Volume III
From the Jinggangshan to the Establishment of the Jiangxi Soviets
July 1927–December 1930

MAO'S ROAD TO POWER

Revolutionary Writings 1912·1949

Stuart R. Schram, Editor

Nancy J. Hodes, Associate Editor

Volume III
From the Jinggangshan to the Establishment of the Jiangxi Soviets
July 1927–December 1930

MAO'S ROAD TO POWER

Revolutionary Writings 1912–1949

This volume was prepared under the auspices of the John King Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, Harvard University

The project for the translation of Mao Zedong's pre-1949 writings
has been supported by a grant from the National Endowment
for the Humanities, an independent federal agency.

The Cover

Volumes I and II of this edition each display on the cover a sample of Mao's calligraphy for the period in question. It is our wish to follow this precedent throughout the whole series, but we have been unable to locate a single document from Mao's hand for the three and a half years from July 1927 to December 1930. There are several poems from this period which Mao copied out in the 1960s, but such a text would not have constituted an emanation of his personality during the years spent in Jiangxi. Fortunately, we have been able to obtain a copy of a document that Mao wrote in August 1931, and it is a passage from this which appears on the cover of the present volume.

The text in question is that of an order to the First Front Army drafted by Mao in Xingguo *xian*, Jiangxi Province, on August 8, 1931, in the context of Chiang Kaishek's third "Campaign of Encirclement and Annihilation." The portion reproduced on the cover corresponds to the second page of Mao's manuscript. A printed text of the order appears in *Mao Zedong junshi wenji*, Vol. 1, pp. 245-46. The whole of this document will, of course, be translated in Volume IV of our edition.

Volume III
From the Jinggangshan to the Establishment of the Jiangxi Soviets
July 1927–December 1930

MAO'S ROAD TO POWER

Revolutionary Writings 1912·1949

Stuart R. Schram, Editor

Nancy J. Hodes, Associate Editor

An East Gate Book

LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 1995 by M.E. Sharpe

Published 2017 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

An East Gate Book

Translations copyright © 1995 John King Fairbank Center for East Asian Research

Introductory materials copyright © 1995 Stuart R. Schram

Maps copyright © 1995 Stephen C. Averill

Translation of "Xunwu Investigation," on pp. 296–418, copyright © 1990
Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University.

No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Notices
No responsibility is assumed by the publisher for any injury and/or damage to persons or property as a matter of products liability, negligence or otherwise,or from any use of operation of any methods, products, instructions or ideas contained in the material herein.

Practitioners and researchers must always rely on their own experience and knowledge in evaluating and using any information, methods, compounds, or experiments described herein. In using such information or methods they should be mindful of their own safety and the safety of others, including parties for whom they have a professional responsibility.

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

(Revised for vol. 3)

Mao, Tse-tung, 1893–1976.
Mao's road to power.

"East gate book."
Includes bibliographical references and index.
Contents: v. 1. The pre-Marxist period, 1912–1920—
v. 3. From the Jinggangshan to the Establishment of the
Jiangxi Soviets, July 1927–December 1930.
I. Schram, Stuart R.,
II. Title.
DS778.M3A25 1992
951.04 92-26783
ISBN 1-56324-049-1 (v. 1 : acid-free); ISBN 1-56324-457-8 (pbk; acid-free)
ISBN 1-56324-439-X (v. 3 : acid-free)
CIP

ISBN 13: 978-1-56324-439-1 (hbk)

Contents

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

1927

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

1928

Report to the Jiangxi Provincial Party Committee and to the Party Central Committee (May 2)	49
A Report on the Current Status of the Red Army (June 16)	53

Report to the Hunan Provincial Committee by the Special Comittee of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area and the Army Committee of the Fourth Red Army of the Chinese Communist Party (July 4) 55

Letter of the Special Committee of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area to the Hunan Provincial Committee (August) 59

Jinggangshan (Autumn) 61

Draft Resolution of the Second Congress of *Xian* Party Organizations in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area (October 5) 62

Report of the Jinggangshan Front Committee to the Central Committee (November 25) 80

Resolutions of the Sixth Congress of Party Representatives from the Fourth Red Army (December 6) 122

Jinggangshan Land Law (December) 128

1929

Manifesto of the Communist Party (January) 133

Notice Issued by the Fourth Army Headquarters of the Red Army (January) 136

An Official Fund-Raising Letter (February 13) 139

Notice to Merchants and Intellectuals (March 16) 140

A Letter to Our Brother Soldiers Throughout the Country (March 16) 143

Letter from the Fourth Red Army Front Committee to the Central Committee (March 20) 147

A Letter from the Front Committee to the Central Committee (April 5) 153

Order of the Military Department of the Fourth Army (April 10) 162

[Xingguo *Xian*] Land Law (April) 163

Report of Mao Zedong, Secretary of the Front Committee of the Fourth Red Army, to the Central Committee (June 1) 166

Proclamation of the Fourth Red Army Headquarters and Political Department (June) 175

Letter to Lin Biao (June 14) 177

The War between Chiang Kaishek and the Guangxi Warlords (Autumn) 190

Double Ninth Festival (October) 191

Letter to Li Lisan (November 28) 192

To the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (November 28) 194

Draft Resolution of the Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in the Fourth Red Army (December) 195

1930

New Year's Day (January) 233

Letter to Comrade Lin Biao (January 5) 234

Letter from the Fourth Army of the Chinese Red Army (the Red Army of Zhu and Mao) to the Soldiers of the Guomindang Army (January) 247

Land Law (February 7) 256

On Occupying Ji'an and Establishing a Jiangxi Soviet Government (February 14) 261

Conclusion of the Joint Conference and Announcement of the Establishment of the Front Committee (February 16) 268

The Road to Guangchang (February) 272

The Significance of Dividing the Troops to Win over the Popular Masses, and Our Line (March 18) 273

Directive on Lessons to Be Derived from the First Attack on Ganzhou (March 19) 280

Order on Rectifying Military Bearing and Discipline (March 21) 283

Order on the Testing of Officers and Soldiers (March 29) 285

Directive on Enlisting and Educating New Recruits (March 29) 289

Directive on Building up Physical Strength and Improving Shooting Skills (April) 291

Guidelines for the Work of Propaganda Personnel (April 26) 293

Xunwu Investigation (May) 296

Oppose Bookism (May) 419

Guidelines of the Fourth Red Army for Political Work at All Levels (June 5) 427

On the Problem of the Rich Peasants (June) 433

The Problem of Vagabonds (June) 450

Order to the First Route Army of the Red Army to Set Out from Western Fujian and Regroup at Guangchang (June 22) 455

Telegram of the Chinese Revolutionary Military Commission on Attacking Nanchang and Regrouping at Wuhan (June 25) 457

From Tingzhou to Changsha (July) 460

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Change Its Route and Advance on Chongren (July 20) 461

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Set Out from Yongfeng (July 20) 464

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Attack Zhangshu (July 22) 466

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army About All Stipulated Arrangements for Crossing the River (July 25) 468

Order to Seize the Niuhang Railway Station (July 29) 471

Order to Withdraw to Anyi and Fengxin for Rest and Reconsolidation (August 1) 474

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Advance from Fengxin to Yifeng (August 6) 476

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Leave Yifeng and Concentrate Its Forces in Wanzai (August 10) 478

Order to Attack Wenjiashi (August 18) 480

Letter to the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, for Transmission to the Central Committee, on the General Situation with Regard to All New Military Operations of Our Army in Western Jiangxi (August 19) 482

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Advance on Xiaohe and to Continue to Attack Zhangjiafang (August 20) 485

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Leave the Town of Yonghe and Concentrate Its Forces in Guanzhuang (August 24) 487

Letter to the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, for Transmission to the Central Committee (August 24) 488

Order to Advance Toward Changsha (August 24) 490

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Attack Changsha (August 28) 493

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Occupy the Line from Fengshupu and Xinqiao to Luoxiaping (August 28) 495

Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Exterminate the Enemy at Yijiawan and Take Advantage of the Victory to Occupy Changsha (August 29) 496

Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army Regarding Extermination of the Attacking Enemy (August 30) 498

Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army About Mobilizing the Masses to Force the Enemy in the Area Northeast of Changsha to Submit (August 30) 500

Order to Lure the Enemy out of Their Fortifications, Eliminate Them, and March into Changsha on the Heels of Victory (August 31) 501

Land Law (August) 503

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Launch a General Offensive (September 1) 508

Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Surround and Attack Changsha and to Launch a General Offensive (September 1) 510

Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army About Luring the Enemy to Come Out and Attack, and Preparing to Encircle and Destroy Him (September 4) 512

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Concentrate Their Troops and Await the Opportunity to Come Out and Attack the Enemy (September 4) 514

Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army About Luring and Destroying the Enemy Who Is Coming Out by Two Routes to Attack (September 5) 515

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Advance on Tianxinqiao and Exterminate the Enemy in Datuopu and Yijiawan When Opportunity Offers (September 5) 517

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Launch a Forceful Attack on Changsha City (September 10) 519

Instruction on Methods for Capturing the Enemy's Weapons (September 12) 522

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Occupy Places Such as Ping[xiang], You[xian], Li[ling], and Zhu[zhou], and to Await Opportunities (September 12) 524

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Attack and Take Ji'an (September 13) 526

Report to the Central Committee (September 17) 529

Order for the First Army Group of the Red Army to Leave Pingxiang and Advance Toward Ji'an (September 23) 533

Statutes of the Red Army Soldiers' Association (September 25) 536

Order of the First Army Group of the Red Army to Leave Yichun, Go to Futian, and Concentrate Its Forces There (September 29) 542

Order for the First Army Group to Attack Ji'an (October 2) 544

Order for the First Army Group of the Red Army to Launch a General Assault on Ji'an (October 3) 546

A Secret Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Carry Out Household by Household Inspections (October 12) 548

Order to the First Army Group of the Red Army to Move Its Forces to the North and Concentrate Them in Qingjiang (October 13) 550

Letter to the Central Committee (October 14) 552

Letter to the Eastern Hunan Special Committee (October 19) 557

Resolution on the Land Problem of the Joint Conference of the General Front Committee and the Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee (October 19) 559

Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Attack Gaoan (October 19) 570

Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Work between the Yuan River and the Ruizhou River and to Await Opportunities (October 24) 572

The Present Political Situation and the Tasks of the First Front Army and of the Party in Jiangxi (October 26) 574

Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Extend Its Work for Three Days in the Original Location (October 29) 590

The Problem of the Rich Peasants after Land Redistribution (The Situation in Yongxin and Beilu) (October) 592

Xingguo Investigation (October) 594

Order to Lure the Enemy Deep into the Red Area, Wait until They Are Exhausted, and Annihilate Them (November 1) 656

Investigations in Dongtang and Other Places (November 8) 658

Circular of the Front Committee of the First Front Army of the Red Army and of the Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee (November 11) 667

The Situation Regarding Land Redistribution in Western Jiangxi (November 12 and 15) 673

The Mistakes in the Land Struggle in Jiangxi (November 14) 680

The Problem of Dividing up Green Crops and Renting Land (November 15) 684

Investigation in Mukou Village (November 21) 691

Letter to the Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee (November 24) 694

Order of the First Front Army of the Red Army About Concentrating Our Forces at Donggu, Nanlong, and Longgang, and Preparing to Attack the Enemy (November 25) 697

Order to the First Front Army of the Red Army About Going to Huangpi and Xiaobu to Concentrate Our Forces (November 27) 699

Red Letter Order No. 7 of the First Front Army of the Chinese Red Army to Move the Troops Toward Pingtian, Anfu, and Kanchaiguang, so as to Facilitate the Purchase of Provisions (December 14) 702

A Letter of Reply by the General Front Committee (December) 704

Eight Great Conditions for Victory (December 22) 714

An Order to Ambush the Enemy Forces That Are Invading Xiaobu (December 25) 722

Red Letter Order No. 10 of the First Front Army of the Red Army (December 26) 724

Red Letter Order No. 11 of the First Front Army of the Red Army Regarding the Decision to Sweep Away the Enemy of the Left Wing, Zhang Huizan, and the Various Divisions of Xu, Gong, and Luo (December 28) 726

Red Letter Order No. 12 of the First Front Army of the Red Army to Attack the Forces of Zhang Huizan at Longgang (December 29) 729

News of the Victory of the Red Army (Extracts) (December 30) 731

Bibliography 733
Index 737
About the Editors 772

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

Acknowledgments

Major funding for this project has been provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, from which we have received four generous grants, for the periods 1989–1991, 1991–1993, 1993–1995, and 1995–1997. In addition, many individual and corporate donors have contributed substantially toward the cost-sharing element of our budget. These include, in alphabetical order: Mrs. H. Ahmanson; Ambassador Kwang S. Choi; the Dillon Fund; John Guth, on behalf of the Fairbank Center Committee; the Harvard-Yenching Institute; James R. Houghton, the CBS Foundation, the Corning, Inc. Foundation, J.P. Morgan & Co., and the Metropolitan Life Foundation; Dr. Alice Kandell and the Kandell Fund; and James O. Welch, Jr., RJR Nabisco, and the Vanguard Group.

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 the final versions against the Chinese originals. She has also drafted some translations, as has Stuart Schram. In particular, she has prepared the initial drafts of all Mao's poems, which were then revised in collaboration with Stuart Schram. Final responsibility for the accuracy and literary quality of the work as a whole rests with him as editor.

We are particularly grateful to Professor Stephen C. Averill of Michigan State University for the many-sided assistance he has offered us in the revision of this book. During the spring and summer of 1995, when he was in Cambridge as a visiting scholar at M.I.T. and Harvard, he kindly read the entire set of proofs very carefully. Professor Averill made many valuable comments and suggestions from his perspective as a specialist in the period in the history of Chinese Communism covered by this volume, and prepared the two maps. He also brought to our attention important sources published in Jiangxi Province, containing a number of additional texts which have enabled us to expand substantially the coverage of Mao's writings, especially during the latter half of 1930.

Thanks are also due to Mr. Shum Chun of the Yenching Library Rare Books Room, who transcribed for us the record of a Politburo Meeting on July 4, 1927, which constitutes the source for the first text in this volume. The copy of this

document available to us is barely legible. Mr. Shum deciphered virtually all of it and transformed it into a neat computer printout which greatly facilitated our task of translation.

This project was launched with the active participation of Roderick MacFarquhar, Director of the Fairbank Center until June 30, 1992. Without his organizing ability and continuing wholehearted support, it would never have come to fruition. His successors, Professor James L. Watson and Professor Ezra Vogel, have both taken a keen and sympathetic interest in our work.

The general introduction to the series, and the introduction to Volume III, were written by Stuart Schram, who wishes to acknowledge his very great indebtedness to Benjamin Schwartz, a pioneer in the study of Mao Zedong's thought. Professor Schwartz read successive drafts of these two introductions, and made stimulating and thoughtful comments which have greatly improved the final versions. 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 Yatsen.[1] In his youth, Mao profoundly admired all three of these men, though they stood for very different things: Zeng for the empire and the Confucian values which sustained it, Tan for defying tradition and seeking inspiration in the West, Huang for Western-style constitutional democracy.

---

1. Abundant references to all three of these figures are to be found in Mao's writings, especially those of the early period contained in Volume I of this series. See, regarding Zeng, pp. 10, 72, and 131. On Tan, see "Zhang Kundi's Record of Two Talks with Mao Zedong," September 1917, p. 139. On Huang, see "Letter to Miyazaki Tōten," March 1917, pp. 111–12.

Apart from Mao's strong Hunanese patriotism, which inclined him to admire eminent figures from his own province, he undoubtedly saw these three as forceful and effective leaders who, each in his own way, fought to assure the future of China. Any sense that they were contradictory symbols would have been diminished by the fact that from an early age Mao never advocated exclusive reliance on either Chinese or Western values, but repeatedly sought a synthesis of the two. In August 1917, Mao Zedong expressed the view that despite the "antiquated" and otherwise undesirable traits of the Chinese mentality, "Western thought is not necessarily all correct either; very many parts of it should be transformed at the same time as Oriental thought."[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

---

2. Letter of August 1917 to Li Jinxi, Volume 1, p. 132.

3. See his letter of January 21, 1921, to Cai Hesen, Volume 2, pp. 35–36.

understanding of the doctrine shaped his vision of the world. But to the extent that, although he was a communist revolutionary, he always "planted his backside on the body of China,"[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 precapitalist stage of development (whether "Asiatic" or "feudal"). And, by placing the polarity "oppressor/oppressed" at the heart of the revolutionary ideology itself, this approach pointed toward a conception in which landlord oppression, and the oppression of China by the imperialists, were perceived as the two key targets of the struggle.

Mao displayed, in any case, a remarkably acute perception of the realities of Chinese society, and consistently adapted his ideas to those realities, at least during the struggle for power. In the early years after its foundation in 1921, the Chinese Communist Party sought support primarily from the working class in the cities and adopted a strategy based on a "united front" or alliance with Sun Yatsen's Guomindang. Mao threw himself into this enterprise with enthusiasm, serving first as a labor union organizer in Hunan in 1922-1923, and then as a high official within the Guomindang organization in 1923-1924. Soon, however, he moved away from this perspective, and even before urban-based revolution was put down in blood by Chiang 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-

4. Mao Zedong, "Ruhe yanjiu Zhonggong dangshi" (How to study the history of the Chinese Communist Party), lecture of March 1942, published in *Dangshi yanjiu* (Research on Party History), No. 1, 1980, pp. 2–7.

tion, and so he put forward the slogan: "Political power comes out of the barrel of a gun."[5] In the mountain fastness of the Jinggangshan base area in Jiangxi Province, to which he retreated at the end of 1927 with the remnants of his forces, he began to elaborate a comprehensive strategy for rural revolution, combining land reform with the tactics of guerrilla warfare. In this he was aided by Zhu De, a professional soldier who had joined the Chinese Communist Party, and soon became known as the "commander-in-chief." These tactics rapidly achieved a considerable measure of success. The "Chinese Soviet Republic," established in 1931 in a larger and more populous area of Jiangxi, survived for several years, though when Chiang Kaishek finally devised the right strategy and mobilized his crack troops against it, the Communists were defeated and forced to embark in 1934 on the Long March.

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

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

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

---

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

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

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

In 1939-1940, 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 policy of land reform, which had been suspended during the alliance with the Guomindang, and thereby recreated a climate of agrarian revolution. Thus national and social revolution were interwoven in the strategy which ultimately brought final victory in 1949.

In March 1949, Mao declared that though the Chinese revolution had previously taken the path of surrounding the cities from the countryside, henceforth the building of socialism would take place in the orthodox way, with leadership and enlightenment radiating outward from the cities to the countryside. Looking at the twenty-seven years under Mao's leadership after 1949, however, the two most striking developments—the chiliastic hopes of instant plenty which characterized the Great Leap Forward of the late 1950s, and the anxiety about the corrupting effects of material progress, coupled with a nostalgia for "military communism," which underlay the Cultural Revolution—both bore the mark of

rural utopianism. Thus Mao's road to power, though it led to total victory over the Nationalists, also cultivated in Mao himself, and in the Party, attitudes which would subsequently engender great problems.

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

Though the ultimate impact of these recent trends remains uncertain, the problem of how to come to terms with the modern world, while retaining China's own identity, still represents perhaps the greatest challenge facing the Chinese. Mao did not solve it, but he boldly grappled with the political and intellectual challenge of the West as no Chinese ruler before him had done. If Lenin 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, 1927–1930

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

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

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

1. See below, his remarks at the August 7 Emergency Conference.

leaders of both parties. Now he would find himself geographically isolated, and excluded from the major decision-making bodies of the Chinese Communist Party.

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

From the United Front to Armed Struggle in the Countryside

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

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

At about the same time, a group of Communist leaders, with the support of Soviet emissaries, were planning a military insurrection in the city of Nanchang

2. See below, "The Hunan Problem," July 4, 1927.

3. See below, "The Overall Tactics of the Peasant Movement at Present," July 20, 1927.

in northern Jiangxi, if possible with the support or tacit acceptance of General Zhang Fakui and his Second Front Army. This uprising, which took place on August 1, was initially successful, but the insurgents soon found themselves under attack by greatly superior Guomindang forces, and retreated toward Guangdong, under the leadership of He Long, the commander of the Twentieth Army, and Ye Ting, who commanded the Twenty-fourth Division of the Eleventh Army.

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

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

> [W]e used to censure Sun Yatsen for engaging only in a military movement, and we did just the opposite, not undertaking a military movement, but exclusively a mass movement. Both Chiang Kaishek and Tang Shengzhi rose by grasping the gun; we alone did not concern ourselves with this. At present, although we have paid some attention to it, we still have no firm concept about it. The Autumn Harvest Uprising[5] . . . is simply impossible without military force. . . . From now on, we should pay the greatest attention to military affairs. We must know that political power is obtained from the barrel of the gun.[6]

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

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

4. See below, "Declaration of Members of the [Guomindang] Central Committee," August 1, 1927.

5. The uprising in Hunan, scheduled to take place in September, in which Mao was to play a leading role as special commissioner sent to the province in mid-August with a mandate to reorganize the Provincial Party Committee. See below, the text of August 9, 1927, and the notes thereto.

6. See below, Mao's "Remarks on the Report of the Representative of the International at the August 7 Emergency Conference."

> The development of the uprising must lead to the seizure of political power. If you want to seize political power, to try to do it without the support of military forces would be sheer self-deception. Our Party's mistake in the past has been that it neglected military affairs. Now we should concentrate 60 percent of our energies on the military movement. We must carry out the principle of seizing and establishing political power on the barrel of a gun.[7]

At the end of August, replying to criticism from the Central Committee directed against his plan to use the two regiments at his disposal to "shield the development" of the worker-peasant uprising he was organizing, Mao declared bluntly: "When you say that we here are engaging in military adventurism, . . . this truly . . . constitutes a contradictory policy which pays no attention to military affairs, while at the same time calling for an armed uprising of the popular masses." [8] In other words, it is irresponsible to ask the ill-armed and unorganized masses to rise up against disciplined armies and be shot down.

In his August exchanges with the Central Committee, Mao also seized enthusiastically on what proved to be a distorted rumor to the effect that the International[9] had decided to break once and for all with the Guomindang and call for the establishment of soviets in China. The Guomindang banner, he said, had already become "nothing but a black flag," and Communists should raise high the red banner of their own Party.[10] In fact, at that time Moscow was still insisting on the maintenance of nominal collaboration with the ultraleftist rump of the Guomindang, but within a month Stalin finally came to realize that this was an illusion and changed his policy. The difference regarding the role of organized armed forces in the next phase of the revolution did not similarly evaporate.

The Struggle on the Jinggangshan

In a Politburo discussion on August 9, Mao had stated that the military force of one division which he proposed to establish in southern Hunan should be able to occupy five or six xian, but if it were defeated, this force could "go up the mountains."[11] At the end of October 1927, Mao Zedong effectively led the remnants of the forces that had carried out the Autumn Harvest Uprising to what was to become the Jinggangshan base, a remote mountainous area astride the Hunan-Jiangxi border.

---

7. See below, the record of the meeting of August 18, 1927.

8. See below, "Letter from the Hunan Provincial Party Committee," August 30, 1927. It appears from the November 14, 1927, resolution of the Central Committee, discussed below, that this letter was signed by the secretary of the Hunan Provincial Committee, Peng Gongda, but since Mao was said to have constituted the "heart" or "core" (*zhongxin*) of the Provincial Committee, he may well have written, and certainly endorsed, this text.

9. In his August 20, 1927 letter, Mao refers to the Communist International simply as "the International," and that is the usage commonly followed in this volume, though to avoid monotonous repetition the contraction "Comintern" is also used on occasion.

10. See below, "A Letter from Hunan to the Central Committee," August 20, 1927.

11. See below, "Hunan Is Important," August 9, 1927.

In late September 1927 Mao learned that there were two "local armed forces" on the Jinggangshan, under the leadership of Wang Zuo and Yuan Wencai. In 1936, talking to Edgar Snow, Mao characterized these men simply as "two former bandit leaders." According to many recent accounts, they had by this time rallied to the revolutionary cause, and Yuan Wencai had joined the Communist Party as early as 1926. In any case, Mao met with Yuan at the beginning of October and came to an understanding with him, and on October 24, 1927, Mao's army ascended the mountain and was welcomed by Wang Zuo. In November, Zhu De and Chen Yi, who were then in southern Jiangxi, sent Mao's youngest brother Mao Zetan to make contact with him, and by December 1927, regular liaison had been established between the forces of Mao and Zhu.[12]

Unfortunately, no substantial texts are available to us from September 1927 to May 1928, though the *Nianpu* includes brief citations or paraphrases from several speeches and letters of this period. No doubt Mao was too busy struggling for survival during these eight months to spend much time writing down his thoughts. Some sources indicate that he sent reports to the Hunan Provincial Committee and the Central Committee in January and March 1928, but these were apparently not received and may have been lost.[13]

In its "Resolution on Political Discipline" of November 14, 1927, the Central Committee had enumerated various errors in the conduct of the uprising in Hunan, including not only the "military opportunism" denounced in August, but failure to distribute the land to the peasants and to carry out the "policy of massacring the local bullies and bad gentry." All these points were integral parts of the radical and terrorist line adopted at this time by the Central Committee, headed by Qu Qiubai.[14] Though the secretary of the Hunan Committee, Peng

12. Pang Xianzhi (ed.), *Mao Zedong nianpu 1893–1949* (Chronological Biography of Mao Zedong, 1893–1949) (hereafter *Nianpu*) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), Vol. 1, pp. 220–29. Mao's statement of 1936 appears in Edgar Snow, *Red Star over China* (London: Gollancz, 1937), pp. 165–66.

13. Regarding the reports sent in January and March 1928, see the chronology in Gui Yulin, *Jinggangshan geming douzheng shi* (History of the Revolutionary Struggles on the Jinggangshan) (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1986), pp. 269, 271 (hereafter, Gui Yulin, *Jinggangshan*). A recent and detailed study of Mao's career down to 1935 by Ma Yuqing and Zhang Wanlu, *Mao Zedong gemingde daolu* (Mao Zedong's Revolutionary Way) (Xi'an: Shaanxi Renmin chubanshe, 1991) (hereafter, Ma and Zhang, *Mao's Way*), states categorically (p. 192) that the document of May 2, 1928, translated below, was "the first report received directly by the Central Committee from the Jinggangshan base."

14. Qu Qiubai (1899–1935), a native of Jiangsu, studied Russian at Beijing University and went to Moscow as correspondent for the Beijing *Morning News* in October 1920. While in Soviet Russia, he joined the Chinese Communist Party and attended the Third and Fourth Comintern congresses. Returning to China, he occupied important posts both in the Guomindang and in the Communist Party. During the summer of 1926, he lectured at the Peasant Movement Training Institute in Guangzhou while Mao was the principal. Elected to the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party at its Fifth Congress, in May 1927, he became the dominant figure in the Party following the August 7 Emergency Conference. He left for Moscow in April 1928 to attend the Sixth Congress of the Chinese

Gongda, was severely criticized, "the most serious responsibility" for this disobedience was attributed to Mao Zedong, who, as special commissioner in charge of the Autumn Harvest Uprising, had "in fact been the heart of the Hunan Provincial Committee." Both Mao and Peng were dismissed from their positions as alternate members of the Politburo and as members of the Hunan Provincial Committee.[15] Mao learned explicitly of this demotion only in March 1928, though he must have been sufficiently aware of the line currently being pursued by the new Party leadership to realize that he was not acting in accordance with it.

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

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

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

This passage manifestly echoes the criticism of Mao two months earlier, in the resolution of the November 1927 plenum. On the one hand, it is rooted in the

Communist Party, which met in the Soviet capital in June 1928. The Congress removed him from his leading position, but re-elected him to the Politburo.

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

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

17. *Central Committee Documents*, Vol. 4 (1928), p. 57.

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

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

---

18. Ibid., p. 61.

19. Ibid., p. 65. The terms translated "declassed poor" and "deproletarianized vagrant-style" are, respectively, *feijiejihuade pinmin* and *feiwuchanjiejihuade youminshi.*

20. When he came to the base area, Zhou Lu was head of the Military Department of the Southern Hunan Special Committee. For Mao's own brief account of this episode, and of the defeats which resulted when he and his men were led away to southern Hunan by representatives of the Southern Hunan Special Committee, see below, section II of the "Report of the Jinggangshan Front Committee" of November 25, 1928. Zhou Lu was, in the end, the victim of his own initiative; he was captured and executed following the failure of the expedition to southern Hunan which he had promoted. The channels of communication at this time between the Central Committee in Shanghai and Mao in the border area remain somewhat obscure. Probably, in the chaotic situation then obtaining, the Central Committee sought to use all possible avenues for conveying its instructions to the grass roots. The "Letter to the Three Provinces of Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi," March 10, 1928 (*Central Committee Documents* [1928], pp. 159–67), states: "As for the disposition of Mao Zedong's army, this should be agreed between the two special committees [of Eastern Hunan and Southwest Jiangxi]." References to the Southern Hunan Special Committee in a letter of January 20, 1928, to Li Weihan are extremely uncomplimentary; comrades on the committee are said to have "incorrect and unproletarian political tendencies." (See *Central Committee Documents* [1928], pp. 71–75.) Li Weihan (1896–1984), also called Li Hesheng, pseudonym Luo Mai, had been a friend of Mao's during his student days, active in the New People's Study Society. At the August 7 Conference he had been elected to the Politburo and

Apart from the fact that Mao was no longer even a member of this committee, the scope of its activity was limited strictly to military matters, and it had no power over political work in the base area. Mao was thus reduced to the status of an army commander. The first text of 1928 translated here, Mao's letter of May 2, 1928, was written in this essentially military capacity, but it urged very strongly the establishment of a special committee to take overall charge of Party affairs in the border area. The report was forwarded by the Jiangxi Provincial Committee to the Central Committee on May 19, 1928, and presumably reached Shanghai fairly promptly.[21] Meanwhile, the Jiangxi Provincial Committee, dissatisfied at the contradictory information it was receiving, decided to send someone to Ji'an to find out what was actually happening.[22]

On or about April 20, 1928, Mao Zedong and Zhu De met for the first time in Lingxian, in the aftermath of the failed uprising in southern Hunan ordered by Zhou Lu. A few days later, they combined their forces on the Jinggangshan.[23] On May 20, Mao Zedong convened a conference at Maoping in Ninggang *xian*, at which a Special Committee was set up, with Mao as temporary secretary, and Zhu De as a member. Shortly afterward, Mao and his comrades learned that the actions taken at the Maoping conference had been approved retrospectively by the Jiangxi Provincial Committee.[24]

The next message emanating from higher authority reached Mao at the end of

---

made head of the Organization Department, and from then on he was, with Qu Qiubai, one of the two most powerful figures in the Party. In its letter of January 20, the Central Committee invited him to go to Hunan and "rectify" the Southern Hunan Special Committee.

21. This, and other materials emanating, in particular, from the Hunan and Jiangxi Provincial Committees, can be found in three major documentary collections. The earliest of these is *Jinggangshande wuzhuang geju* (The Armed Independent Régime on the Jinggangshan) (Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 1979), pp. 120–121 (hereafter, *The Jinggangshan Régime*). The second is *Jinggangshan geming genjudi shiliao xuanbian* (Selected Historical Materials on the Jinggangshan Revolutionary Base) (Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 1986), pp.29–30 (hereafter, *Jinggangshan Historical Materials*). The second collection has been compiled by the Jiangxi Provincial Archives and should in principle be more accurate, but in some cases details missing from the texts which appear in it can be found in the earlier source. The third collection is *Jinggangshan geming genjudi* (The Revolutionary Base on the Jinggangshan), 2 vols., (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi ziliao chubanshe, 1987) (hereafter *The Jinggangshan Revolutionary Base*).

22. Letter of May 10 and report of May 13 from the Jiangxi Provincial Committee to the Central Committee, *Jinggangshan Historical Materials*, pp. 25–28.

23. *Nianpu*, Vol. 1, pp. 238–39. Much detailed and precise information regarding the origins and characteristics of the various armed forces that joined together on the Jinggangshan to form what came to be called the Fourth Red Army, and the organizational changes that took place during the ensuing two years, can be found in the memoirs of Xiao Ke, *ZhuMao hongjun ceji* (Perspectives on the Zhu-Mao Red Army) (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1993), especially pp. 3–13 (hereafter, Xiao Ke, *The Zhu-Mao Red Army*).

24. The report of Du Xiujing dated June 15, 1928, discussed in the following paragraph, confirms that a letter from the Jiangxi Provincial Committee along these lines had been forwarded by the the Western Jiangxi Special Committee.

May, when an emissary from the Hunan Provincial Committee, Du Xiujing, arrived in the border area.[25] In addition to presenting an oral report, Du read out a letter from the Hunan Provincial Committee stressing that it was "completely wrong to burn whole cities."[26]

A month later, on June 30, 1928, two representatives of the Hunan Provincial Committee arrived on the Jinggangshan almost simultaneously. Mao's account, in his report of July 4, 1928, translated below, says they arrived "at the same time," but in fact they did not travel together. Mao found the letters they brought him blatantly contradictory. Yuan Desheng had left first, with letters dated June 19, 1928, indicating that Mao could continue to build his base on the Jinggangshan.[27] Du Xiujing, for his part, brought a letter and directive dated June 26, 1928, containing substantially different instructions. These documents would have made plain to Mao that the unpalatable orders thus presented to him were largely the work of Du himself. After his visit to Ninggang at the end of May, Du had submitted a rather critical report to the Hunan Provincial Committee.[28] Mao, Du wrote, was doing his best, but was trying to cope with too many things at once. The Provincial Committee in turn acknowledged its debt to "Elder Brother Du" in the second letter of June 19, and the letter of June 26 clearly reflected the opinions expressed in his report.[29] Yuan and/or Du also brought Mao a resolution from the Central Committee regarding work in Hunan.[30]

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

---

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

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

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

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

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

30. See below, Mao's "Report to the Hunan Provincial Committee," July 4, 1928. The document from the Central Committee cannot have been that dated June 4, which reached Mao, according to his November 25 report, only on November 2, 1928. It may have been the letter of March 10, addressed to the Provincial Committees of Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi, which contained a section on Hunan stressing the need to move in the direction of Wuhan. See *Central Committee Documents* (1928), pp. 159–67.

replaced by a Front Committee, of which Mao was appointed secretary. Du Xiujing was, however, to remain as "inspector" (*xunshiyuan*) of the Provincial Committee, "to help the Front Committee in its work." Yang Kaiming (who had accompanied Du to the Jinggangshan) was appointed secretary of the more powerful Special Committee.[31] Thus both the newcomers were set over Mao. Ironically, in view of the repeated criticisms of Mao Zedong for his intimacy with bandits and lumpenproletarians, the former bandit chieftain Yuan Wencai was also to be appointed to the Special Committee and was to be in charge of the Jinggangshan base during the absence of the main force. Yang and Du, the letter concluded, would explain everything face to face; the "former emissary," Yuan Desheng, was to return to the Provincial Committee.

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

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

---

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

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

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

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

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

---

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

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

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

36. See below, the discussion of this change in the Jinggangshan Report of November 25, 1928. Tan Zhenlin (1902–1983), who took his place as secretary of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area Special Committee, was a native of Youxian, Hunan, who had joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1926.

fifteenth in a list of nineteen members. Finally, the Central Committee letter of June 4 reached the Jinggangshan on November 2, 1928, and Mao was able to re-establish the Front Committee, with himself in charge.

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

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

The two most important texts are the resolution of October 5, 1928, and the

37. For a biographical sketch of Zhou Enlai, and a discussion of the role he played from the Sixth Congress until the end of 1930, see below the section of this Introduction entitled: "Toward the Li Lisan Line."

38. Li Lisan (1899–1967), original name Li Longzhi, was a native of Liling, Hunan Province, also known under the aliases of Bai Shan and Li Minran. Li Lisan had met Mao Zedong during his student days, but Mao remarked later to Edgar Snow that their friendship "never developed." After studying at the Changjun Middle School in Changsha, Li went to France in 1919 on the work-study program. There he was an active sponsor of the Socialist Youth League and was deported by the French government in 1921 for related activities. In 1922, Mao Zedong, then in charge of the labor unions in Hunan (see his writings in this capacity in Volume II), sent Li Lisan to Anyuan to organize the workers there. Li played a major role in the May Thirtieth movement of 1925 in Shanghai. In 1926, he lectured on the workers' movement at the Peasant Movement Training Institute while Mao was principal there. He was elected to the Politburo at the Fifth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1927 and was one of the principal organizers of the Nanchang Uprising in August 1927. After a period as Party secretary in Guangdong, he returned to Shanghai at the end of 1928 to work on the Central Committee. For further details, see below, the note to Mao's letter to him, November 28, 1929.

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

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

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

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

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

39. *Central Committee Documents* (1928), pp. 174–77.

tion, in the June letter, that "guerrilla warfare should be extended to an excessively wide area" was casually brushed aside, as one of two minor points in the letter reflecting a lack of understanding of "concrete circumstances" in the base area.

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

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

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

Logically, hostility toward even moderately privileged social strata went together with a tolerant attitude toward those at the bottom of the social scale. Consequently, while disputing the claim of the Hunan Provincial Committee that the whole of his army was made up of vagrants, Mao declared that it was entirely appropriate to have a great many of them, since they were "after all particularly good fighters." The solution, he added, lay in intensifying political training, "so as to effect a qualitative change in these elements."[40]

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

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

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

40. See below, section IVA3 of the November 1928 report. In the *Selected Works* version, both the praise of the *youmin* as "particularly good fighters" and the idea of effecting a "qualitative change" in them have disappeared.

was symbolized by the fact that Qu Qiubai, though he had been removed as secretary general of the Chinese Party, was extremely influential in the discussion of the resolution on the national and colonial question. At the end of the congress, while acknowledging that the previous "adventurist" moods had led to disastrous defeats, it was proclaimed that the present period in China must be "a phase of preparation of mass forces for an upsurge of revolution." And though "permanent revolution" had been repudiated, Lenin's formula of the "growing over" (*pererastanie*) of the democratic revolution into the socialist revolution was adopted, and this process was said to be "inevitable." In other words, the guidelines thus laid down for the new leadership of the Chinese Communist Party encouraged a further drift toward the left, though not necessarily in the way Li Lisan and Zhou Enlai actually went about it. [41]

Toward the Li Lisan Line

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

On December 10, 1928, Peng Dehuai led his Fifth Red Army to Ninggang to join forces with the Fourth Red Army.[42] The resolutions of the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party reached the Jinggangshan at the beginning of January 1929, and on January 4, Mao called a meeting at which they were explained and discussed. At the same time, it was decided that the main force of the Fourth Red Army, led by Mao Zedong and Zhu De, would seek to establish a new base in southwestern Jiangxi, while the two regiments making up the Fifth Army remained on the Jinggangshan under the command of Peng Dehuai. The Bailu Conference of January 4, 1929, marked an important turning point in Mao's rural revolution. As Mao stated frankly in his report of March 20, 1929, his main reason for leaving the Jinggangshan was that he and his comrades "had

41. For a clear and authoritative discussion of the political situation in Moscow in 1928, and of the contrast between the two congresses, see E. H. Carr, *A History of Soviet Russia: Foundations of a Planned Economy 1926–1929*, Vol.3, Part III (London: Macmillan, 1978), especially pp. 856–87 (hereafter, Carr, *Foundations*, Vol. 3-III).

42. Peng Dehuai (1898–1974) was, like Mao, a native of Xiangtan *xian*, Hunan. A former regimental commander in the Guomindang National Revolutionary Army, he joined the Chinese Communist Party in April 1928. In July 1928, he led an uprising at Pingjiang, and created the Fifth Red Army, of which he assumed command.

no way out economically." In other words, the Jinggangshan area was so poor, backward, and isolated that it could not serve as a viable base for further expansion and development of the Red forces. The decision to leave the Jinggangshan was, however, also the result of the blockade imposed by Guomindang forces, and of the pressure of constant enemy attacks. Another assault by the White forces was imminent at the time Mao and Zhu left, and Peng Dehuai may not have been happy at the prospect of staying behind to face it on his own.

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

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

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

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

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

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

44. For the text, see *Central Committee Documents* (1929), pp. 29–37. Extracts in translation can be found in Tony Saich (ed.), *The Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party: Documents and Analysis, 1920–1929* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), Doc. C.23, pp. 471–74 (hereafter Saich, *Rise to Power*).

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

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

"In accordance with the directives of the Sixth Congress, the Central Committee long ago informed you," the letter stated with some asperity, that "you should divide up the Red Army's armed forces into small . . . units, and scatter them in all the villages of the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area, to carry on and deepen the agrarian revolution." Such a policy of avoiding concentration would provide fewer targets for the enemy and "would be advantageous for the provisioning and survival of your troops. But either this directive did not reach your organization, or you did not accept it or put it into practice." Mao had, of course, not received the directive in question.[45] This renewed injunction to divide up his forces was rendered even less palatable because it was accompanied by a brusque order to leave the army and come to Shanghai:

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

45. The reference is manifestly to the directive of September or October 1928 to the Hunan-Jiangxi Border Area Special Committee and the Commander of the Fourth Army, in *Central Committee Documents* (1928), pp. 661–81; the passage on dispersing the Red Army appears on p. 671.

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

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

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

Both Li Lisan and Zhou Enlai were more thoroughly schooled in Marxism than Mao and had devoted more time to the workers' movement. Thus, on grounds of both ideology and experience, they were more inclined to stress the

---

46. See Jin Chongji, *Zhou Enlai zhuan 1898–1949* (Biography of Zhou Enlai, 1898–1949) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, 1989), pp. 192–93 (hereafter, Jin, *Zhou Enlai*).

47. See ibid., p. 192.

48. Quoted in Carr, *Foundations*, Vol. 3-III, p. 867. Zhou Enlai (1898–1976), *zi* Xiangyu, was born in Jiangsu. After graduating from Nankai Middle School in Tianjin in 1917, he studied in Japan for a year and a half, returning to China at the time of the May Fourth Movement. After a year at Nankai University, devoted mainly to work with the student movement, he went to France under the work-study program in November 1920. He joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1922. On his return to China in 1924, he became head of the Political Department of the Huangpu (Whampoa) Military Academy. He was elected to the Central Committee at the Fifth Congress in May 1927. In the reorganization of July 12, 1927, he became a member of the Provisional Standing Committee of the Politburo. At the Sixth Congress in June 1928, he was again elected to the Central Committee.

role of the urban proletariat in the Chinese revolution. This was, of course, also the attitude of Moscow, as documented in a whole series of Comintern directives from the late 1920s and early 1930s. But at the same time, Stalin was impressed with the achievements of the Red Army in China, at a time when victories were scarce on the world scene. As a result, it had been laid down at the two congresses of the summer of 1928 that, while placing primary emphasis on the cities and the working class, the Chinese Communist Party must take full account of the possibilities offered by the struggle in the countryside.

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

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

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

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

49. See Richard C. Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists 1928–1931* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), especially pp. 76–79 (hereafter, Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists*).

> hastening the revolutionary upsurge. The greatest mistake would therefore be to abandon the struggle in the cities and sink into rural guerrilla-ism. But in our opinion, it is also a mistake—if any of our Party members hold such views—to fear the development of the power of the peasants lest it outstrip the workers' leadership and become detrimental to the revolution. For the revolution in semi-colonial China will fail only if the peasant struggle is deprived of the leadership of the workers; it will never suffer just because the peasant struggle develops in such a way as to become more powerful than the workers. The Sixth Congress has pointed out the mistake of neglecting the peasant revolution. . . .

The parenthetical remark about the error of fearing the power of the peasants, "if any of our Party members hold such views," was ironic to the point of provocation; Mao knew very well that many of those in Shanghai did. Most people in Moscow did also, but Mao chose to ignore that fact, and evoke nonetheless, in conclusion, the authority of Moscow, where the Sixth Congress had been held, in support of the importance of what he was doing. By "the leadership of the workers," Mao meant, of course, the leadership of the Party of the proletariat and, more concretely, his own leadership.

As it happened, at the very moment when Mao was composing his letter, the Central Committee in Shanghai was revising its attitude somewhat, in the light of information received about the victories in Jiangxi. On April 4, Zhou Enlai declared, at a meeting to discuss the problem of the Fourth Army, that the instruction to Mao and Zhu to leave the army was "correct in principle," but that account should be taken of current reality. A new letter was therefore sent on April 7, to the effect that if Mao and Zhu "could not come for the time being, the Central Committee would like to see the Front Committee send a capable comrade to discuss the matter."[50]

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

> The general line of the work in the countryside is the struggle of the peasants against the landlord class. At present, the **landlord class is the principal enemy of all the peasants**[51] (including the rich peasants, the middle peasants, the small peasants, and the semi-small peasants), and the party must rally the whole body of the peasants to oppose the oppression and feudal exploitation of the landlords and despotic gentry. . . . On the basis of the overall strategy of opposing the landlords, we must unite with the rich peasants; deliberately to accentuate the struggle against the rich peasants is wrong, for this serves to confuse the principal contradiction between the peasants and the landlord class.

---

50. This letter is not included in *Central Committee Documents*. It is cited in Jin, *Zhou Enlai*, p. 193.

51. Emphasis in the original.

This statement was qualified by the proviso that, when class struggle between the poor peasants and the rich peasants took place, the Party should, of course, stand on the side of the poor peasants.[52] The overall position of the Central Committee toward the rich peasants was, nevertheless, rather indulgent. Mao, as we have seen, took a very different line toward the "intermediate classes" in his report of November 25, 1928. This letter did not reach Mao for some time, but a copy was received in Moscow, where it aroused grave misgivings.

During the first half of 1929, the leftward trend in Stalin's economic policies which had manifested itself in the summer of 1928 took new and harsher forms, culminating in the removal of Bukharin from his position as chairman of the Executive Committee of the International on July 3, 1929. In this context, even the qualified sympathy of the Chinese Communist Party for the rich peasants was totally unacceptable, and on June 7, 1929, the International sent an extremely blunt letter on the peasant question to the Chinese comrades. Singling out for criticism the passage cited above, the International declared that "some leading comrades" were "still permitting serious errors in decisions on the peasant question." These errors, the letter said, dated back to the Sixth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (i.e., before Stalin's turn to the left at the Sixth Comintern Congress), when the "kulaks" had been included among the peasantry as allies of the proletariat. This "opportunist interpretation" of Lenin's position was extremely harmful at a time when the "kulak elements" were going over to the side of reaction in China.[53]

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

52. *Central Committee Documents* (1928), p. 680.

53. For the complete text of this letter, see P. Mif (ed.), *Strategiya i Taktika Kominterna v Natsional'no-kolonial'noy Revolyutsii na Primere Kitaya* (The Strategy and Tactics of the Comintern in the National-Colonial Revolution, on the Basis of the Chinese Example) (Moscow: Izdanie Instituta MKh i MP, 1934), pp. 236–44 (hereafter, Mif, *Strategy and Tactics*). A conveniently available English translation, which is somewhat abridged and omits the reference to the directive to Mao, can be found in Jane Degras (ed.), *The Communist International 1919–1943: Documents*, Vol. III, 1929–1943 (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 31–36 (hereafter, Degras, *Communist International*, III).

54. For the text of the circular, see *Central Committee Documents* (1929), pp. 342–57, which also contains (p. 357) a note regarding the change made on August 1. For a translation, see Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz, and John K. Fairbank (eds.), *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952), pp. 166–79 (hereafter, *Documentary History*). A partial translation of the lengthy resolution of the Second Plenum itself appears in Saich, *Rise to Power*, Doc. C.14, pp. 386–400.

This Comintern rebuke, which was a source of embarrassment to Li Lisan, must have brought joy to Mao, for it was entirely in line with his own position and could be seen as strengthening his hand in dealings with the Central Committee. In his Jinggangshan Land Law of December 1928, translated below, he had been obliged to make one concession to the Party leadership, accepting the distribution of land according to labor power (which favored the wealthier elements among the peasantry) as a possible alternative to the equal distribution to every individual, which Mao himself regarded as the only correct principle. In the Xingguo Land Law of April 1929, also translated below, he had made a second concession, replacing the confiscation of all land by the confiscation of public land and that of the landlord class alone. In 1941, when the Xingguo Land Law was first published, Mao added a note stating that this change was "a correction of principle,"[55] as compared to confiscating the land of all the peasants. Nonetheless, this provision, which allowed not only poor peasants but rich peasants to keep their land, cannot have been to his liking. Encouraged by the June letter from Moscow, he soon moved forward, not only to a new land law of February 7, 1930, more in harmony with his own ideas, but to the extremely harsh directive of June 1930 "On the Problem of the Rich Peasants."

Meanwhile, Mao himself suffered something of an eclipse from June to November 1929, when an attack of malaria coincided with a temporary weakening in his political standing.[56] In April and May, the Red Army, as indicated in the brief report of June 1, 1929, translated below, had been fighting, with mixed fortunes, in southern Jiangxi and then in western Fujian. At the same time, disagreements had developed within the Party and the Red Army themselves, and there was considerable tension in the relations between Zhu De and Mao Zedong.

On broad questions such as the importance of base areas, and of military force, the two men were in agreement. Differences had arisen, however, about the control of military operations, the nature of military planning, and the political role of the army. Zhu De did not oppose overall Party leadership, but he thought the Party, and Mao as secretary, were trying to run too many things directly. He agreed that plans were necessary, but in view of the need to cope with the immediate military threat, he thought Mao was too much inclined to spend time devising overall, long-term plans. And while Mao wanted the army to engage in propaganda, as well as in fighting, Zhu De thought fighting was the army's main task. In sum, Zhu De was conscious of the fact that he had much experience of warfare, and Mao, although he was learning fast, did not know so

55. Mao Zedong, *Nongcun diaocha* (Rural Investigations) (Yan'an: 1941), p. 127.

56. His illness has been variously reported in the literature as malaria and tuberculosis. The fact that he was suffering from malaria is confirmed in *Nianpu*, Vol. 1, pp. 281–90, *passim*. His withdrawal because of a mysterious ailment accounts for the well-known incident of the publication of an obituary of Mao Zedong in early 1930 attributing his death to a "a long-standing disease of the lungs." (See *International Press Correspondence* for March 20, 1930.)

much about military strategy. Zhu De's feeling that he should be in charge of strictly military matters was further accentuated by the fact that the troops he had brought with him to the Jinggangshan significantly outnumbered those of Mao and his bandit allies, and by the fact that the Twenty-Eighth Regiment, under Zhu's own command, was the best fighting force in the Red Army.

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

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

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

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

57. Liu Angong (?–1929), was a native of Sichuan, who had spent a period in the Soviet Union studying military affairs. He was killed in combat in October 1929.

58. See Jin Chongji, *Zhu De zhuan* (Biography of Zhu De) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), pp. 175–80 (hereafter, Jin, *Zhu De*), and also *Nianpu*, Vol. 1, pp. 274–77.

by which critics meant the concentration of authority in the Party secretaries and other leading organs of the Party, and above all Mao's own authority.[59]

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

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

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

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

---

59. See below, "A Letter to Lin Biao," June 14, 1929.

60. *Nianpu*, Vol. 1, p. 278.

61. This account of the congress is drawn in the first instance from Xiao Ke, *The Zhu-Mao Red Army*, pp. 88–102. See also *Nianpu*, Vol. 1, p. 281, and *Zhongguo gongchandang huiyi gaiyao* (A Summary Account of Chinese Communist Party Meet-

On July 29, 1929, at an emergency meeting of the Front Committee, Mao agreed that Chen Yi should go to Shanghai, in the role of the "capable comrade" asked for by Zhou Enlai in his letter of April 7 cited above. During the month of August, the Central Committee met several times to discuss the decisions of the June 22 conference, and Mao's letter of June 14 to Lin Biao. A committee of three, consisting of Li Lisan, Zhou Enlai, and Chen Yi, was appointed to draft a directive to the Fourth Army. Zhou Enlai made the final revisions on September 28, and Chen Yi carried the resulting document back to Jiangxi.[62]

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

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

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

---

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

62. *Nianpu*, Vol. 1, pp. 284–86.

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

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

On November 28, Mao sent to the Central Committee a letter formally notifying them of his recovery, and of the fact that he was resuming his functions as secretary of the Front Committee. At the same time, he wrote in a more personal vein to his old friend Li Lisan. The concern he expressed about his family was undoubtedly sincere, even though he had been living for some time with another woman, He Zizhen, who formally "became his revolutionary companion" in June 1928, a year and a half before his wife, Yang Kaihui, was executed in February 1930.[65] How sincere he was in asking for Li's "excellent guidance" is another matter.

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

Meanwhile, a letter from Moscow dated October 26, 1929, which arrived in Shanghai in early December, had altered fundamentally the context in which Li Lisan must elaborate his strategy, in ways which would have a decisive impact on the relationship between Li and Mao. On July 10, 1929, Chinese authorities in the Northeast had taken over the telegraph installations of the Chinese Eastern Railway, closed the Soviet trade delegation in Manchuria, and arrested the Soviet manager of the railway. This action had been taken on the orders of Zhang Xueliang, who in December 1928 had accepted nominal subordination to Chiang Kaishek's Nanjing government, and the matter was pursued aggressively by Chiang. In the end, after a Soviet military offensive on the border in November 1929, the Chinese government was obliged to back down and restore the status quo. Meanwhile, however, Moscow saw the crisis over the Chinese Eastern

64. *Nianpu*, Vol. 1, pp. 289–90.

65. See *Nianpu*, Vol. 1, p. 247. One account, based on the recollections of numerous eyewitnesses, argues the view that Yuan Wencai and Wang Zuo played an important role in pushing Mao into this relationship with He Zizhen, a native of the area, in order to secure his loyalty to the people of the Jinggangshan. See Liu Xiaonong, "Mao Zedong dierci hunyin neiqing" (Inside Information on Mao Zedong's Second Marriage), *Jizhe xie tianxia* (Reporters Write about the World), No. 21, May 1992, pp. 4–11. Whether or not Yuan and Wang actually arranged the match, it seems clear that they supported and encouraged it.

Railway as yet another aggressive imperialist plot against the Soviet Union, and the letter of October 26 was, in effect, a call to the Chinese Communist Party to throw all its weight into the struggle to frustrate this design. In order to encourage them in this, the Comintern suddenly discovered that the "revolutionary wave" in China was beginning to rise. The consequences of this directive were to prove exceedingly far-reaching.[66]

Carrying Out the Li Lisan Line

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

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

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

66. For an abridged translation of this directive, see Degras, *Communist International*, III, pp. 84–89. For a concise account of the Chinese Eastern Railway crisis, see Carr, *Foundations*, Vol. 3-III, pp. 895–910.

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

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

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

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

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

If Circular No. 60 of December 8, 1929, was the first expression of the Central Committee's new orientation, Circular No. 70 of February 26, 1930, formulated that line more systematically. This directive, too, like the February 1929 letter to Mao, was in fact drafted by Zhou Enlai. At a Politburo meeting in Shanghai on February 17, 1930, Zhou declared that the Party's present task, in the light of circumstances such as the continuing struggles of the warlords, was to "create a direct revolutionary situation and seize political power." Thereupon, he was entrusted with the task of drafting Circular No. 70.[68]

68. On Zhou's role, see Jin, *Zhou Enlai*, pp. 209–10. The full text of Circular No. 70 can be found in *Central Committee Documents*, Vol. 6 (1930), pp. 25–35.

This new document called for organizing political strikes of the workers, local insurrections, and uprisings of the soldiers in the White armies, as well as expanding the Red Army, in order to achieve "preliminary victory in one or several provinces." If the Party pursued these policies resolutely, "a direct revolutionary situation in the whole country" could be brought about. Criticizing Zhu and Mao by name for their "persistent attitude of hiding and dispersion," the directive called for urban leadership of insurrections, in order to eliminate all such tendencies rooted in "peasant consciousness and banditism."

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

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

Order No. 1 of the newly established joint Front Committee (of which Mao was the secretary) conjured up even wider vistas. "With the movement of the imperialists to attack the Soviet Union," this document asserts, "a high tide of world revolution will burst out, the high tide of the Chinese revolution will arrive very soon, Chinese soviets will appear as successors to the Russian soviets, and they will become a powerful branch of the world soviets." Here, and in the letter of January 1930 to soldiers of the Guomindang Army, also translated below, the need to make revolution in China in order to defend the "state of the proletariat"

69. See below, the Land Law of February 7, 1930.

70. See *Party Meetings*, p. 104.

71. See Stephen C. Averill, "The Origins of the Futian Incident," (in Tony Saich and Hans van de Ven [eds.], *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution* [Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1995]), p. 92. (Hereafter, Averill, "Futian Incident.")

is strongly underscored. At the same time, this text holds out the prospect of a revolutionary upsurge in the whole country which will "bury the ruling classes completely." Thus, the promotion of a revolutionary high tide was seen not simply as the internationalist duty of the Chinese Communist Party but as an enterprise which would rapidly lead to victory, first in Jiangxi and then in several other provinces.[72]

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

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

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

---

72. See below, the documents of February 14 and 16, 1930. It is confirmed in *Nianpu*, Vol. 1, p. 298, that Mao, as one of three members of the presidium of the Pitou Conference, shared responsibility for the proclamation of February 14. As secretary of the new Front Committee, he must also have endorsed the notice of February 16, whether or not he wrote it himself.

73. Jin, *Zhou Enlai*, pp. 210–13. The immediate reason for sending him was a dispute between the Chinese Communist Party and the "Eastern Bureau" of the Comintern, which served as the agency for transmitting Moscow's orders.

74. For articles illustrating a range of views on this issue, see the contributions to the authoritative inner-Party journal *Dangshi yanjiu* (Research on Party History, hereafter *Party History*) by Lin Yunhui, "Lue lun Mao Zedong tongzhi dui Lisan luxian de renshi he dizhi" (A Brief Account of Comrade Mao Zedong's Understanding of and Resistance to the Lisan Line), *Party History* 4, 1980, pp. 51–59; Tian Yuan, "Zai lun Mao Zedong tongzhi dui Lisan luxian de renshi he dizhi" (More on Comrade Mao Zedong's Understanding of and Resistance to the Lisan Line), *Party History* 1, 1981, pp. 65–71; and Ling Yu, "Mao Zedong tongzhi he Lisan luxian de guanxi taolun zongshu" (A Summary of the Discussion Regarding Comrade Mao Zedong's Relationship to the Lisan Line), *Party History* 3, 1982, pp. 78–80.

Central Committee sent a letter to the Front Committee of the Fourth Army stating that the Red Army was "one of the forces directly contributing to an initial victory in one or several provinces." It was, however, an "extremely erroneous" conservative attitude to assume that this meant (as Mao had said in his letter of April 1929) "taking the whole of Jiangxi in one year." Taking Jiangxi was possible, but only in the context of a nationwide revolutionary upsurge, and only if the Fourth Army overcame its tendencies toward dispersion and recruited the broad masses to form a truly powerful Red Army. The immediate destination should be Jiujiang, which would serve as a guarantee of victory in Wuhan. Finally, Mao was told that he absolutely must obey the order to come to Shanghai for a conference of delegates from the soviet areas which the Central Committee would soon hold.[75]

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

The political resolution adopted on this occasion repeated the view that, while the Red Army could help achieve victory in one or several provinces, such a prospect was inseparable from a nationwide revolutionary upsurge. To imagine that the soviet areas could preserve their conquests over a prolonged period of time

75. For the text of this letter, see *Central Committee Documents* (1930), pp. 57–60.

76. See Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists*, pp. 121–38, especially p. 130.

77. Li Wenlin (1900–1932), a native of Jiangxi, was a graduate of the Huangpu Academy who had participated in the Nanchang Uprising. In 1928, he was sent to reorganize the Party near his home in Jishui *xian*, Jiangxi. Mao encountered him there on the way down from the Jinggangshan in February 1929. On that occasion, Li gave substantial aid to Mao's forces, and the two men established good relations. As late as January 5, 1930, Mao underscored his positive attitude toward Li Wenlin by including him in the list of four exemplars of the "correct" policy of setting up revolutionary bases which appears in the letter of that date to Lin Biao, translated below. Editing his *Selected Works* in 1950, however, Mao removed Li's name from this enumeration, for by the spring of 1930 Mao and Li had come into conflict regarding the control of the revolutionary organizations and of the armed forces in Western Jiangxi. See Yung-fa Ch'en, "The Futian Incident and the Anti-Bolshevik League: The 'Terror' in the CCP Revolution," *Republican China*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, April 1994, pp. 1–51, Averill, "Futian Incident," p. 100, and the discussion below in this Introduction.

without a victory of the revolution in the entire country was "a great mistake."[78]

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

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

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

The June resolution "On the Problem of the Rich Peasants" began by extend-

---

78. Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists*, p. 142, quoting from the Russian-language proceedings of the May conference. (These materials are absent from *Central Committee Documents.*)

79. See, for example, the text of March 1927, "An Example of the Chinese Tenant-Peasant's Life," in Volume II of this edition, pp. 478–83.

80. Gu Bo (1906–1935) was a native of Xunwu in Jiangxi Province. He joined the Chinese Communist Party in December 1925, and participated in the Guangzhou uprising of 1927. In October 1929, he became secretary of the Xunwu Party Committee. In May 1930, he provided considerable assistance to Mao Zedong in conducting the investigation in Xunwu of which the report is translated below. Thereafter, he worked for some time in the First Front Army, and was closely associated with Mao. For a detailed account of his career, see Roger Thompson's monograph: Mao Zedong, *Report from Xunwu* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), especially pp. 9–30 *passim.*

81. On this gathering, see *Nianpu*, Vol. I, pp. 310–11, and also Ma and Zhang, *Mao's Road*, pp. 327–29.

82. Thornton, *The Comintern and Chinese Communists*, p. 145, citing the documents of the conference.

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

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

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

This point is driven home in the text which appears, below, immediately after the Xunwu investigation: "Oppose Bookism." After enunciating at the outset his famous aphorism "Without investigation, there is no right to speak," Mao went on to spell out the obvious implications of this view for his relationship with Li Lisan and others in Shanghai. "Surprisingly," he wrote, "when problems are discussed within the Communist Party, there are also people who say, whenever

---

83. See below, "On the Problem of the Rich Peasants," June 1930.

84. See below, "The Problem of Vagabonds," June 1930. This text was drafted by Deng Zihui, but Mao revised and endorsed it.

they open their mouths, 'Show me where it's written in the book.' " Even Marxist books, he added, though they should be studied, "must be integrated with our actual situation." Plainly this was aimed at those who had learned about Marxism in Moscow, or in Paris, but did *not* know or understand the realities of rural China.

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

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

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

85. The resolution of June 11, 1930, can be found in *Central Committee Documents* (1930), pp. 115–35. For a slightly abridged translation, see *Documentary History*, pp. 184–200.

86. This view has been put forward by Thornton, *The Comintern and Chinese Communists*, p. 157.

87. For the text of the letter dated June 15, 1930, see *Central Committee Documents* (1930), pp. 137–41.

This rude and insulting missive did not, in fact, reach Mao until October.[88] Meanwhile, however, Li Lisan sent an emissary, Tu Zhennong, to inform Mao of the substance of the Central Committee's recent decisions. Tu arrived at the headquarters of Zhu and Mao in Changting on June 21, 1930, and gave a report lasting two days.[89]

In the context created by Li Lisan's order to launch an offensive against the cities, Mao was led to devote a great deal of his time to military matters. This volume contains nearly fifty orders and directives, signed by Zhu and Mao, for the six months from June 22 to December 29. Many of these deal in fine detail with routes and schedules for the movement of various units belonging to the First Army Group,[90] but they also contain Mao's observations on the overall strategy of the revolution. This dimension of his thinking is developed more systematically in nine or ten letters, telegrams, reports, and resolutions dating from the second half of 1930. Taken together, these materials provide a far more concrete and vivid account of Mao's role in the implementation of the Li Lisan Line than has previously been available.

The day after Tu Zhennong came to report on Li's new strategy, Zhu and Mao issued an order stressing that the situation "was opening up a good deal" because of the conflict between Chiang Kaishek and his rivals, so that the First Route Army, "in concert with the masses of workers and peasants," could "seize Jiujiang and Nanchang so as to establish political power in Jiangxi.[91] Three days later, Mao produced a telegram which echoed in fact, with exemplary fervor, all the key points of the Li Lisan line. "The reactionary rule," Mao wrote, "is already headed toward collapse." He confirmed that the First Army Group would advance on Nanchang and regroup at Wuhan with the Second and Third Army Groups. They would "seize victory first of all in the provinces of Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi, in order to push forward the nationwide revolutionary high tide." But at the same time, the telegram called for political strikes by the workers, local uprisings by the peasants, and revolts by the troops of the White armies. It looked forward not only to the complete overthrow of the Guomindang but to the "final decisive battle against the Guomindang warlords and the imperialists," adding that the victory of the Chinese revolution would raise the curtain on the world revolu-

---

88. This fact is stated by Mao himself in the letter of October 14, 1930, to the Central Committee, translated below. It is confirmed by Jin Chongji, *Zhu De*, p. 205.

89. Jin, *Zhu De*, p. 205. For information regarding Tu Zhennong, see the note to the report of September 17, 1930.

90. As explained below, in the "Note on Sources and Conventions," we have placed at the head of this volume two maps showing the area in which these military actions took place. It has not seemed appropriate to annotate all the names of places and individuals which appear in these orders, but the full texts have been translated as background to the writings of a more general character referred to below.

91. See below, "Order to the First Route Army of the Red Army to Set Out from Western Fujian and regroup at Guangchang," June 22, 1930.

tion. "Our red flag," proclaimed Mao, "will fly throughout the entire world."[92]

It might be argued that Mao responded in this way because he had been persuaded by Tu Zhennong's report, or simply because he had no alternative but to obey. In the light of all the available sources, however, it seems more likely that, sharing as he did much of Li Lisan's revolutionary optimism at this time, he saw an opportunity to strengthen his own position by falling in with Li Lisan's strategy, just as Li Lisan was bent on using and controlling him. Though Mao still believed in the fundamental importance of the countryside, and Li stressed rather the leading role of the urban workers, the prospect of an imminent revolutionary conflagration in the whole country appeared to offer wide scope for the simultaneous implementation of both these strategic visions.

What was Moscow's position regarding the issues raised by Li Lisan's new policies? The picture is somewhat obscured by the fact that communications between China and the Soviet Union were poor, so that letters often took several months to reach their destination. As a result, Shanghai and Moscow were frequently responding to positions which had long since been abandoned. (The same, as we have just seen, was true of communications between Mao and the Central Committee.)

To take only one example, the Comintern letter of June 1930 (commonly dated July 23 in Chinese sources because that is when it was received in Shanghai) was drafted in Moscow in May in response to what was known there of the policy adopted by the Chinese Communist Party in February (that laid down in Circular No. 70).[93] In this letter, while noting that an objective revolutionary situation still did not exist throughout the country, because the "waves of the workers' movement and the peasants' movement" had not merged into one, the Comintern predicted that the revolutionary situation would shortly encompass "if not the whole of Chinese territory, then at least the territory of a number of key provinces." Nonetheless, though the Comintern expected the decisive battles in China to take place in the near future, they did not agree with Li Lisan that the time for an offensive had already come. Moscow therefore explicitly refused to sanction Li's decision to order attacks on Wuhan, Changsha, and other cities, and

---

92. See the "Telegram of the Chinese Revolutionary Military Commission on Attacking Nanchang and Regrouping at Wuhan," June 25, 1930, signed by Mao as chairman of the commission, and by all the other principal commanders, including Zhu De, Peng Dehuai, Lin Biao, and Chen Yi.

93. In recent years, these matters have been clarified by the publications of Soviet scholars, based on the Comintern archives. Perhaps the most authoritative of these is the book by A. M. Grigor'ev, *Revolyutsionnoe Dvizhenie v Kitae v 1927–1931 gg.* (The Revolutionary Movement in China in the Years 1927–1931) (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka," 1980) (hereafter, Grigor'ev, *The Revolutionary Movement in China*). Chapter 4 of this work is devoted to the elaboration and implementation of the Li Lisan line. Grigor'ev's argument is summarized in his article "The Comintern and the Revolutionary Movement in China under the Slogan of the Soviets (1927–1931)," in *The Comintern and the East*, ed. R. A. Ulyanovsky (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979), pp. 345–88.

for coordinated uprisings in those places, arguing that both the Red Army and the workers' movement should first be further strengthened.[94]

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

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

Meanwhile, at the end of July, the First Army Group of Zhu and Mao approached Nanchang, as promised in the June 25 telegram. Some of the cadres wanted to attack the city, but Mao Zedong and Zhu De were skeptical about the prospects, and sent Luo Binghui to reconnoiter. Luo reported back that the enemy forces were extremely strong and their positions were well fortified. It was therefore decided to limit the action to taking a railroad station across the river from Nanchang, and shooting off guns to commemorate the third anniversary of the Nanchang uprising on August 1.[95]

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

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

94. See Grigor'ev, "The Comintern and the Revolutionary Movement in China," pp. 369–73. Substantial extracts from the June 1930 directive can be found in Degras, *Communist International*, III, pp. 114–20.

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

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

the First Front Army. A majority of the Front Committee was in favor of the attack, so despite their own growing reservations, Zhu and Mao issued the "Order to Advance Toward Changsha" of August 24, 1930, translated below. On August 31, another order was issued, of which the content is sufficiently indicated by the title: "Order to Lure the Enemy out of Their Fortifications, Destroy Them, and March into Changsha on the Heels of Victory." This was followed on September 10 by yet another order for an assault on Changsha. In carrying it out, the Red Army suffered heavy losses. On September 12, Zhu and Mao finally issued the order to abandon the attack.[97]

Five days later, in a report to the Central Committee, Mao summed up the reasons for the defeat at Changsha, but then went on to put forward once more the objectives of attacking Nanjing, taking Wuhan, and establishing political power in the whole country. The immediate objective was, however, to take Ji'an.[98] Although, as noted above, the attempts to take this small but important city in the spring of 1930 had been unsuccessful, Ji'an seemed on the face of it a reasonable objective. In fact, the direction thus given to the action of the "Zhu-Mao Army" had violent and no doubt unforeseen consequences.

In the wake of the Pitou Conference of February 1930, the Western Jiangxi and the Southern Jiangxi Special Committees had been merged to form the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee. Despite the fact that Mao had played a key role in setting up this organization, the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee soon fell under the control of a faction hostile to Mao and the First Front Army on multiple grounds. Not only were the leading figures, including Li Wenlin, supporters of the Li Lisan line. They were natives of Jiangxi, who resented being taken over by a Hunanese-dominated "guest army." Moreover, many of the leaders of the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee were themselves of elite origins, naturally concerned with the interests of the rich peasants.[99]

The resulting tensions manifested themselves progressively during the last four months of 1930. The rhetoric of the first order announcing the new strategy, issued on September 13, was calculated to dispel any impression that Mao and his comrades were giving up their revolutionary objectives. It called for "destroying . . . reactionary rule in Jiangxi, . . . attacking Nanjing to the right, and securing the seizure of Wuhan to the left, to facilitate . . . the seizure of political power in the whole country." Four days later, in a report of September 17, 1930, to the Central Committee, Mao sounded a soberer note. The attack on Changsha,

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

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

99. Regarding the extremely complex interrelation between ideology, regional and provincial differences, economic interests, and political organizations in Jiangxi at this time, see the previously cited article by Stephen C. Averill, "The Origins of the Futian Incident," pp. 79–115, especially pp. 100–102.

Mao argued, while it had cost the Red Army heavy losses, had "demolished the prestige" of more than thirty Guomindang regiments, and in that sense constituted a great victory.[100]

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

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

Toward a Strategy of Protracted War

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

Among the most interesting of these are his rural investigations. Both while his army was occupying Ji'an and during the retreat from that city, Mao continued the practice of summoning meetings everywhere he went to collect data regarding social and economic conditions which he had inaugurated in May 1930 with the Xunwu investigation. The most important of these exercises in late 1930 was the Xingguo investigation of October 1930. This text, translated below, is only slightly over half as long as that regarding Xunwu. It

100. See below, the translations of these two texts.

101. The full text of this resolution is not currently available. The passages cited here were quoted by Qu Qiubai in an article in *Shi hua* (True Words), no. 2 (December 9, 1930), pp. 3–4. Qu was, of course, seeking to justify himself by criticizing the leftist errors of others, but these extracts are undoubtedly authentic.

contained, however, as Mao noted in his preface, more analysis than did the Xunwu survey regarding the differing attitudes of the various classes toward land reform. This substantial document, and the briefer notes regarding Dongtang, Mukou Village, and other places underscore Mao's continuing commitment to the axiom he had laid down in May 1930: "No investigation, no right to speak."

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

In defending his own policy of equal redistribution on the basis of the number of family members versus the criterion of labor power, Mao Zedong several times attacked the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, which had adopted the latter principle at its Second Plenum of July 1930.[102] The tension between this body and the First Front Army has already been mentioned above. The Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee was to be Mao's adversary in November and December 1930 in one of the most savage inner-Party struggles in which he was ever involved: the so-called Futian Incident.

During the months leading up to this clash, Li Lisan's position in the Party was significantly weakened, but he by no means lost all influence. The Third Plenum of the Central Committee met in Shanghai from September 24 to 28, 1930.[103] Zhou Enlai, who had been sent to Moscow by Li in March 1930 to explain his new line, was sent back to China by the International to participate in this gathering, as was Qu Qiubai, who chaired the meeting. Stalin's intention was that on this occasion Li Lisan should be sternly condemned, but the Plenum was, in fact, largely a whitewash. Li was found guilty only of individual tactical mistakes, but not of a systematic error of "line."

---

102. See, in particular, "The Mistakes in the Land Struggle in Jiangxi," November 14, 1930, translated below.

103. Most earlier studies, including serious monographs such as that of Thornton (*The Comintern and the Chinese Communists*, p. 187), indicate that the meeting took place in Lushan, but it has now been revealed that this statement in the contemporary documents was a deliberate distortion for security reasons.

This development can be understood in part as an effort by the leftists Qu and Zhou to protect their fellow leftist Li Lisan, in order to safeguard their own position vis-à-vis the rightists such as Zhang Guotao and Cai Hesen.[104] It should also be noted, however, that Moscow did not begin denouncing "errors of line" by the Chinese Party until it was learned that Li Lisan was calling for uprisings in Mongolia, and talking about "world revolution." Such a perspective, which implied the involvement of the Soviet Union in a worldwide civil war, was wholly unacceptable to Stalin. The International therefore sent a letter in November utterly condemning the Third Plenum. "The peasant movement," stated the letter, "has far outpaced, in speed and scope, the movement of the industrial workers." When Li Lisan proposed an armed uprising in Wuhan, the letter noted, the Chinese Communist Party had only two hundred members there. To attack the major centers, tightly controlled by imperialism, would only bleed white both the urban working class and the Red Army.[105]

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

Information regarding the Third Plenum reached the First Front Army only in December.[106] In any case, on reading it, Mao could only have concluded that Li Lisan remained a powerful figure whose influence constituted a threat to his policies. Of the Comintern letter of November 16 and Li's subsequent disgrace, Mao presumably knew nothing.

Whatever his understanding of the situation in Moscow and Shanghai, Mao Zedong was also involved, as already noted, in a complex set of relations with those who exercised power in the Party at the local level. The conflict was particularly acute with the Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee and the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, dominated at this time by Li Wenlin. Despite the tensions between them, Mao's General Front Committee and Li Wenlin's

---

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

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

106. *Nianpu*, Vol. 1, p. 317.

Jiangxi Provincial Action Committee held a "Joint Conference" in Luofang from October 25 to November 1, 1930. The "Resolution on the Land Problem" of October 19, 1930, endorsed on this occasion, asserted that the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee was filled with AB Corps elements.[107] (The initials "AB" are commonly thought to stand for "Anti-Bolshevik"; in any case, this body had been formed in 1925–1926 to fight the Communists.)

The Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee had, in fact, waged a major campaign from May to September 1930 against AB Corps infiltration of the Party, in response to prompting from Moscow and the Central Committee. The reference to this phenomenon in the October 19 resolution was thus, in itself, widely acceptable. Indeed, another resolution adopted at the Luofang Joint Conference called for a struggle against the AB Corps in the First Front Army as well.[108] There was, however, disagreement both about the nature of the AB Corps and about the reasons for the excesses committed in the course of the campaign in Southwest Jiangxi.[109]

At the Luofang Conference, Li Wenlin had criticized the principle of "luring the enemy deep," which Mao regarded, together with the strategy of a "protracted war," as one of the two cornerstones of his military thought.[110] In November, Mao therefore judged that the time had come to take forceful action against his opponents in Jiangxi. In the course of the ensuing confused struggles, the real policy differences became intertwined with reciprocal accusations of association with the AB Corps, on the basis of tenuous evidence, or no evidence at all save for confessions under torture. In November 1930, some 4,000 of the 40,000 officers and men in the First Front Army were arrested as AB Corps members, and about half of them were executed.

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

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

---

107. See below, the translation of this resolution.

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

109. See Yung-fa Ch'en, "The Futian Incident and the Anti-Bolshevik League,", pp. 4–10, and also Yu Boliu and Chen Gang, *Mao Zedong zai zhongyang suqu* (Mao Zedong in the Central Soviet Area) (n.p.: Zhongguo shudian, 1993), pp. 166–73.

110. On "luring the enemy deep," see below,"Investigations in Dongtang and Other Places," November 8, 1930. The strategy of a "protracted war" is outlined in Section III of "Eight Great Conditions for Victory," December 22, 1930, translated below, which also discusses "luring the enemy deep."

conflicting accounts.[111] In the aftermath of Li Shaojiu's exactions, Liu Di, a battalion political commisar, turned against him on December 11, seized control in Donggu, made a forced march to Futian and there attacked the prison, releasing some twenty members of the Southwest Jiangxi Action Committee. More than a hundred of Mao's supporters were killed in the course of these events.[112]

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

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

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

---

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

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

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

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

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

Note on Sources and Conventions

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

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

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

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

Sources. Since there is no complete, or nearly complete, Chinese edition of Mao's writings from December 1920 onward, this and all subsequent volumes of our edition must be drawn from a variety of materials.

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

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

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

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

of Mao's writings when they were revised for inclusion in the official edition of his *Selected Works*.

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

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

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

1. The translations that appear here correspond to the earliest available version of the text in question.
2. Words and passages from this original version that have been deleted in the *Xuanji* are printed in italics.
3. Substantive and significant changes in the text, including additions made by Mao, or under his authority, in the 1950s, are shown in the footnotes. The *Mao Zedong ji* indicates meticulously *all* changes, including those that involve only matters of punctuation or style (such as the frequent replacement of the somewhat more literary conjunction *yu* by the more colloquial *he*, both meaning "and.") We have shown in the English version only those changes that appeared to us to have a significant impact on the meaning of the text. Any such judgement is, of course, in some degree subjective. We have sought to err on the side of showing too many variants, rather than too few, even when there was monotonous repetition in the changes, but we have not hesitated to leave out of account variants we regarded as trivial.

In footnotes of this kind, the words that appear *before* the arrow reproduce enough of the original text to identify what has been changed. The words that appear *after* the arrow correspond to what has been added or revised in the *Xuanji*. Because, in the rewriting of the 1950s, sentences and whole passages have often been substantially recast, it would take up far too much space, and make our text unreadable, to show every variant in detail. In some instances, it has been possible to show the new version in the form of complete sentences, but frequently we include only enough of the new wording to make plain the main thrust of the changes.

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

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

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

In most biographical notes dates of birth and death, separated by a hyphen, are given immediately after the name. A blank following the hyphen should, in principle, signify that the person in question is still living. In the case of individuals born in the 1870s and 1880s, this is obviously unlikely, but in many instances even the editors working in Beijing have not been able to ascertain the facts. We have done our best to fill these gaps, but have not always succeeded. Sometimes a Chinese source ends with the word "deceased" (*yigu*), without giving the date of death. Here we have inserted a question mark after the hyphen, and have mentioned the fact in the note. It should not be assumed that all those

born in the 1890s for whom no second date is given are already dead; some of them are in fact very much alive as of 1995.

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

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

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

Similarly, in the case of second or provincial-level, and third or metropolitan-level graduates of the old examination system, we have chosen to use the Chinese terms, respectively *juren* and *jinshi*. The literal translations of "recommended man" and "presented scholar" would hardly have been suitable for expressions which recur constantly in Mao's writings, nor would Western parallels (such as "doctorate" for *jinshi*) have been adequate. We have also preferred *xian* to "county" for the administrative subdivision which constituted the lowest level of the imperial bureaucracy, and still exists in China today. Apart from the Western connotations of "county," there is the problem that *xian* is also often translated "district" (as in the expression "district magistrate"), and "district" itself is ambiguous in the Chinese context. We have also preferred to use the Chinese word *li* rather than to translate "Chinese league" (or simply "league"), or to give the equivalent in miles or kilometers.

Approximately one-third of this entire volume consists of the investigations of local conditions to which Mao attached such importance. The most important of these are the Xunwu investigation of May 1930, reproduced here from Roger Thompson's monograph Mao Zedong, *Report from Xunwu* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), and the Xingguo investigation of October 1930. For obvious reasons, Mao employed in these texts many different units of measurement, which it has seemed on the whole preferable to leave untranslated, in order to avoid ambiguity. Each such unit is explained and defined at the point of its first occurrence. To make it easier to find the relevant footnotes, they have been included in the index, under the Chinese name of the unit in question.

Monetary units are, if possible, the source of even greater confusion than units of weight or volume. Generally speaking, the Chinese term for "dollar," *yuan*, has been left untranslated. It was, however, used in the 1920s and 1930s in two different senses: to designate 1 *yuan* silver coins, and the corresponding banknotes, and to refer to 10-cent or 20-cent silver coins totaling 1 *yuan*. This fractional currency did not enjoy its full face value, but was discounted by varying amounts depending on the time and place. To avoid ambiguity, whole-*yuan* coins or banknotes were commonly referred to as *da yang*, or "big foreign [dollars]," while the smaller coins and notes were called *xiao yang* or "small foreign [dollars]." As in Volume II of this edition, where this problem occurs in Mao's report of May 1926 on propaganda (p. 373 and note 3), we have translated *da yang* as "big foreign dollars." *Xiao yang*, in contexts where Mao explicitly discusses the relation between the two units, is translated "small foreign dollars." Where *yuan* appears without any further indications, it can be assumed that it almost certainly stands for fractional silver currency with a face value of one dollar. More information about monetary units is contained in the notes to the Xunwu and Xingguo investigations. (See also Appendix A to Roger Thompson's *Report from Xunwu*.)

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

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

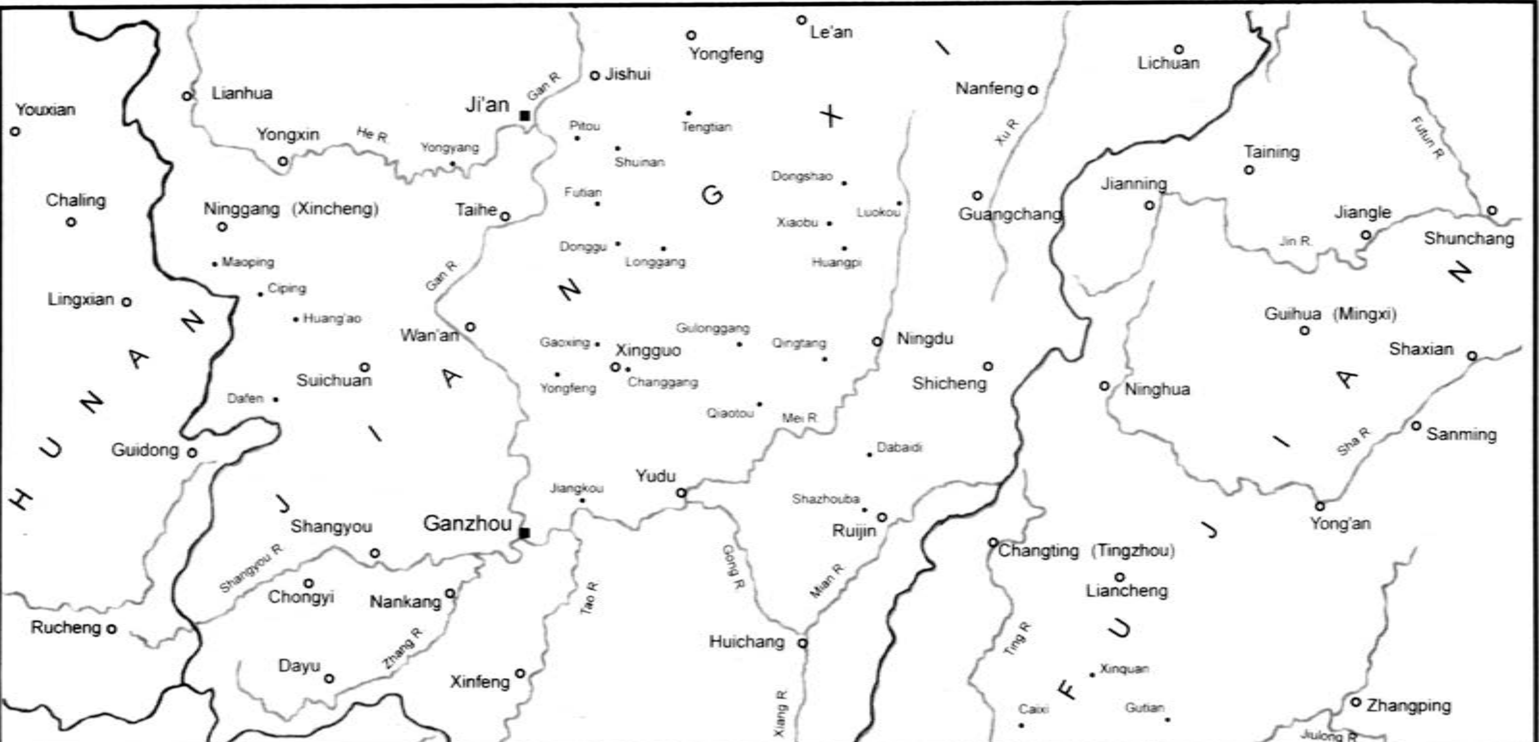
missing characters is small, each one is commonly represented in the printed Chinese text by a hollow square occupying the space which would normally be taken up by a single character. In our English version, each such square has been represented by the symbol [X], so the reader of the translation can 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 even, with the agreement of Roger Thompson, introduced the same practice into the translation of the Xunwu investigation, but we have not done so rigidly. In several instances, Professor Thompson has turned massive blocks of text containing figures and other data into tables which are much easier to follow, and we have retained this more accessible presentation. For the most part, however, the translations in this volume seek to reproduce Mao's original in form as well as in substance.

About the Maps

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

Map. No. 1. South-central China



Map. No. 2. Southern Jiangxi Base Areas

Volume III
From the Jinggangshan to the Establishment of the Jiangxi Soviets
July 1927–December 1930

MAO'S ROAD TO POWER

Revolutionary Writings 1912·1949

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

1927

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

The Hunan Problem

(July 4, 1927)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8. Teli is the *zi* of Zhang Guotao (1897–1979), a native of Jiangxi. After studying at Beijing University, he was elected a member of the Central Committee at the First Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, and thereafter played a major role in the Party. At this time, he was a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, and he remained on the new temporary Standing Committee of the Central Committee after July 12.

Hesen: There has been a clash between He[9] and Tang.[10] The forces of He are extremely isolated, and that being the case, He is the one who is making use of repression in the present incident.

Mao: The Changsha incident[11] is actually a case of He usurping Tang's political power. Tang has left, and he wanted us to join forces with him to restore [his power], but saw that we were not strong. Now he himself has recovered, but he still needs our help. Because we are not strong, Tang launched an attack on He, and tried to win over He's subordinates. Consequently, he is unable to attack Xu[12] immediately. This proves that the strength of the He faction in Hunan is very great. Tang truly needs our assistance, but because we are not strong he does not know where to start. Tang might be determined to get rid of He.

---

9. He Jian (1887–1956), *zi* Yunqiao, *hao* Rongyuan, was a native of Liling in Hunan. In October 1926 he had participated, under the command of Tang Shengzhi, in the capture of Wuchang. In April 1927 he had spoken out against radical land policies, arguing that many of the officers in his army were landlords. The regiment under Xu Kexiang which carried out the massacre in Changsha discussed in the following paragraph was part of his Thirty-fifth Army.

10. For a detailed note on Tang Shengzhi, see Mao's "Hunan Peasant Report" in Volume II, p. 430. As indicated there, Tang (who was commander-in-chief in Wuhan) was regarded by Mao in early 1927 as a "revolutionary military man," and he was elected to the provisional executive committee of the All-China Peasant Association on March 30, 1927. At the end of May, Tang, who was at the front of the Northern Expedition, was called upon to investigate the massacre that had just been carried out by his subordinates, and his own attitude began to change. In a telegram of June 26, published on June 29, he placed the primary blame on the peasants. Five days later, at the time of this meeting, the Communists were still hoping against hope that he would not break with them.

11. The reference is to the events of May 21, 1927, in Changsha and its environs, described below in the note regarding Xu Kexiang.

12. Xu is Xu Kexiang (1890–1967), a Hunanese, who was garrison commander in Changsha. On May 21, 1927, his forces violently repressed the labor unions and peasant associations in what came to be known as the "Horse Day Massacre" (this date being, according to the Chinese cyclical system, a day of the horse). The killing of Communists and peasant activists continued for many days in central Hunan, and the number of victims was very large. A document of June 13, 1927, "Latest Directive of the All-China Peasant Association," translated in Volume II of this edition, pp. 514–17, contains a graphic account of the atrocities committed on this occasion.

Zhong: He is linked to Feng[13] and Chiang.[14] Tang is on the side of the left wing. Wang[15] spoke about how to deal with Tang, and said our method was so careless that wasn't it natural Tang should be upset? Instead of opposing him, can we comfort him? For the sake of opposing Chiang we do not oppose him, but since four people have already been killed, we cannot make a public statement.

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

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

Luo: Get in touch with Tang directly.

---

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

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

15. The reference is to Wang Jingwei (1883–1944), *zi* Jixin, a native of Guangdong. He joined the Tongmenghui in 1905 and was closely associated with Sun Yatsen from that time forward. It was he who drafted the testament which Sun signed on his deathbed in 1925. Though he ended his life as the premier of the Japanese puppet government in Nanjing, he was a leading figure in the Guomindang Left in 1925–1927. It was on his recommendation that Mao became acting head of the Propaganda Department of the Guomindang in 1925–1926. Many of the texts translated in Volume II reflect Mao's positive attitude toward him at that time.

Mao: Zhou[16] and Cao[17] said that they had their own difficulties. He is ferocious and insatiable—if you give an inch he wants a foot, he uses gold to bribe his opponents. Last time Cao said that we were pressing too hard. We think that the He faction is too weak.

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

Shu: He forced Li[18] to dissolve the special Party headquarters in the Second Division of the Eighth Army; He's strength in Wuhan is very great.

Mao: Apart from promoting the dissension which already exists between Tang and He, we should draw Tang to our side, so that Wang [Jingwei], Deng,[19] and Zhang[20] will be able to exert some kind of influence. In addition to the decision by the Thirty-sixth [Army] to oppose Chiang, the Second Front [Army] has decided to oppose Chiang as well, and so has the Eighth Army. Ye Qi's division has links with Kaixin.[21]

Luo: Regarding the consultations between Tang and Feng.

Mao: If Feng's telegram is authentic,[22] Feng is sure to attack Wuhan; then the situation in Wuhan will be like that [X][X][X][X].

---

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

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

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

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

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

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

22. The reference is to Feng's telegram of June 21, 1927, to Wang Jingwei and Tan Yankai, following his meeting with Chiang. It demanded that Borodin be immediately sent back to the Soviet Union, and that the leadership of the Nanjing government be accepted.