspondents in Chungking, long irritated because they have been prohibited from visiting the fighting