

Revolutionary Theses, Social Reality, and the Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution

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Abstract: The Chinese revolutions were the standard-bearers of the world revolution that influenced many independence fighters in colonized countries. Feudalism, militarism and imperialism were the main 'enemies' to the masses that trapped them in the various social inequities of poverty, exploitation and subjugation. Self-worth and national pride were the drivers of the Chinese Revolution as they embedded Chinese nationalism within Marx-Lenin's revolutionary strategy. However, the formation, organization and revolutionary struggle of the Chinese Communist Party was defined and controlled by the Communist International (Comintern) and Stalin that placed them in a straitjacket beyond the border of the Chinese society. A two-stage revolutionary strategy was to be applied in China where the infant CCP must work with Kuomintang (KMT) to gain national liberation of China from imperialism, militarism and feudalism under the leadership of Dr Sun Yat-sen to Chiang Kai-shek. However, defining the changing society in China from afar blinded Stalin interpretation of Marx-Lenin theses as a revolution from below was triggered by the peasant uprisings and KMT's voices are national revolution but in practice is reactionary. KMT's voices of revolutionary vigour are to obtain Russian aid and military support but in realpolitik, it massacres the peasants and the labourers who rebel and jeopardies their militarist-capitalist-imperialist agenda. Students of contemporary societal and political change could learn from the Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution, where the body of knowledge applied was socially blinded to the changing social reality of the locality.

Abstrak: Revolusi Cina adalah pembawa standar revolusi dunia yang mempengaruhi banyak pejuang kemerdekaan di negara-negara terjajah. Feodalisme, militerisme, dan imperialisme adalah 'musuh' utama massa yang menjebak mereka dalam berbagai ketidakadilan sosial berupa kemiskinan, eksploitasi dan penaklukan. Hal ini mendorong terjadinya revolusi. Harga diri dan kebanggaan nasional adalah pendorong Revolusi Cina karena mereka menanamkan nasionalisme Cina dalam strategi revolusioner Marx-Lenin. Namun, pembentukan, organisasi dan perjuangan revolusioner Partai Komunis Tiongkok ditentukan dan dikendalikan oleh Komunis Internasional (Komintern) dan Stalin yang menempatkan mereka dalam jaket pengekang di luar batas masyarakat Tiongkok. Strategi revolusioner dua tahap akan diterapkan di Tiongkok di mana PKC yang masih bayi harus bekerja dengan Kuomintang (KMT) untuk mendapatkan pembebasan nasional Tiongkok dari imperialisme, militerisme, dan feodalisme di bawah kepemimpinan Dr Sun Yat-sen ke Chiang Kai-shek. Namun, mendefinisikan masyarakat yang berubah di Cina dari interpretasi Stalin yang membutakan atas tesis Marx-Lenin sebagai revolusi dari bawah dipicu oleh pemberontakan petani dan suara KMT adalah revolusi nasional tetapi dalam praktiknya adalah reaksioner. Suara kekuatan revolusioner KMT adalah untuk mendapatkan bantuan dan dukungan militer Rusia tetapi dalam politik nyata, KMT membantai para petani dan buruh yang memberontak dan membahayakan agenda militeris-kapitalis-imperialis mereka. Mahasiswa perubahan sosial dan politik kontemporer dapat belajar dari Tragedi Revolusi Cina, di mana tubuh pengetahuan yang diterapkan secara sosial dibutakan oleh realitas sosial yang berubah dari lokalitas.

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INTRODUCTION

This article attempts to highlight and to analyse the emergence, growth and the near annihilation of the Chinese communist movement from 1921 to 1927 as a historical case study to understand the changing political alignments, regime change and collapse of government. The tragedy of the Chinese revolution represents a classic case of defining realities, in the face of contradictory social forces, to suit the Marxist revolutionary theory interpreted with agenda beyond the nation.

To understand the tragedy of Chinese Revolution as a historical case study of Marx's and Lenin's theory of revolution as it relates to the Chinese situation, the development of the CCP, their alliance with the KMT and the betrayal they faced in 1927-28 will have everlasting lessons to be learned by contemporary student of politics interested in regime change.

Marx's vision of world revolution was basically Eurocentric in orientation. The European industrialized nations were regarded to be the centers of world revolution, and their proletariats the leading force in freeing the world from the evils of capitalism. Thus, Marx was quoted to have declared that "...the only salvation for the peoples of the East lay in Europeanization" (d' Encausse and Schram 1969, p. 4). Thus, Marx views that the Indians may possess high human qualities, a capacity to play a vital role in world revolution and to develop in turn a dynamic civilization but he stressed that such a realization could be foreseen only on the condition that they be Europeanized. Asian civilization was regarded as inferior, since individual initiatives played no role, and every aspect of the economic and political activities were stifled by oriental despotism. Thus, Marx was to view British colonialism in India as fulfilling a double mission: "...one destructive, the other regenerating-the annihilation of old Asiatic Society, and the laying of the material foundations of Western Society (capitalism)" (Marx and Engels 1969, p. 117). However, Marx observing the progress of the Taiping Rebellion in China, he wrote that the convulsions in the non-European part of the world capitalist system could react back on Europe itself, and even provoke revolution there (Marx and Engels 1969, p. 119). It was with such certainty that he stated that the next uprising of the people of Europe might depend more on what was then going on in the Chinese celestial empire than on any other political causes that existed then. Thus, he stressed the need to apply the revolutionary lever in Ireland, for the proletariat in Britain to free themselves from capitalism (Marx 1969, p.

120).

Lenin adapted Marx's works to suit the revolutionary situation of the backward countries. He also held the view that the vanguard of world revolution principally lay in the hands of the proletariats of the advanced countries. The essence of Lenin's theory of revolution was 'politics in command'. Politics he regarded as the concentrated expression of economics. Given that politics had the priority, socialist consciousness as an element in the revolutionary process could be imported from the outside to aid the class struggle of the proletariat. (d' Encausse and Schram 1969, p. 18). Of significance to China is Lenin's articulation of Marx's thought on giving priority to revolutionary action in the colonies rather than to the mother countries and, especially the need to support nationalist movements in attaining world revolution. Two crucial issues dictated his view of the revolutionary strategy in the East, namely, the elimination of feudalism and the fight against imperialism. Using a historical perspective, Lenin saw the framework of the independent nation-state as permitting the free development of a capitalist economy to replace feudalism, thus opening the way for further changes. The creation of a nation-state in the colony was also regarded as a fight from the rear against imperialists' threat to Russia (Lenin 1969, p. 156). Consequently, the liberation of the colony would help world revolution immensely, for it would clear the way for Asian bourgeoisie to move toward capitalism and put an end to the labor-aristocratic mentality of the Western proletariat, opening their own path for socialism. With these two goals in mind, Lenin concluded that "a harmony of interests prevailed not only among the workers of the whole world but also between the workers and the bourgeois nationalists of the subject East" (Brandt 1958, p. 2). However, Lenin revolutionary strategy of joining nationalist bourgeois-democratic movement in the backward countries that diluted class struggle was questioned by Trotsky, Roy and Rosa Luxemburg (North and Eudin 1968, p. 6). In appeasing the opposition to his revolutionary strategy Lenin (1969, pp. 170-182) at the Congress of Baku in 1920 dampened the above fear by saying that to collaborate with the bourgeois-nationalists did not mean that the communists must abandon class struggle or allow their hands to be tied in future. Lenin also demanded a resolute struggle against pseudo-communist revolutionary liberation movements which put on communist colouring (Lenin 1969, p. 154). On the issue of organizing workers' and peasants' soviets Lenin concurred with Roy that when the soviet was estab-

lished in a backward country, the latter could avoid the capitalist stage of development and move directly to socialism. Unlike Trotsky, who consistently emphasized the proletarian hegemony of soviet power, Lenin and Roy had a conception of the soviet that would not be necessarily pure' proletarian. It might include peasants and could be applied not only in a mainly proletarian majority situation, but also in semi-feudal and feudal situations (quoted in d' Encausse and Schram 1969, p. 28). However, like Marx, Lenin emphasized that a non-capitalist path of socialist transition could be realized only if the victorious proletariats of the West gave their supports to the revolutionary movement in the backward countries.

As a disciple of Marx, Lenin had been able to mediate and adapt Marx's theory of world revolution to that of the backward countries. But to understand the tragedy of the Chinese revolution of 1927-28, Lenin's theoretical framework only provides us with a clue, for in 1924 Lenin died and the Comintern plus the Communist Party of the Soviet Union fell into Stalin's hands. It was Stalin's interpretation of Marxism-Leninism that accounted for the complication faced by the communists in China. Stalin had been exploiting the theoretical framework of Marxism-Leninism, not only to spread world revolution in China but also to preserve Russian interests and to consolidate his own power.

METHOD

This article employs historical studies framework. In such an approach historical data based on historical documents published by the various actors themselves or quoted by other scholars were relied on to organize the chronological events taking place. These historical events were analysed but within a sociological imagination as the analytical tool. Thus, history was combined with the needs to study the social structure and the biography of the actor, family and community involved in explaining the fluidity of the society (C.W. Mills 1959). Class theory of Marx-Lenin Revolutionary Strategy (d' Encausse and Schram 1969) and the structure of social action (Parson 1937) were used as the theoretical frameworks in understanding the contestation of classes and agencies involved that contributed to the revolutionary paths and the challenges faced by the Chinese Communist Party in 1927.

THE FORMATION OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

Feudalism, imperialism and natural catastrophe were the three main agents of destruction in 19th

China which resulted in the creation of mass pauperization, a large floating population and migrating overseas. Yet, it was the cumulative effects of these destructive agents that saw the awakening of the revolutionary potential of the Chinese people.

Mass pauperization and a large floating population in China had resulted in the growth of sporadic revolts, the most serious being the Taiping Rebellion of 1850. In the traditional course of events, these revolts would have confirmed the exhaustion of Heaven's mandate to the ruling dynasty and provided the justification for the rise of a new reigning house. This pattern of dynastic change was, however, no longer applicable to 19th and 20th century China. This was because the Chinese ruling class could find resources to renew its strength by participating directly or indirectly in the profits of the foreign trade to combat the agrarian uprisings which they were facing. The superior force and material advantages of the foreign imperialists had adverse effects for the Chinese ruling class, too. They blocked the channels of independent, indigenous capitalist development and transformed them into a class of brokers, moneylenders, and speculators, with their interests tied directly to foreign needs. It is no exaggeration to say that the upper stratum of Chinese feudal society was battered into submission and adapted accordingly to suit the schemes of the foreign imperialists. It is a well-known observation that once entrenched, Western imperialism would tend toward defending itself by supporting all that was archaic, conservative and backward in the society (Isaacs 1961, p. 10).

An analysis of the economy of China would highlight the prevalence of an extreme form of mass pauperization. Studies in the 1920's showed that in Northern China, 65.2% of the population held 25.9% of the land in parcels less than 7 mow, which is a fraction above an acre. The inequality of land ownership can be observed where 43% of the land was controlled by the landlord and the rich peasants who comprised only 11.7% of the farming population, while the remainder belonged to the middle peasants (Isaacs 1961, p. 26). Data on inequality of land ownership repeat itself in the provinces of Kwangtung, worse in the Yangtze Valley and in Chekiang (Isaacs 1961, p. 26). The peasants had to surrender 40% to 70% of his crop to the landlord. Besides, the rates of interest were never lower than 30% of his crop. Sometimes it reached 80% -not to mention the feudal practice of giving gifts and free labour to the landlords. Under such conditions, it could be concluded that the Chinese peasants were little better off than bonded slaves. Clearly, the so-

cial system took away from them the fruits of their unending toil, including the land, giving them nothing in return except misery.

China was basically rural in nature in 1920's where only 6% of the total population of 450 million lived in cities of more than 50,000 people, while another 6% in towns of 10,000-50,000 (Harrison 1974, p. 9). In 1913 there were 660,000 full-time factory workers and in 1919 the figure rose to a million; this excluded the 2 million in mining, utilities and construction, and the 10-20 million in transportation and handicraft. It was also estimated that 5 million farmers worked on a part-time basis to supplement their insufficient income from the land. With only a small fraction of the total population forming the industrial proletariat class, it is not surprising to note that there were only 152 strikes prior to 1919. In terms of foreign control, China did not fare any better in the 1920's. The following economic activities where half of the cotton industry, one-third of the railway rights, more than half of the shipping industry and four-fifths of foreign and coastal trade were under foreign control. It was estimated that foreign investment in China totaled US\$3 billion from 1902 to 1914. It is, therefore, not difficult to understand how China had an adverse trade balance of US\$1.5 billion from 1912 to 1924 (Isaacs 1961, p. 8).

The cumulative effects of the above conditions led to the awakening of the Chinese people to the social ills of dynastic rule and imperialism. This was manifested by such incidents as the 100 Days Reform of 1898 and the Boxer Uprising of 1900, which culminated in the formation of a Republic in China by Sun Yat Sen in 1912. However, these proto-type revolutionary movements did not alter the basis of Chinese society in any fundamental ways they were basically representatives of the Chinese privileged classes. This obviously rendered limitations to the revolution undertaken (Bianco 1971, p. 7).

However, the possible solution to the social problems of China did not remain pessimistic indefinitely. The May Fourth Movement in 1919, which led to the birth of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, opened an alternative solution to the Chinese situation. The May Fourth Movement (MFM) emerged as an opposition to the Paris Peace Conference, which transferred Shantung from the control of Germany to that of Japan. This opposition sparked off student protests that resulted in cultural renewal and revolution by "...young men's passion to impose young men's values on society" (Bianco 1971, p. 36). As such, it attacked the

ideological mainstay of a conservative and authoritarian order, drawing the country's different social classes together in a joint effort under vague and general concepts like democracy, science, humanitarianism, liberalism and reason (Bianco 1971, p. 45).

In 1919, about fifty students who had neither any roots in social democratic thought nor experience in political work gathered to form Marxist study groups and socialist societies in Peking and Shanghai. This was followed by the founding of the Chinese Socialist Youth Corps by Chen Tu-Hsu in 1920. These groups were composed of a motley crowd of malcontents, ranging from anarchists to anti-militarists and anti-Confucianists (Brandt 1958, p. 21). However, their leaders managed to organize a communist party in China in 1920. The Comintern dispatched a Korean comrade, named Kim Sen, but failed as Chen Tu-Hsu opposed on the grounds that "a communist party made up of such elements would certainly collapse" (Brandt 1958, p. 21). Chen Tu-Hsu had to dissolve and reform the Socialist Youth Corps in May 1921, as these groups were becoming less and less socialist. Similarly, the First Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in July 1921, still harboured democratic socialists and anarchists among its sixty to seventy members. However, the Congress adopted instead a resolution declaring that the new party should stand up on behalf of the proletariat and should establish no relationship with other parties or groups (d' Encausse and Schram 1969, p. 51). Despite this ruling, Henk Sneevlit, or Maring, Secretary of the Commission on the National and Colonial Questions and an executive member of the Comintern succeeded in urging the CCP to join the Communist International. This action was to have far-reaching consequences for the Chinese people, "... for it not only aligned the CCP with the International Communist Movement but also afforded the Kremlin a fresh passage of entry into China" (Bing 1971, p. 681). With the majority having decided to opt for the communist line of undertaking societal change in China, the struggle with the democratic and anarchist groups came to an end (Brandt 1958, p. 24).

This swift and total triumph of Marxism in China could not be understood only in terms of the interacting pressures of imperialism and the overpowering social ills which faced the country, but also the Chinese absorption of nationalism into Marxism, for Marxism proved itself to be a most effective system for attacking social iniquities as well as for restoring a national pride that had been

humiliated for decades. As a philosophy of history, Marxism thus allowed the Chinese to rehabilitate their national heritage which had been condemned in toto (Bianco 1971, p. 51). The formation of the CCP was welcomed with joy by the Chinese communists and the Chinese masses who were ignorant then of the great sacrifice they had to make in the years ahead, for the formation of the CCP necessarily tied the revolutionary movement to China, but also to Russia, which was to have an overpowering influence on the direction in which this infant movement would develop.

THE FORMING OF A UNITED FRONT POLICY BETWEEN THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE KUOMINTANG

The period from 1921 to 1924 marked the establishment of the CCP and the reorganization of the KMT and is of very great significance to the understanding of the root to the tragedy of the Chinese revolution. It saw the attempt by the communists to implement Lenin's revolutionary strategy in semi-colonial and colonial countries, as well as the gradual perversion of the theses to protect Russian interests in strengthening China. It is here that we can observe how the newly formed CCP's resolution to carry out revolution in China as a class struggle was being eroded through the alliance with Sun Yat-sen's KMT into a bloc from without to a bloc from within.

This political alliance was done under the directives of Stalin and his revolutionary strategists in Moscow and China. Among the revolutionary strategists was Sneevlit who had played a great role in Indonesia in persuading the 'Sarekat Islam' and the Communist Party of Indonesia to practice Lenin's united-front policy. Sneevlit came to China on June 3, 1921 where he contacted not only Li Ta-chao and Chen Tu-hsu of the CCP, but also Sun Yat-sen of the KMT that these two groups would cooperate in unifying China to eliminate feudalism and imperialism. However, in the First Congress of the CCP (July 1921) and the First Hangchow Plenum of the Central Executive Committee of the CCP (August 29, 1922) continuously opposed Sneevlit's proposal to form a united front with the KMT. Sneevlit argued that the CCP should enter the KMT as individuals to take advantage of the loose structure of the KMT's organization to seize control of it from within and, thus, to develop their own propaganda and contact with the masses. The CCP opposed the proposal because they maintained that a party could represent only one class and that, if class lines between the bourgeoisie and the prole-

tariat were blurred in a strategy of bloc-from-within, classes will become mixed up and prevent the execution of an independent policy (Harrison 1972, p. 48). Sneevlit presented a report on the Chinese situation to Comintern on July 12, 1922, where he reiterated his stand on the need to carry out a united-front tactic between the CCP and the KMT as the 'real population' of China was basically peasants, who were completely indifferent and had yet no political importance. Class struggle, as had been the case with the Indonesian peasants, did not exist for the Chinese peasantry (Sneevlit as quoted in Bing 1971, p. 687). He asserted that the KMT was not a party of the bourgeoisie but a bloc of various classes of intellectuals, overseas Chinese capitalists, soldiers and workers (Bing 1971, pp. 685-687). On July 18, 1922, the Comintern formally decided to implement Sneevlit's recommendation on China, stressing that the Chinese communists would not have much of a future if they did not enter the KMT.

By the Second Congress of the CCP in July 1922, "The CCP takes the initiative in calling a conference, to be participated in by the revolutionary elements of the KMT and revolutionary socialists, to discuss the question of creating a united front for the struggle against warlords of the feudal type and against all relics of feudalism. This struggle along a broad united front is a war to liberate the Chinese people from dual yokes -the yoke of foreigners and the yoke of powerful militarists in our country -a war which is just as urgently needed as it is inevitable" (Barndt et al 1952, p. 63). However, being cautious, CCP still called only for a united front of bloc-from-without to be formed by the revolutionary elements of the KMT and Chinese socialists, and not solely with the KMT as a party (Peng 1976, p. 36).

Initial opposition to Sneevlit's proposal not only come from the CCP, but also came from Sun Yat-sen (Brandt 1958, p. 31). It was when historical circumstances were unfavorable to his position that Sun Yat-sen turned to the Russians, who had been courting him to form an alliance with the CCP. The first of the immediate unfavorable historical circumstances that Sun was facing in 1922 was his disappointment with the decision of the Washington Peace Conference of 1921-22 to pursue a policy of freeing China from the Japanese policy of an independent, violent encroachment on China, only to leave her a victim to the cooperative, slow encroachment by all the imperialist countries. Secondly, his appeals to the Western nations to give financial assistance and develop China were re-

buffed. Finally, when he was ousted from Canton for the third time in June 1922 by the Canton warlords, he resorted to an alliance with Russia and the CCP in the hope of not only to "... win Soviet aid but also to profit from the energies of some communists ... by admitting them into the KMT as individuals" (Harrison 1972, p. 48). The Comintern also observed that Sun Yat-sen had been appearing before the students since the May Fourth Movement of 1919, giving verbal support to the Canton Mechanics' Union Strike of 1920 and the Hong Kong Strike of 1922 in which the workers were successful in securing their demands from the British (Bing 1971, p. 682). Under the direct pressure of these strikes that Sun Yat-sen's Kwangtung government revised the penal code to legalize union organization, clearing the path for further labor movement (Isaacs 1961, p. 65). These revolutionary manifestation in Sun Yat-sen impressed the Russian by butchering the Peking-Hankow Railway workers on February 7, 1923. This put an end to the Ikrutsk line of an alliance with Wu, for the latter turned out to be the stronghold of British imperialism (Brandt 1958, p. 25). On January 10, 1923, Sneevlit reports of the latest situation in China led the Comintern to order the Chinese communists to remain within the KMT. On January 12, Zinoviev presented to the Comintern the resolutions on CCP-KMT collaboration, which were that "... the only serious national revolutionary group in China is the KMT which is based partly on the liberal-democratic bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, partly on the intelligentsia and workers.... The independent workers' movement in the country is still weak, (thus) the central task for China is the national revolution against the imperialists and their feudal agents within the country and under such condition it is expedient for members of the CCP to remain in the KMT and worked with them (Degras in Trotsky 1976, p. 38).

Following these developments Stalin sent A.A. Joffe to meet Sun Yat-sen, during which meeting the latter cemented the Three Great Policies of Alliance with Soviet Union, with the Communists, and with the masses against imperialists and warlords. This meeting was of great significance, for it concluded that China had to go through a two-stage revolution rather than skipping it and denied the possibility of class struggle (Isaacs 1961, p. 63). These perverted revolutionary theses could be supported by quoting the 'Joint Manifesto of Sun Yat-sen and A.A. Joffe of January 23, 1923': "Dr. Sun is of the opinion that, because of the non-existence of conditions favorable to their successful application in China, it is not possible to carry out either Com-

munist or even the Soviet System in China. M. Joffe agrees entirely with this view; he is further of the opinion that China's most important and most pressing problems are the completion of national unification and the attainment of full national independence. Regarding these great tasks, M. Joffe has assured Dr. Sun of the Russian people's warmest sympathy for China, and of (their willingness to lend support' (Barndt et al 1952, p. 70). At the Third National Congress of the CCP on June 23, 1923, the CCP passed a manifesto in which "The KMT should be the central force of the national revolution and should assume its leadership" (Barndt et al 1952, pp. 71-72). At the same time, however, the CCP hoped that the KMT would resolutely discard its two old notions of reliance on foreign powers and concentration on military action, and that it would pay attention to political propaganda among the people. It also should not miss any opportunity for such propaganda which could create a true central force for the national welfare and a true leadership for the national revolution (Barndt et al 1952, p. 72).

Although Sun Yat-sen was formally to accept the Chinese communists into the KMT in January 1924, a few more conservative and less venturesome KMT comrades were voicing opposition to this policy, for they were fearful and suspicious of the communists' as the latter boasted to "... rally the masses and split the KMT" (Brandt 1958, p. 38). Even the Second Congress of the Socialist Youth Corps in August 1923 passed a resolution that the corps members should enter the KMT, but they should take orders only from the CCP, and should preserve the independence and tightness of its organization (Brandt 1958, p. 39). It is interesting to note that Sun Yat-sen silenced his members' opposition to the policy by emphasizing the importance of the united front policy to unify China. However, he also stressed that "if Russia wants to cooperate with China, she must cooperate with our party and not with Chen Tu-hsu. If Chen disobeys our party, he would be ousted" (Kwei 1970, p. 12).

Despite the total capitulation to the KMT, Borodin, who arrived in 1923 felt that it was still possible to control the KMT, and thus he urged the CCP to split the KMT and instigate quarrel from within to take over control of the party (Harrison 1972, p. 56). Yet at the First National Congress of the KMT in January 1924, it was Borodin who introduced the Russian Bolsheviks' style of organization to the KMT, which successfully turned it into a center of power: a party in which a strict party discipline was firmly established. This congress also

elected some CCP leaders to the Central Committee of the KMT (Li Ta-chao, Tan Ping-shan, Lin Po-chin) and some alternates (Chu Chiu-pai, Mao Tse-tung, Chang Kuo-tao and others). The communists and the left KMT made considerable inroads into the center of the KMT as later they controlled the policy-making of the party. This in turn consolidated and prolonged the alliance with Russia's China policy; the policy of revolution from above (Chen 1967, p. 96). Prior to the convening of the KMT's congress, the Russians had been moving military arms, money and advisers to China in order to implement the deals made with Sun Yat-sen in 1923. In May 1924, General Galin, acting as military adviser to the KMT, arrived in China to help reorganize the KMT military units, ending their previous dependence on the old-style militarist tactics.

From the above discussion we saw that the Sneeplit strategy of allying the CCP to the KMT was carried out successfully, ending the absolute corruption and disorganization of the KMT, enabling it to put on a new mask and become the 'common people's party'. This success in reorganizing the KMT, however, laid the foundation which was to set the limit of the revolutionary strategy of a united front tactic with the KMT, because now "... the KMT was not only 'armed' politically, but militarily as well" (Peng 1976, p. 45).

THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS TASTE POWER

The period after the First Congress of the KMT in January 1924 to its Second Congress in January 1926, saw the dramatic growth of the Chinese communist movement as manifested by its phenomenal growth in membership and by its increasing influence in the KMT. This was made possible by its ability to mobilize and organize the Chinese masses to carry out political strikes against the imperialists and their Chinese appendages. Sun Yat-sen's image as the father of the Chinese revolution helped the Chinese communists tremendously, for he would not hesitate to restrain any opposition from his followers to his united-front policy with the communists, thus enabling the latter to carry out their activities. Sun Yat-sen's tactic of insisting on the united-front policy was because of his interest to accomplish the unification of China. In September 1924, he felt that the time was ripe for a northern expedition, for then the Mukden and Chang Tso-lin warlords were fighting each other. His intention, however, was thwarted by the Chinese communists and Borodin "... who maintained that such expedition would be premature and that the immediate task of the Nationalist government at Canton was

the consolidation of its position in the south" (Brandt et. al. 1952, p. 74). Displeased with the communist opposition to his proposal, Sun went to negotiate with Marshal Tuan Chi-jui, the new head of the northern government, for a possibility of cooperating with him to unify China. On his way to meet Marshal Tuan he even stopped in Japan and delivered a speech extolling Sino-Japanese friendship (Brandt 1958, p. 57). Such actions of negotiating with the warlord and the imperialist to achieve Chinese national unification disturbed the communist, for they considered such a move as not being revolutionary. However, Borodin kept his promise of consolidating the national government's position in Canton, for in February 1925 the Whampoa cadets, with the help of a spontaneous assistance from the peasants who attacked General Chen Chiung-ming from the rear, were able to take control of Canton. On consolidating their position in Canton, the National government declared the formation of a new National Government of China on June 25. Sun Yat-sen had, by then, passed away four months earlier and was succeeded by Wang Ching-wei.

In the meanwhile, a great wave of anti-imperialism was brewing in Shanghai in May 1925. This movement was started initially by a call to strike by the Chinese workingmen at a Japanese textile mill, which was followed by a student rally who had acquired Leninist method of 'stirring', in honor of a comrade shot dead by a Japanese foreman. The rally had prompted the Shanghai-based foreign policemen to arrest some demonstrators to enforce respect for the rights of foreign investors. It was in protest against these arrests that a massive column of students paraded through Shanghai on May 30. Stopping in front of a police station, they flaunted their slogans and shouted in defiance. Fearing that the students might storm the station, the British police officer in charge gave orders to open fire on them. This historic bloodshed event in Shanghai, known as the 'May Thirtieth Movement', saw "... all of Shanghai's students, workers, and merchants go on strike" (Peng 1976, p. 49). This wave of anti-imperialism spread to other cities, and on June 23, led to the 'Shakee Incident' in Canton. The unity shown by the workers, students and the merchants in organizing strikes and demonstrations marked a veritable flood of anti-imperialist sentiment in the national liberation movement. The Canton-Hong Kong strike was regarded as the bastion for the anti-imperialist movement in South China. In paralyzing Hong Kong's economy, it represented a grave attack against British imperialism.

Moscow was exulted by the immense strength shown by the Chinese masses against the imperialist powers. Even the International Labor Federation, Profintern, which had a gloomy perception of the Chinese revolution, was thrilled that the Chinese workers had at last "... sat on the saddle" of power (Brandt 1958, p. 52).

The May Thirtieth Movement reflected how class hatred and patriotic passion of the Chinese petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie could be in solidarity with the masses, but only to a certain extent. Although the Shanghai Chinese Chamber of Commerce initially provided for the financial needs of the movement, the members realized later that they were "... in the same boat with their foreign rivals" (Isaacs 1961, p. 78). The Chinese manufacturers who had backed the movement had done so on the assumption that the strikes would not affect them. However, in Shanghai it was the foreigners who controlled the electricity supply of the city, and when they stopped the power plants, the wheels in the Chinese factories stopped as well. Unwilling to shoulder a mounting load of relief payment without any income from their industrial production, the Chinese bourgeoisie decided it wiser to seek a settlement with the imperialists. On capitulating to the foreign interests, the Shanghai General Merchants Association opposed publicly the anti-imperialist position of the workers, merchants and students. Financial assistance to the movement was cut-off, small businesses were ordered to open their doors, and all kinds of plot were used to break the strikes. Undoubtedly, the bourgeoisie had discovered that their fundamental conflict with the working class overrode their conflict with imperialism (Peng 1976, p. 50). The Chinese bourgeoisie's policy of betting on the strong was a rewarding one, for their submission to the imperialists was rewarded by the imperialists, who appointed some of their members to the Shanghai Municipal Council for the first time in Chinese history. It was not organized labor that failed the Chinese masses, but organized businesses, reflecting the persisting trend that a common struggle against imperialism would eventually give way to divisive class war in China.

The May Thirtieth Movement, despite its inevitable failure, stimulated the Chinese communists to drift back toward the stand that they had taken earlier at Hangchow, a sign of returning self-confidence, to reiterate their renascent purism. It should not be interpreted, however, that the May Thirtieth Movement alone caused them to do so, for way back in December of 1924, Peng Shu-tse (1976, p. 47) had affirmed "... that from the standpoint of

their material basis, revolutionary consciousness, and conditions of the international revolution ... only the working class can become the leader of the national revolution". In January 1925, the Fourth Congress of the CCP even decided to arouse the workers more openly, by preaching pure communism, rather than KMT doctrines to the proletariat (Brandt et. al. 1952, p. 61). The May Thirtieth Movement and the growing emphasis of the Chinese communists on the need to lead the proletariat, prompted the Chief KMT theoretical spokesman, Tai Chi-tao, to write an anti-communist pamphlet in July. Chen Tu-hsu was quick to read the omen, for Tai Chi-tao was arguing for national unity to be the supreme law, and class struggle would become outlaw (Peng 1976, p. 52). As a result of this growing antagonism, Chen Tu-hsu submitted a proposal to the Central Committee of the CCP in October 1925, writing, "Tai Chi-tao's pamphlet was not accidental but the indication that the bourgeoisie was attempting to strengthen its own power for the purpose of checking the proletariats and going over to the counter-revolution. We should be ready immediately to withdraw from the KMT. We should maintain our (public) political face, lead the masses, and not be held in check by the policy of the KMT" (Chen 1976, p. 600). Alarmed at the Chinese communists' resolution, some KMT rightists formed a Sun Yat-sen Society, known as the Western Hill Faction, and announced the expulsion of the communists in November 1925. Their announcement was rebuffed, however for the legitimate party leadership stood faithfully by their communist allies.

The Thirtieth Movement, which saw 135 strikes involving 400,000 workers, not only demonstrated the power of the Chinese communists in directing the revolution, but also for once it brought Stalin's China policy in line with the Chinese communists. The news of the strikes in Shanghai had caused Stalin to become quite 'separatist' in his thinking. This was evident in the speech on May 18, 1925, when he redefined the KMT from that of the party of the liberal democratic to that of workers and peasants. The future prospect of the Chinese workers appeared so much brighter than that Stalin thought they could reduce their dependence on other classes. Thus, he asserted, "away with the national united front, with the bourgeoisie as an ally, a smaller revolutionary bloc would now serve the workers better" (quoted in Brandt 1958, p. 64). However, the failure of the May Thirtieth Movement dampened Stalin's high hopes. Consequently, in late 1925, he returned to his old policy of seeking

the closest cooperation with his KMT ally. Stalin's disillusionment with the May Thirtieth Movement also led the Comintern representative in China to oppose Chen Tu-hsu's separatist proposal. In so doing, Borodin urged the Chinese Communists "... to try to use the upcoming Second Congress of the KMT to push the whole party into the hands of the left wing, and thus to take over leadership of the national revolutionary movement" (quoted in Peng 1976, p. 52). The Second Congress of the KMT was held in January 1926, when solidarity with Moscow and the Chinese communists filled the air. The outcome of the Congress was an encouraging one for the left KMT and some Chinese communists who together won three-fifths' majority of the KMT leadership. Also, Chiang Kai-shek, the Red General, was elected to the Central Executive Committee of the KMT for the first time.

POWER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

The Chinese communists' successes with the masses and their ability to infiltrate the KMT leadership structure were to sow a contradictory seed in the development of the Chinese revolution. Their very successes caused the bourgeois-national revolutionary movement to shed the revolutionary cosmetics they had been wearing, to show themselves as being the staunch supporters of all that were exploitative and oppressive in China. This contradictory development of the Chinese revolution was compounded by Stalin's degenerated interpretation of Marxist dialectical thinking in analysing the Chinese revolutionary situation. He continuously urged the Chinese communists to abide by the united-front tactics prescribed by him as the only possible course available. Stalin's interests in having the Chinese revolutionary process pass through the stage of bourgeois-democratic revolution was in fact an allusion to Lenin's theses that a backward country, where capitalism was weak, could avoid the capitalist stage and proceed directly to socialism. In appearance, his persistence in urging the Chinese communists to maintain a united front with the KMT was all done in the interests of Chinese revolution. But Russian and Stalin's vested interests were at the root of this controversy.

Though the conclusion of the Second Congress saw the left KMT and the Chinese communists were no doubt in the majority of the KMT leadership, Chiang Kai-shek's military-cum-political power was able to override this numerical strength to carry out a coup on March 20, 1926 in Canton. The coup seemed inevitable in view of Chiang's remark to Wang Ching-wei on March 8,

1926, that "the actual power of controlling the revolution must not fall into the hands of outsiders (communists)" (quoted in Chen 1967, p. 103). Moscow reacted strangely to the news of Chiang's coup, with a denial that it ever happened, and denounced the news as mere imperialist propaganda. The central organ of the Comintern released a statement on April 8, 1926, that "the KMT is not a tiny group with a few members, but a mass party and the revolutionary Canton troops and the revolutionary Canton government are founded on this basis. It is, of course, impossible there to carry out a coup d'état overnight" (quoted in Isaacs 1961, p. 97). Moscow's conspiracy of silence and her outright denial of Chiang's coup were inevitable, as the Russians were then facing the threat of a possible new alliance between Japan and Britain, which might join forces to strangle the Chinese revolution and endanger the safety of Soviet Russia (Brandt 1958, p. 73). The Russians opted shrewdly to solve any possible threat from the Anglo-Japanese alliance by buying off Japan, not at the expense of Russia but rather of the Chinese. In this respect, they agreed that South Manchuria should remain in the hands of the Japanese and accepted the status of Manchuria as an 'autonomous state' (Brandt 1958, p. 73).

The Chinese communists reacted differently to Chiang's coup. The Canton branch of the CCP did not deny or remain silence regarding the coup, for the branch members urged their comrades to adopt an offensive tactic against it, to stage their own 'March 20'. But the Chinese Communists Party Central Committee in Shanghai opposed the offensive tactic, and only a minority demanded a break with the KMT. Amid this controversy, Chen Tu-hsu wrote to the Comintern that the cooperation with the KMT should be changed from within to a bloc-from-without. Chiang, being a cunning counter-revolutionary, was quick to dampen the Russians' fear of the incident, for he apologized to his Russian advisers for the inconvenience incurred and reaffirmed in April of his submission to Comintern discipline. Chiang realized that he needed the masses and, especially the Russian aides, to extend and consolidate his own position in China. Thus, in arguing for the need to carry out the Northern Military Expedition he was quoted as saying, "Both the Communists Party and the KMT are fighting against imperialism, and if the KMT (abandoned) the Communists Party, not only would the communist revolution not succeed but the KMT revolution would also be a failure" (Harrison 1972, p. 79). Trotsky's description of Chiang as playing the role of an executioner who

wanted the cover of world communism proved right when Chiang, on May 15, called a plenary Session of the KMT Central Executive with the intention of framing the limits, and defining the organizational activity of the communist members in the KMT. A 'Resolution Adjusting Party Affairs' (Kwei 1970, pp. 40-41) was passed which excluded communists from all higher posts in the KMT and limited them to only one-third of the seats on all party committee. The communists were to take their orders no longer from their own leaders but from a joint two-party committee with a Comintern delegate in it. They were not to criticize KMT doctrine as embodied in the Three People's Principles. This in effect forfeited the communists' right to propagate their own teaching. A list of party members in the KMT was asked to be handed over, so that the KMT would know against whom to enforce the projected 'adjustment'. In addition, the resolutions also forbid KMT members from joining in any other political party, approved the plan for launching the Northern Military Expedition, and appointing Chiang as the Commander-in Chief of all the expeditionary armies. Since martial law was declared on the very day of the Plenary meeting, it also ended the Canton-Hong Kong Strike against British imperialism, unconditionally.

Borodin, on being invited back to Canton from Shanghai by Chiang, believed that the Chinese communists were too weak to carry out a country-attack against the KMT. Borodin believed that the Chinese communists should tacitly agree to postpone the counter-attack. He would have tried it if he had a 25% chance of surviving the coup for one year (Chen 1967, p. 103). Initially, Borodin opposed Chiang's Northern Military Expedition but gave his blessing later by providing the assistance needed in carrying out the expedition. In return for Borodin's favors, Chiang reinstated the Russian advisers as well as Borodin's position in the KMT. While attending the Third National Labour Congress in May, Chiang exulted the roles of the peasants and workers in sweeping away all the counterrevolutionaries and consolidating the position of the National government, ending with slogan that even communists dared not utter then, "Long Live the World Revolution" (Isaacs 1961, p. 104).

In July 1926, Chiang launched the Northern Military Expedition and reinforced the martial law to forbid all labor disturbances during the duration of the military expedition. Borodin's sudden preoccupation with the necessity of carrying out the military expedition reflected Moscow's fear of Wu Peifu's sudden lunge toward the South. Moscow inter-

preted Wu's move as a pact between the latter and Britain to gain control of the KMT's sphere. Then, Chang Tso-lin and the Japanese were also busy widening their own spheres in the North. For the Chinese revolution to survive, or rather for a strong China to act as a front against any imperialist encroachment on Russia itself, the KMT would have to concentrate entirely on its self-defense. However, Chiang's easy victories in his march northward not only dispel the fears Moscow had nurtured with plenty of reason, but also enabled Stalin to seize Chiang's success as a triumph to vindicate his course in China and even his claim to good foresight. With success on his side, Stalin easily silenced his critics in the party, so that by the end of 1926 he argued only with his henchmen (Brandt 1958, p. 87).

Chiang's resolution on party readjustment and the ending of the Canton-Hong Kong Strike made the Chinese communists realize that they had lost the golden opportunity to further divide and conquer the KMT's organization from above, and to have lost a chance to create an independent working-class movement without ever having recognized its existence. Thus, on June 9, 1926, after informing the KMT that it did not feel bound by the rules of the inter-party readjustment, the Central Committee of the CCP proclaimed their autonomy. The Chinese communists' proposal to train independent military forces for use against the KMT was rebuffed by Borodin, who did not want to release any weapons from the stores intended for Chiang's military expedition, fearing that in the face of the warlords' hostility such an act would only weaken Chiang's position. The Chinese communists were urged instead to go on doing the "coolie service for the KMT -a disagreeable task, to be sure, but a necessary one historically" (Brandt 1958, p. 76). What else could the Chinese communists do, for not only had the Comintern refused to consider Chen Tu-hsu's resolution, but Bukharin had also published an article in Pravda charging those who advocated the CCP's withdrawal from the KMT to be as wrong as those in the Soviet Opposition. Evidently, the latter statement was made to oppose Trotsky's support to the Chinese communists' appeal to the Comintern with the argument that it "...is necessary to approve as unconditionally correct the resolution of the June Plenum of the Central Committee of the CCP, which demands that the party withdraw from the KMT and conclude a bloc with organization through its left wing" (L. Trotsky 1976, p. 146). Trotsky (1976, p. 148) saw such a move not as "... the termination of

collaboration but of servitude". The Chinese communists' appeal and Trotsky's support for a move toward the left KMT fell on deaf ears as immediately after Chiang's May 15 Plenum, Voitinsky, the Chief of the Far Eastern Division of the Comintern, submitted three main proposals to the special session of the Russian Politburo. They were that the Chinese communists would not discuss with the KMT on the possibility of a certain separation of functions, the best-known communists should leave the KMT and only in case of emergency would the possibility of separation between the two allied parties be worthy of consideration (Brandt 1958, p. 78). Voitinsky left Moscow for China in June 1926 to 'correct the separatist tendency' among the Chinese comrades.

While the Chinese communists could not quite accept Moscow's directives as though they were the source of Marxist world law, the progress of the Northern Military Expedition saw the masses of ordinary people rising spontaneously in a veritable tidal wave, sweeping the expeditionary armies across Central China by the end of 1926. All these quick and easy victories were nevertheless the direct result of an advanced army of communist-trained propagandists and political agitators, who had cleared the expeditionary armies' routes, by organizing strikes and peasant revolts behind the militarist lines. In some instances, they had infiltrated even the warlords' armies who were hostile to the KMT (North and Eudin 1963, p. 28). To the Chinese communists, the mushrooming growth of the mass movement was very significant, for though the numbers of party membership were to increase by only one thousand, their following had increased by the million and their influence grown immeasurably. In Hunan, the membership registered in the peasant associations increased from 1,071,137 in November 1926 to 2 million in January 1927, and the membership of the labor union jumped from 60,000 to 150,000 within the same period (Isaacs 1961, pp. 112-113). In Wuhan, the Chinese communists helped to organize the Hupeh General Labor Union with a total membership of 3 million (Peng 1976, p. 56). These are some of the figures that showed the growing influence of the Chinese communists in organizing and mobilizing the masses to employ strikes not only as means for their own economic ends but also for political goals. It was this which later jeopardized the maintenance of the united front because the conservative Nationalists feared the many implications of social revolution.

In the countryside, the resolutions passed on

May 15 by the KMT were understood by the unscrupulous landlords, the corrupt gentry, and the avaricious officials as meaning that the government was about to dissolve the peasant associations and that the KMT had abandoned the workers and the peasants. In retaliation to these oppressive classes, the peasants rallied to demand rent reduction, the abolition of the worst miscellaneous taxes, and for arms to fight the village gentry. In Hunan, village authority fell largely to the peasant associations as elsewhere, the logic of the revolutionary situation asserted itself where before long the peasants began first to refuse to pay rent and then to seize the land outright (Peng 1976, p. 57). Thus, the Third International had stated from 1920 that the revolution in the East must be based on the action of the peasantry, and as early as 1923 it had explicitly instructed the Chinese communists to lay stress on peasant movements and to carry out radical land reforms. This was because Moscow saw that the leaders of KMT would be in favour of land reforms against the old feudal landowners. From 1923 to 1926 the Comintern demanded the execution of land confiscation without compensation and making "... the fundamental problem of the Chinese national liberation movement ... the peasant problems" (Harrison 1972, p. 72). The workers' strikes and peasant revolts soon came to be regarded by the KMT not as a source of strength but as a constant menace and threat to the preservation of its political unity. In Wuhan, the General Chambers of Commerce threatened a general strike of capital on December 3, 1926, should the communists fail to take effective steps to restrain the workers. It is important to note that one of the justifications the Chinese communists' alliances with the KMT was Sun Yat-sen's progressive approach toward agrarian problems. However, Sun never carried it out, fearing that it would upset the existing property relations and destroy the economic foundation of the Chinese ruling class.

As the Chinese revolutionary process developed, and the need to maintain the united front became an end rather than a strategy for achieving the Chinese revolution, the Comintern began to act in contradiction to its intentions. In 1925 the Comintern approved the ruling of the CCP's Fourth National Congress that the peasants be prevented from deciding on the reduce-rent movement. An extreme stand was taken in July 1926, when the peasant movement was regarded as developing the disease of left deviation everywhere (Harrison 1972, p. 72). Thus, the communists' policy of progressively abandoning the masses was inevitable if they were to

continue the alliance with the KMT. Despite Stalin's colouring it as a party of workers and peasants, the KMT was a party of bourgeoisie and landlords par excellence. It has been remarked that agrarian revolution could not be carried out in the countryside because the landlords in China were 'quadrilateral beings' (Chen Hai Seng quoted in Isaacs 1961, p. 31): they were rent collection, merchants, usurers, and administrative officers. To add to this trend, many landlords were military and civil officers as well. It was not surprising, therefore, to find that as the Northern expedition progressed every local satrap joined the KMT as soon as it reached his territory. The National Revolutionary Army was tainted with these 'quadrilateral being'. It is observed that except for one army corps, the other five were ex-warlord armies which the KMT had 'reorganised', "... not by changing their structure of personnel but simply by giving them numbers" (Brandt 1958, p. 89). By the time the Northern expedition reached the Yangtze, there were then thirty-four warlords and their troops in the KMT.

Thus, Stalin and Bukharin sent directives to the Chinese communists to keep the peasant movement in check and not to drive the generals leading the victorious northward march away, it marked the surrendering of the communists' agrarian revolution. The directives were sent in October 1926 and November 30, with the decision that only lands belonging to the church, convents and reactionary militarists should be confiscated, and not those belonging to the KMT army officers. The directives to protect officers' lands which became in fact the defense of the landlords against the peasants, made a mockery of Mao's plea of marching "... at their head and lead them, or to follow at their rear, gesticulating at them and criticizing them. Or to face them as opponents" (Mao 1967, p. 22). Mao urged to defend the inevitable power of the peasant revolts. For Mao "To right a wrong, it is necessary to exceed the proper limits, and the wrong cannot be righted without the proper limits being exceeded" (Mao 1967, pp. 21-22).

Turning our focus on Moscow, we find Stalin praising the Northern Expedition as revolutionary gain against imperialism and militarists and giving assurance that the big bourgeoisie who controlled half of the KMT Central Committee were weak. This, Stalin thought, would inevitably strengthen the Chinese peasantry and the workers. For victories of the Northern Expedition meant that the masses in China would have freedom of assembly, freedom to strike, freedom of the press, and freedom of coalition for all revolutionary elements

(Isaacs 1961, p. 119). Bukharin even regarded the growing territorial consolidation of the KMT as something 'essentially new and original' in China, allowing the Chinese revolution to possess a center organized into a state power (Isaacs 1961, p. 121).

In China, however, the situation was not developing in accordance with the Comintern's interpretation, as the Chinese communists strong influence with the masses proved to be only in numerical strength and was easily off set by the KMT's ability to use force in support of its argument. The growing wave of mass uprising was gradually suppressed by the KMT. In fact, in every city and town they entered and controlled, not only the peasants and their associations but also the workers' unions, including the left KMT, if they were sympathetic to the workers' and peasants' movement, were being destroyed (Peng 1976, p. 57). The united-front policy was increasingly felt by the Chinese communists to be a policy full of dilemma and contradiction, and thus not easy to adhere to. Consequently, they appealed for an independent or separatist approach toward carrying out the revolution but were continuously opposed by Moscow. Stalin's directive of November 30, 1926, argued in favor of the Chinese communists carrying out the agrarian reform without fear of alienating the uncertain and perfidious cooperation of a part of the capitalist class but on the other hand, he also emphasized that for the meantime it must differentiate its agrarian tactic according to the economic and political peculiarities of the different sections of the Chinese territory, so as not to harm the united front (Isaacs 1961, p. 120).

In China, Chiang Kai-Shek, on failing to convince the left KMT to meet under his auspices in Nanchang, turned anti-communist. In January 1927, he expelled those members who did not follow Sun Yat-sen's Principles and insisted on maintaining a friendship with Soviet Union. He rationalised his action with the following argument: "It is not (Russia's) Policy to tyrannise over us, and though her representatives have acted otherwise, insulting our every movement, I am convinced that it had nothing to do with Russia but are the individual actions of these representatives" (quoted in Isaacs 1961, p. 127). It was even rumoured that Chiang had negotiated with Mukden and Japan to forge a front against the Reds in China. Without doubt, he denied it persistently and claimed that the rumour was a malicious attempt to injure his reputation for revolutionary purity (Isaacs 1961, p. 128). On Borodin's advice, the left KMT proved bold by convening the Third Plenary Session of the KMT at

Hankow on March 10, 1927, without Chiang's presence. The resolutions that were passed revolved around the theme that "the Chinese revolution should create a regime of revolutionary democracy, and, above all, should not create a personal military dictatorship" (Peng 1976, p. 58). The emergency power of Chiang was revoked, the military Council was re-established, and Chiang was removed from the Central Executive Committee of the KMT. The cooperation between the KMT and CCP was re-emphasized, and two portfolios, that of labour and agriculture, were created -taken by the Chinese communists. In Shanghai, the workers had organised strikes on March 19, February 22, and March 21, 1927, despite the delaying tactic of Chiang to enter the city, so as to prepare the way for the KMT to control Shanghai. The communists had to face a 'white reign of terror' to achieve this end from the warlords' armies under General Li Pao-Chang, the underworld gangs, and the police of the International Settlement were raiding and persecuting the workers and their union headquarters (Isaacs 1961, pp. 134-137). By the time the National Army entered Shanghai on March 22, Shanghai was already taken by the workers, except for the International Settlement. On entering Shanghai, Chiang continued the practice of persecuting the workers adopted by the warlords and imperialists, while insisting that there was no rift between the right and left KMT. He even insisted on carrying on the policy of united front with the Chinese communists for the sake of world revolution. Yet on March 31, 1927, he declared the intention of creating a clearer and better relationship between China and the foreign powers based on mutual friendship and understanding.

The Chinese communists were not alone in saluting Chiang's entry into Shanghai and his armies as the saviours of the people. The Comintern reacted in the same manner, considering it as nothing less than the standard of world revolution (Isaacs 1961, p. 156). But Trotsky saw in Chiang's victory the emergence of national fascism and insisted on the unconditional independence of the Chinese Communist Party (Trotsky 1976:144). On March 16, 1927, Parvda published an article to oppose Trotsky, asserting that the western press exaggerated the strength of the right KMT. Moscow felt that the strength of the left KMT and the masses would pressure the right KMT into relinquishing its power. It has been observed that on April 5, 1927, Stalin, having assured that all was well in China, put forth the following argument: "Why drive the Right when we have the majority and when the Right lis-

ten to us? ... When the Right is of no more use to us, we will drive it away. At present, we need the Right. So, they (the bourgeoisie group) must be utilised to the end, squeezed them out like a lemon and then flung away" (quoted in Isaacs 1961, p. 162). On April 12, 1927, saw the Moscow's directive being executed accordingly, not by the communists though, but rather by Chiang who began his butchering of the Chinese communists in Shanghai. Due to Stalin's earlier direction to hide their weapons in order not to provoke Chiang, the workers now found themselves to be without any arms. They were urged by the Chinese communists to call a strike instead, but only to be machine-gunned down by General Ghou Feng-Chi (Isaacs 1961, p. 179). This incident caused Moscow to retreat into silence again until April 21, when it proclaimed that Chiang was a traitor, and that Stalin was not surprised by the event since it proved the correctness of the Comintern's line. Roy, however, was ready to overlook the incident. On April 13, he sent a telegram to Chiang urging him not to convene a separate plenary session in Nanking, as it would split the KMT which he considered "a supreme necessity at that moment" (Roy quoted in North and Eudin 1963, p. 61). To the Chinese communists, Chiang's butchering of their comrades showed how subservient they had been not only to the Comintern but also to the KMT, resulting in the passing away of an exceptionally favourable historic moment to lead the fermenting masses to victory. The whole incident marked a classic case of refusing and fearing to take overpower from the masses when it was on the streets.

POWER TO WANG CHING-WEI

The degenerated form of dialectical thinking practised by Stalin enabled him to justify Chiang's counter-revolutionary move as 'not unexpected', and thus proving the correctness of the Comintern line. In fact, his latest analysis of the Chinese situation showed that it had then entered the second stage of development in which the left KMT would be the instrument to swing away from the revolution of an all-national united front toward a revolution of the workers and peasants. It was also to be an agrarian revolution which would "...strengthen and broaden the struggle against imperialism, against the gentry and the feudal landlords, and against the militarists and Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolutionary group" (North and Eudin 1963, p. 65). With this transformation the Chinese revolution continued to develop based on a class coalition as manifested by the left KMT's promise to the

communists that they were ready to fortify themselves with the CCP.

Trotsky, who had been consistently arguing for the unconditional independence of the CCP and the formation of workers', peasants' and soldiers' soviets, viewed the left KMT and those generals controlling the Hankow government as unreliable (Peng 1976, p. 71). "Politicians of the Wang Ching-wei type, under difficult conditions, will unite ten times with Chiang Kai-shek against the workers and peasants" (Trotsky 1976, p. 235). He even regarded the Chinese communists who were elected on March 10, 1927, to be heads of the Departments of Labour and Agriculture as "... impotent hostages, if not a direct mask for the preparation of a new bloc against the working masses" (Trotsky 1976, p. 235). In May 1927 news in London also supported Trotsky's assessment of Wuhan having lost its dominant position and becoming "... little more than the shadow of a name" (quoted in Isaacs 1961, p. 206).

Wuhan had indeed lost its dominant position militarily, economically and politically vis-à-vis Chiang's growing power. Militarily, the imperialists and Chiang had packed their war vessels along the entire Yangtze river, making Wuhan practically a beleaguered city. Economically, the Chinese bourgeoisie and the imperialists were resisting and denouncing the demands and the strikes of the workers. In addition, they acted by closing their shops and factories and curtailing river steamer schedules to Wuhan. The political bankruptcy of Wuhan steadily progressed as the left KMT approached the Hankow Chamber of Commerce to plead with them to resume business, promising them to rein the mass movement. Wuhan's leaders blamed the economic difficulties, not on the sabotage by the capitalists, but on the workers, who were thought to have been ruining trade and industry. The Comintern's advice to the left KMT to take over the banks, factories and shops was opposed, as they were more interested in protecting, not violating, bourgeois property (Isaacs 1961, p. 209).

At the Fifth National Congress of the CCP in April 1927 (North and Eudin 1963, p. 65), the Chinese communists found themselves in Stalin's straitjacket. Roy was forced by Stalin to inform the Chinese communists that Chiang's anti-communist coup had strengthened the bonds between the left KMT and the communists. Accordingly, he remarked to Peng Hsu-tse, an opponent to the continued compromises between the communists and the left KMT, that his analysis of events was Marxist "... but the line adopted by Stalin was the only cor-

rect line ... and naturally it was impossible to discuss the mistakes of the past line". (Peng 1976, p. 64). It was not surprising, therefore, that slogans such as 'Long live the cooperation between communism and the Three People's Principles' filled the air throughout the Congress. Out of the Congress, a conservative agrarian reform was decided, whereby small landowners and lands belonging to the officers of the Revolutionary Army were not subjected to confiscation. Thus, in 1929 Chen Tu-hsu remarked that "there was not even one of the bourgeoisie, landlords, tuchuns, and gentry of Hunan and Hupeh provinces who was not the kinsman, relative, or old friend of the officers of that time ... (Thus) to confiscate the land is only empty words if it is conditioned by 'do not touch the land of the military officers'" (Cheng 1976, p. 605). Though the communists abandoned the peasantry, the peasants in Hunan attempted on their own to create precisely the kind of local organs of power which Trotsky spoke about, and which Stalin opposed to preserve the governmental authority of Wuhan (Isaacs 1961, p. 228). These peasant excesses had to be pacified by Cheng Tu-hsu and the peasants had be 'straightened up' because the left KMT had approved General Tang Sheng-chih to launch a military expedition against Peking. It was hoped Tang's success would allow Wuhan to add pressure on Chiang to submit to the left KMT. Borodin gave support to this expedition, although he regarded General Tang as a possible 'second Chiang'. Borodin's trust in this Christian General who turned pro-communist, and had been receiving military assistance from Moscow, proved later to be a disaster (Brandt 1958, p. 122). General Tang's armies defeated the 'Crown Prince of Manchuria', Chang Hsueh-liang, at Chumatien but his army was reduced to a skeleton as it suffered heavy casualties. As such, the actual victor was Feng Yu-hsiang himself, who had awaited the outcome of this battle to decide whom he should join hands with. Feng proved to the communists to be just as slippery as Chiang, to whom he later turned for support.

Meanwhile, on May 20, Wang Ching-wei appealed to the two communists' ministers in his government to solve the worker-peasant problems. Their duties were to restrain and check the excesses created, for the landlords and the petty bourgeoisie had been exerting pressure on the KMT Central Executive Committee to do so. Wang's appeal was dutifully followed by the communist ministers, who wanted to keep the solidarity of the united front. After being in office for a month, Tang Ping-shan, the Chinese communists Minister of Agriculture in

the left KMT government and similarly, Chu Ch'iu-pai, failed continuously to calm the emotions of the peasants which Mao had aroused so effectively. On May 21, the landowners' loyal kin in the officers' corps of the army at Changsha 'cleaned up' the city in which the Chinese communists' followers perished by the thousands (Brandt 1958, p. 129). Local communist leaders reacted to the massacre by urging the concentration of armed detachments to attack Changsha. They were, however, discouraged by the Chinese Communist Central Committee and were directed instead to cancel their plan and wait for the decision of the government's inquiry.

It must be stressed that although the Eight Plenary Session of the Comintern Central Executive Committee met three days after 'Hsu's May 21 massacre' at Changsha, no news on the incident was remarked in Moscow until May 30. At this Plenary Session, Stalin was preoccupied with the need to liquidate the Opposition group, Trotsky, and to put an end to the annoying need to answer for the consequences of his China policy. And as before, he reaffirmed at this session the need of the Chinese communists to enter the left KMT government and facilitate their tasks of governing by every means. While on the one hand Stalin instructed the Chinese communists to deepen the agrarian revolution. In so doing, the latter were to mobilise and arm the masses, not by themselves but through Wuhan. According to Stalin, the victory of the revolution would not be possible without Wuhan (Isaacs 1961, p. 243). On his part, Trotsky declared finally that he had nothing in common with Stalin's China policy. He refused to assume a shadow of responsibility for the policy towards the left KMT and Wuhan government and thus advised the Comintern to reject this responsibility without hesitation (Trotsky 1976, p. 234). The acceptance of General Tang to investigate the Changsha incident was interpreted by Moscow as an end to the reactionary group in Changsha. But on June 26, 1927, General Tang concluded his investigation of the Changsha incident by blaming the peasants and workers for breaking loose from control and precipitating a reign of terror against the people (Isaacs 1961, p. 250). Stalin on June 1, sent a telegram to Chen Tu-hsu to adopt a radical programme towards the left KMT was in fact and attempt to force a test of strength on the Wuhan government. In addition to the usual emphasis on the need to maintain the united front and to practise a conservative agrarian reform, Stalin also ordered the destruction of unreliable generals. He called for the creation of a new army with 20,000 communists and 50,000 selected workers

and peasants, the replacement of some members of the left KMT by new workers and peasants, and the formation of a revolutionary committee with a well-known KMT leader as its chairman to put on trial the reactionary officers. These new instructions were nevertheless regarded as ludicrous by the Chinese communists and the Comintern representatives in China (Brandt 1958, p. 135). They saw the execution of such a telegram as counting on Wuhan not merely to tolerate, but also to promote the preparations for, their own destruction.

On the same day the Chinese communists received Stalin's ludicrous telegram above, Feng Yuhsiang also sent a telegram to Wang Ching-wei summoning him to a conference at Chengchow on June 12, and pledged his obedience to Wuhan, while stating the desire to crush the communists at the same time. On June 22, Feng met Chiang and publicly announced his attention to cooperate with Nanking in ending militarism and communism and urged Wang again to expel the communists. Not wanting to be a prospective puppet to Stalin, however, Wang went to meet Feng in Chengchow as scheduled. In the meantime, the left KMT in Wuhan remained faithful to Feng's desire to crush the communists. On June 30, Wuhan began suppressing the workers' movement with much ease, for prior to that time the Chinese communists had assured Wuhan of their arms to the left KMT. In reacting to Feng's latest compromise with Chiang, Bukharin urged the Chinese communists not to trust Feng but proclaimed that "... Wang Ching-wei is not among them. He is firmer (in his revolutionary position) than the others" (quoted in Isaacs 1961, p. 266). Bukharin's assessment of Wang's reliability proved to be inaccurate, for on July 15, 1927, the Central Executive Committee of the left KMT issued an order requiring all CCP members in the KMT and in the Revolutionary Army to withdraw from the KMT or be severely punished. Following this anti-communist move, Wang Ching-wei began his diplomatic shuttles to unite the left KMT with the right KMT. On August 10, 1927, the bourgeois nationalist group was united in a complete unit, and Wang pardoned Chiang Kai-shek's emergency measures of April 12.

To have foreseen the counter-revolutionary character of the KMT and taking an aggressive strategy against it prior to the 'July 15 Communists' Expulsion' would have been regarded by Stalin as being Trotskyist. The discrediting act of the KMT was seen by Stalin as a point where the revolution was striding forward to the highest phase of development, to the phase of direct struggle for dictator-

ship of the working class and the peasantry (Peng 1976, p. 74). Formation of soviets, the arming of the masses and the workers as the leading force of the revolution became his immediate strategies to emancipate the Chinese from the yoke of imperialism, feudal-militarism and the Chinese bourgeoisie. When Trotsky was urging these very strategies, Stalin regarded him as forcing the masses to jump over stages through which it had not yet passed. But now, without acknowledging his mentor, he himself was forcing the Chinese communists to jump over the ruins of the revolutionary movement (Isaacs 1961, p. 279). This 'policy of adventurism' was dutifully carried out by the Acting General Secretary of the CCP, Chu Chiu-pai, who approved the Comintern's circular of blaming Chen Tu-hsu as being responsible for the defeat of the revolution (Peng 1976, p. 75). In accordance with Stalin's latest revolutionary strategy, the Chinese communists carried out four insurrections to make a come-back into the revolutionary scene. The first uprising, in Nanchang, happened on August 1, under the KMT banner, the second the Hunan-Hupeh Autumn Harvest Uprising, the third uprising of the Hailufeng soviet movement and the fourth insurrection in Canton on December 11, 1927. They were unable to carry out the proper resolutions because the combined forces of Chang Fa-kuei and Li Chi-shen's warlords stood united and drove out the communists instead. The cumulative result of these adventures was the destruction of a powerful political force among the Chinese communists to almost a point of insignificance within a few months (Thornton 1969, p. 32). These uprisings saw Mao breaking away from Comintern and the Russian revolutionary strategy to begin his Long March to power with the peasantry

CONCLUSION

From the very day of its formation the CCP did not have much opportunity to develop and to test its own revolutionary strategy to suit its own socio-historical context. Marx and Lenin theses of revolutionary strategy were freely used but it was the agenda beyond the Chinese communists into the hands of defending the political status quo of Russia and Stalin. However, the Chinese absorption of nationalism into Marxism, for Marxism proved itself to be a most effective system for attacking social iniquities as well as for restoring a national pride that had been humiliated for decades. As a philosophy of history, Marxism thus allowed the Chinese to rehabilitate their national heritage which had been condemned in toto by feudalism, imperialism

and militarists.

It was the destruction of Mao peasant base in Hunan in September 1927, which forced him and his peasant followers to flee a long march to Ching-kangshan mountain, that enabled him to develop and practise the revolutionary strategy that would eventually bring victory to the Chinese masses. His strategy was opposed, no doubt, but he was too isolated from Moscow to be within Stalin's control. Thus, the Chinese revolution of 1921-1927 is a tragedy, not only as evident in the thousands of decapitated bodies of the communists and their followers, but also because of their inability to develop a revolutionary strategy to suit their own social and historical contemporary reality taking place in own motherland.

Lessons learned from this historical study to contemporary students are that the body of knowledge of societal change applied should not be socially blinded to the changing social reality of the locality concerned.

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