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**The Marshall Mission and the KMT-CCP
Negotiations After World War II**

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Wu Jiajing

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THE MARSHALL MISSION AND THE KMT-CCP
NEGOTIATIONS AFTER WORLD WAR II

By
Wu Jiajing

A THESIS

Submitted to
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

THE MARSHALL MISSION AND THE KMT-CCP
NEGOTIATIONS AFTER WORLD WAR II

By

Wu Jiajing

In December 1945, President Truman sent General George Marshall to China on a special mission to demonstrate to the American public and to the world the new administration's determination to support Chiang Kai-shek against the Communists and to stabilize the situation in China without a major commitment of American military forces. The Kuomintang accepted Marshall's mediation in hopes of getting more American aid while the Communists welcomed the Americans in hopes of gaining American understanding, and, if possible, American support in the negotiations.

Saddled with his preconception that the Chinese Communists were "uncooperative" and handicapped by the constraints of domestic and world politics, Marshall failed to perform impartially. In July, 1946, the Communists announced their final break from the U.S., alleging that the U.S. imperialists were more dangerous than the Japanese imperialists. In December, 1946, the mission came to an end.

Primary sources are State Department documents, Wellington Koo's papers, Truman's memoirs, Acheson's memoirs, and some special collections of Chinese materials.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to take this opportunity to express my personal gratitude to certain individuals and organizations. I am greatly indebted to Dr. Cohen, who not only aroused my interest in this topic but also guided me in my research and writing. With his own high standards in scholarly work, he gave me a sense of what I should look up to in my pursuit of knowledge. Beyond our academic relations, his constant encouragement and kindness, which he does not always show, helped relieve me from the homesickness in the past two years. Most important of all, without his dedication and persistent efforts in the educational and cultural exchanges between China and the U.S. I would probably never have had the chance to come over to study here to begin with.

Dr. Lammers, who spent time to read my manuscript and offered me his valuable criticisms on the paper. His encouragement and care for me always makes me feel comfortable and close to him not only as a scholar but as an individual.

Dr. Coogan, who went through my manuscripts line by line and relentlessly corrected the mistakes I made. In Dr. Coogan I see the most conscientious professor who dedicates himself to all his students and who is ready at any time to help the students. By working with Dr. Coogan, I learned not only how to phrase my sentences more accurately and

scientifically but more important than anything else for a historian, learn to think more precisely and logically.

I am also grateful to Dr. Gourley, who read through my manuscripts and offered me valuable comments and edited part of the paper. With his soft-heartedness, Dr. Gourley is always the person whom I want to talk with whenever I have problems.

I am especially indebted to Dr. and Mrs. Solo, who are like parent-figures to me. Their loving and caring for me make my stay here much more enjoyable. Apart from their concern for my personal life, they took the pains to edit my paper in a meticulous way. Though there is still a long way to go before I could ever reach the high standards Dr. Solo set for me, it is good to start the necessary training.

I would like to express my thanks for Professor Wang Ching-cheng from the Institute of Modern Chinese History in Beijing, China, who read my first draft of the paper and offered very valuable suggestions with respect to certain arguments.

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Key to Nomenclature

To avoid confusion, I chose to use the old Wade system instead of the Pinyin system at places where individual names, places or newspapers were conventionally known in the Wade system. For instance, I use Chiang Kai-shek instead of Jiang Jieshi, Hsin Hua jih pas instead of Xin Hua RI Bao. I also use the Wade system for the quoted publications and names of scholars from Taiwan so as to be consistent with what is used there. For the other Chinese sources which have not been translated into English yet and which have not been widely known either in Wade or in Pinyin, I decided to use the new Pinyin system. In this way we may help scholars get to know the official Chinese Pinyin system gradually.

The Marshall Mission and the KMT-CCP Negotiations after World War II

The Marshall mission to China is a conspicuous example of American foreign policy towards the nationalist movements in the third world since 1945. As the self-styled keeper of world order, the U.S. has tended to see all signs of unrest or revolt against corrupt and repressive regimes as conspiracies by world Communism aiming at the expansion of Soviet power. In order to check the advance of Communist movements, the U.S. has time and again ventured into countries already torn by internal strife. It has supported undemocratic, repressive governments in their unpopular "anti-Communist" causes, expecting that the local dictators will listen to America's voice of moderation and carry out reforms necessary to keep the populace from falling into Communist hands. Each time, the U.S. has found itself in league with a sanguinary dictator and has been at a loss as to what to do with him. To wash its hands would mean to abandon its commitment to its allies, to stay would be as embarrassing and might exact an even higher price: the U.S. was left entangled in a dilemma, subject to attacks both at home and abroad. In this instance, Marshall's mission "earned not only the U.S. government but the general himself the enmity of both Nationalist and Communist[s] partisans."¹ One attacked him "for holding them back from

victory, the other for selling them out by deceptive proposal designed to weaken them."² In short, his mission has been a controversial issue in the history of American foreign policy.*

Conflicting Interpretations of the Marshall Mission

The official Chinese Communist interpretation, as Professor Liu Danien, one of the leading Chinese historians of Sino-American relations, put it, is that Marshall's mission to China was not motivated by a genuine American interest in the cessation of hostilities between the Kuomintang and Chinese Communist Party. On the contrary, "its real interest was to freeze the military situation within China proper. In this way Chiang Kai-shek would be enabled to launch an offensive in Manchuria, and from there to expand it into China proper ... and eventually to eliminate the Communist troops."³

According to this view, the U.S., emerging after World War II as the most powerful nation in the world, aimed, under the

*Steven I. Levine offers a new perspective of this mission. He reviews it in the context of the emerging Cold War and mounting U.S. concern with Soviet expansion in East Asia. He argues, the primary objective of this mission was to thwart Soviet expansion in Manchuria. In that respect, although the mission failed to unify China, it succeeded in its basic purpose. However, the author would argue, to check Russian expansion in the Far East was one of the concerns upon which Truman and his advisors formulated their China policy, it was not the objective of the mission. Besides, Soviet-American confrontation was not so tense in late 1945, even less so with regard to the Far East. Therefore, it will not be proper to evaluate the success or failure of this mission in terms of Soviet-American relations.

Truman Administration, at replacing Japan in Asia, "subjugating the Chinese people by annihilating the Chinese Communists as a first step" and consequently, "turning China into a U.S. colony."⁴ Only with the thawing of the relations between the U.S. and China has this interpretation of Marshall's mission been somewhat softened. In a recent book, Zhongguo Xiandai Shigao, 1919-1949, (A History of Contemporary China, 1919-1949), the authors, while still accusing the U.S. of imperialist intentions, suggest that it was intended "as a sham peace so as to soften the Chinese resentment and to restore American prestige in China."⁵

Historians in Taiwan, however, hold a very different view. Professor Wang Chien-ming of National Chen Chi University, Taipei, accuses Marshall of partiality towards the Chinese Communists, charging that the American envoy was under the influence of the Chinese Communist Party.⁶ Another well-known scholar in Taiwan, Professor Chou Yi-ching, also attributes the failure of the mission to Marshall's ignorance of the true nature of the Chinese Communist Party. He holds that as a typical career military officer, unaware of all the schemes and intrigues of the Chinese Communist Party, Marshall was not good at handling political problems. It was inevitable, therefore, that Marshall would fall prey to Communist traps when he was assigned the task of dealing with the issue of peaceful unification."⁷ Even Chiang Kai-shek blamed Marshall's proposal for a second cease-fire in June,

1946 as the cause of "the final defeat of the Nationalist troops in Manchuria in the winter of 1948."⁸

Why is the U.S. criticized by both sides? It is because Marshall's mission had contradictory objectives. On the one hand, the U.S. wanted to keep its commitment to the anti-Communist Chiang Kai-shek and to prevent a Communist take-over in China. On the other hand, the U.S. desired to help build up a democratic Chinese government on a broader basis, with the Kuomintang, Chinese Communist Party and other parties sharing the power. The Chinese Communist Party saw the anti-Communist objective as paramount while the Kuomintang interpreted the even-handedness in Marshall's mediation treachery. The result has been criticism of Marshall's mission from both sides, since the mission failed to satisfy either.

Prelude to the Mission

The contradictory mission was largely a product of the domestic politics that led to Marshall's appointment. It was prompted by the public attack on American China policy by then Ambassador Patrick J. Hurley, whose sudden resignation took President Truman by surprise.⁹ On November 27, 1945, in a curiously contradictory address, Hurley told the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. that "professional foreign service men" in China had been undercutting him with respect to the effective implementing of American China policy, and he "ended with an attack on the Department [of State] generally."¹⁰

Hurley's charges received widespread news coverage. On the same day, a number of Congressmen urged an investigation.¹¹ Though uncertain about the reliability of Hurley's confusing charges, several Republicans were quick to take the opportunity to attack the Administration's foreign policy. Senator Kenneth S. Wherry, of Nebraska, and Representative George A. Dondero, of Michigan, questioned the State Department's stand towards the Chinese Communists. Major General Claire L. Chennault, the wartime Commanding General of the 14th Air Force in China, joined forces with the Republicans in questioning the loyalty of certain career diplomats.¹² Politicians sense the importance of this delicate issue; a mistake might ruin parties and political careers. The Democrats were no less sensitive. On learning of it, Henry Wallace, Secretary of Commerce, wrote in his diary: "His [Hurley's] statement as read ... was a marvel of political demagoguery.... I immediately thought it was some high Republican masterminding."¹³

To defend the administration against the charges of having "given Hurley inadequate backing,"¹⁴ Truman followed the suggestion of Clinton Anderson, then Secretary of Agriculture, and the urging of his advisors. He appointed a highly respected General George Marshall to replace Hurley in China.¹⁵ With his "international reputation for impartiality, wisdom, and fair play,"¹⁶ Marshall was well qualified to "do a particular job that needs to be done in China," as the White House Press Secretary Charles Ross

explained.¹⁷ Hence, Marshall's appointment served the dual purpose of demonstrating the Administration's anti-Communism and yet also stabilizing the situation in China without a major commitment of American military forces.

Given its contradictory objectives, why was Marshall's mediation ever acceptable to the three parties involved? The answer is, at that time, negotiation was the best choice for all sides. As will be seen in what follows, none had a better alternative.

The U.S. Position

In a speech on October 27, 1945, Truman pointed out that "a new danger was beginning to appear," caused by the refusal of "one of our former allies ... to cooperate ... to build a peaceful world." But the President assured his audience that Americans were "prepared to use our military strength to fulfill our obligations." Unfortunately, Truman went on to say the U.S. did not have unlimited resources to enable it to undertake some burdens in this world struggle. China was one of these.¹⁸

Recalling his days in the White House when he made the decision to send Marshall's mission, Truman wrote in his memoirs, "Our position in China offered us little choice." He said, "We could not send in the kind of military forces that could assure that Chiang Kai-shek would prevail," which would "throw into China unlimited resources and large armies of American soldiers to defeat the Communists.... The American

people would never stand for such an undertaking."¹⁹

Under these domestic pressures, however determined Truman was to be "prepared to use our military strength to fulfill our obligations," the last thing he wanted to see was U.S. military involvement in the Chinese civil war. Nor could he afford simply to wash his hands of the situation. Chaos in China could upset the equilibrium of the postwar world. In a confidential letter to the president, Marshall wrote:

I have told Generalissimo that two factors in my opinion make it imperative for him to find an agreement with the Communists for a unified government and army at an early date. First, that in the present situation China is very vulnerable to low level Russian infiltration methods to the strengthening of the Communist regime and the progressive weakening of the National Government position in Northwest China and Manchuria reference Russia, and secondly, that it is apparent that United States military and Naval forces can not be continued for long in China.²⁰

Marshall concluded that "only the Communists would gain, if a general conflagration were allowed to develop."²¹

In addition to this dilemma, inherent in the perception of "world struggle", there were sentimental constraints that the Truman Administration had to take into account. It would be extremely hard for the Americans to break their commitment after years of efforts during the war to build up the image of China, particularly Chiang Kai-shek, as an ally of the U.S. in the war against Japan. For better or for worse, Americans expected their government to remain faithful to its old allies.

Furthermore, Truman and Marshall believed that it was necessary to preserve order and stability in China as a way to block Moscow. They were aware of what the Soviet Union was doing to Manchuria, Singjiang and Outer Mongolia and feared that "failure to bring about unification would lead to Soviet intervention."²² On the other hand, they were not aware of the complexity of the Chinese problem. On top of all these, the preconceived assumption of the monolithic character of the Communist movement made it harder for the American leaders to distinguish radical nationalism from Soviet expansion. Even when they were reminded of the differences between Moscow and Yenan, they chose not to believe.

On the very afternoon of Hurley's resignation, Secretary of State James Byrnes reminded the President that Stalin at Potsdam had called the Chinese Communists brigands, robbers and fascists. Neither Truman nor others present heeded Byrnes' reminder.²³ To them, considering the character, the ideology and the past attitude of the Chinese Communists, it was difficult "to perceive how American interests of any kind could flourish in such a Communist state." Furthermore, a China "unfriendly towards the U.S. would be an ever-present menace to the security of our country and inimical to the principles which we espouse."²⁴

Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy's question: "Under what circumstances is the U.S. willing to see Manchuria become a Chinese Communist state in somewhat the same category as Outer Mongolia?"²⁵ reflected the fear of Soviet

expansion which gripped these key officials of the Truman Administration. In addition to their inherent fear of monolithic Communism was the warning from the Division of Eastern European Affairs that the Soviets would use the Chinese Communists as "an effective machine to build up and expand their influence in a somewhat similar manner to the methods they have used in Central and Eastern Europe."²⁶

The concessions won by Stalin at Yalta and acknowledged in the Sino-Soviet Pact signed on August 14, 1945 had reversed most of the Russian defeats in China during the preceding four decades. Now Moscow's postwar position in China would be even stronger than St. Petersburg's at the beginning of the twentieth century before the Russo-Japanese War. Considering all these potential dangers, Truman told his cabinet that "unless we took a strong stand in China, Russia would take the place of Japan in the Far East."²⁷ Otherwise, Manchuria and North China would pass under Soviet control or dissolve into separate states under Soviet domination (like Mongolia), which would tip over the whole scale of balance of power. To the U.S., it would mean "the defeat or loss of the major purpose of our war in the Pacific."²⁸

Truman and his subordinates were concerned about many things in China: they wanted to confront Soviet Russia in its attempt to expand into Manchuria; they wanted to prevent a Communist take-over in China; and they wanted a united and strong China under Chiang Kai-shek with close and friendly ties to the U.S. However, the means that Truman could use to

achieve these goals were limited by political considerations. He could not send Americans to fight Chiang's battles. That would be a task so great and so repugnant to the American people that the government could not undertake it and it was one which was not in accordance with American interests.²⁹

The only course of action that was left open to them, as Truman put it, was to "exert whatever influence we might have to prevent civil war," and to "support the Generalissimo politically, economically, and within the limits, militarily."³⁰

The Position and Rationale of the CCP

Why did the Chinese Communists accept Marshall's mediation and come to the conference table? When news of Hurley's resignation reached China, Yen-an was quite pleased. The Hsin Hu Jih Pao (the major communist newspaper), printed an editorial on November 30, saying that the "resignation offered a golden opportunity."³¹ On November 30, editorials in both Communist Party papers, Hsin Hua Jih Pao in Chungking and Jie Fang Jih Pao in Yen-an, expressed the hope that General Marshall would consolidate and develop the friendship of the Chinese people and the American people."³² At an earlier conference in welcoming Marshall's participation in matters pertaining to cessation of hostilities, the announcement of surrender and in opening communication, the Communist representative Chou En-lai expresses Yen-an's eagerness to have Marshall as mediator in settling the civil war. Yen-an felt Marshall's support in

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accomplishing an effective cessation of armed hostilities would be in the interest of the Chinese people.³³

Frustrated both by Stalin's policy and Hurley's pernicious line, the Communists needed Marshall's cooperation. They hoped that he would reverse Hurley's line and would play "an even-handed role in China." They also hoped that if Marshall found Chungking "responsible for the failure of his mission, Washington might cut its aid to the Kuomingtang."³⁴

At a time when the Communists were militarily weak and politically sold out by Stalin, they needed support and sympathy both at home and abroad. Only through negotiations could legal recognition of the Party be secured. If negotiation efforts failed, the Communist leaders hoped they would at least have the opportunity to show the world that Chiang Kai-shek was bent on war.

What was the international situation bearing upon the civil conflict in China? At the end of World War II, economic rehabilitation in Europe as well as in Asia required peace and stability. Several major powers were overtly concerned that uncontrolled civil conflict in China would endanger the delicate equilibrium in international relationships. The Chinese Communist leadership was fully aware of this, as Mao Tsetung said: "A number of factors including the international situation mitigated against renewal of open warfare."³⁵

Before leaving Yen-an, Mao explained to his comrades that he had agreed to the talks because "at present the Soviet Union, the U.S., and Britain all disapprove of civil war in

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China."³⁶ Had the Communists attempted to renew open warfare, they would not only have discredited their own image as defender of national interests but also offended their "Big Brother" in Moscow. Recalling his hard times some twenty years later Mao said: "The Russians did not permit China to make revolution. Stalin ... [was] saying that we should not have a civil war and should cooperate with Chiang Ki-shek. Otherwise, the Chinese nation would perish."³⁷ Stalin confirmed Mao's statement when he told his Yugoslavian comrades in early 1948 that the Chinese had proven their independence and at the end of the war they won their revolution by disobeying his advice.³⁸

There always have been differences of opinion among the Communist parties in different countries and among the Communists in each Communist party. Yet the officers and staffs of the State Department and War Department were oblivious to these differences. Nothing could shake their belief that the Chinese Communist Party was acting on behalf of Moscow³⁹ let alone make them accept that the Chinese Communists "enjoyed what seem to be a surprising degree of independence of Moscow."⁴⁰

Stalin was first and foremost a Russian expansionist. The concessions that he had won at Yalta in early 1945 had fit neatly into the historic pattern of Russian efforts to secure political and economic advantages at the expense of China. They bore no trace of either Marxist internationalism or any human compassion for a sorely tried and long-humiliated

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neighbor. He was not interested in the common allegiance to Marxism-Leninism, but only interested in regaining what Russia had lost in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). He said at the end of World War II:

The defeat (in the Russo-Japanese War) weighed on our country like a dark blot. Our people believed and waited for the day when Japan would be beaten and the blot be wiped out. For forty years we of the older generation have waited for this day. And now this day has come.⁴¹

With the fresh memory of twenty million and more lost Russian lives and disrupted economy Stalin was determined to make Russia secure in his life time. Besides, being chronically suspicious, Stalin felt ill at ease with a strong unified China, even more so with a strong China under the Chinese Communist Party, which had proven its independence with Moscow. As Djilas said:

He anticipated future danger to his own world and to his own empire from the new Communist great power, especially since there were no prospects of subordinating it internally.⁴²

Stalin's disdain for ideological commitment was not only obvious to his comrades like the Yugoslavian Communist Djilas; it was also noted by the American Charge d'Affaires in the Soviet Union, George Kennan. In a letter to the Secretary of State from Moscow on January 10, 1946, Kennan wrote: "If Russian interests would thereby be served, USSR would not permit ideological scruples to stand in the way of a deal with Chinese reactionaries."⁴³ He went on to say:

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It would be a mistake to assume that USSR necessarily seeks in Manchuria a regime composed predominantly of Yen'an Communists. In most respects USSR can perhaps be better served by docile opportunists of all colors of the political spectrum than by exclusively Yen'an personnel who are ideologically acceptable but who as result of their nationalist sentiments may prove headstrong.⁴⁴

Headstrong the Chinese Communists did prove to be in the twenty-five year history of relations between them and their Russian comrades.

The primary Chinese Communist leader Mao Tzetung knew the history of Sino-Russian relations and the humiliations China had suffered time and again at Russia's hands. Least of all would Mao ever forget his own experience with the arrogance of Moscow's representatives such as Michael Borodin who masterminded the catastrophe in 1927. Besides, Mao's strong nationalist sentiments conflicted with Stalin's proteges in the Party, Wang Ming and the so-called twenty-eight Bolsheviks. Most importantly, Mao could not be ignorant of what the Soviet Union was doing in Sinkiang and Northeast China in late 1945.

According to a report by Edwin W. Pauley, personal representative of U.S. president on reparations, Russian looting in Manchuria after the war amounted to \$2 billion, of which direct damage upon Manchuria by Soviet removals would amount to \$858,000,000.⁴⁵

Taking advantage of the fact that the Nationalist troops were racing with the Communist troops to take over cities evacuated by the Russians, Stalin made a deal with the

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Kuomintang government for joint Sino-Soviet control of the development of the mineral resources in Manchuria. In return, on November 13, 1945, the Soviets agreed to allow the airlift of 1,500 KMT troops per day into Changchun. On November 17, 1945, while denying any assistance to the Chinese Communist troops, the Soviets agreed to postpone their withdrawal of troops from December 3 to January 3 at the request of the National Government,⁴⁶ on the condition of joint Sino-Soviet operation of 80% of heavy industry in Manchuria.⁴⁷ While dealing with the KMT government so as to exact maximum concessions in Manchuria and Singjiang, the Soviet Government time and again disassociated itself from the Chinese Communists. In a confidential letter to the Chinese Government, George Yeh wrote that: "On November 17, official word was received from Moscow The message stated that ... the Soviet Government had no intention whatsoever of supporting the Chinese Communists."⁴⁸

Stalin, on a different occasion, personally pledged his support to the Nationalist Government. Recalling his meeting with Stalin at the Foreign Ministers Conference in Moscow, James Byrnes wrote that:

He [Stalin] stated that by his treaty with China signed last August he pledged his support to the National Government and he intends to comply with that obligation.⁴⁹

At a conference with American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Averill Harriman, Stalin also promised Russian support to the Nationalists. He explained that Moscow had just

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recently recalled its three representatives from Yen-an, and therefore, had little contact with the Chinese Communist Party.⁵⁰ The fact that its three representatives in Yen-an was the only contact Moscow had with the Chinese Communists before the end of World War II was also noted by Theodore White in his book Thunder out of China. In that book, White mentioned that from 1937 to 1945 no more than five Russian planes made trips to Yen-an and by 1944 two Tass newspapermen and a Russian doctor constituted the only instruments of Soviet influence in Yen-an.⁵¹ And in Manchuria, the Russians, in compliance with their treaty with the National Government, have handed over civil administration of Mukden to the Chinese Central Government authorities on December 27 and that of Harbin on January 1.⁵²

Stalin's policy in Manchuria forced the Communists to abandon their efforts to reduce Soviet aid to Chungking. The departure of Hurley and the appointment of Marshall seemed to offer an opportunity for securing American support; so the Chinese Communist Party turned to the United States.⁵³ In pursuit of the American connection, the Party leaders needed Marshall's cooperation. As Colonel Ivan D. Yeaton, Commanding Officer of the U.S. Army Observer Group in Yen-an, observed, "I ... believed the Communists are ready to make greater concessions than ever before and at the same time if General Marshall's reactions [are] favorable to throw themselves in the lap of the U.S."⁵⁴ Not only did the Party press applaud Marshall's appointment, but the Communist leaders made

favorable remarks about what they interpreted as a change in American policy.⁵⁵ Apart for their concern for the international situation and their hope for a change in American policy towards China domestic factors also played a role in bringing the Communists to the table.

At the time of the Japanese surrender, the Communists were militarily weak. They had 1.2 million troops under their command, but they had no planes, no tanks, and a few pieces of artillery. Their troops had only rifles. They held an area of 2.2 million square kilometers out of a total of 9.59 million square kilometers, which accounted for only 22.9% of the whole area of China. In these areas, they controlled 130 million people, which accounted for only 29.1% of the total population of China.*⁵⁶

On the other hand, the Kuomintang had 2 million regular troops and more than 1 million irregular troops. In addition to that, they had another 1 million cadets and staffs of the military academies in the rear areas. This totaled up to more than 4.3 million troops. They controlled more than 300 million people and all the big cities in China.

*According to the U.S. military intelligence, the Chinese Communists in their¹⁶ areas had 475,000 regular troops and had 207,000 rifles.⁵⁷ Acheson's figures of the Chinese Communists' strength at that time were as follows: they controlled 15% of geographical area, with 116 million people, which accounted for one quarter of the population of China.⁵⁸ Due to lack of access to official documents, the figures Wei quoted in his book are the most complete ones I can get so far. However, I need other sources to confirm my suspicion that these figures are a little exaggerated.

The differences between the military strengths of the two sides can also be seen in a report sent by the Charge d'Affaires in China, Walter S. Robertson, to the Secretary of State on January 7, 1946, in which he wrote:

Military position of Communists in North China seems to be deteriorating as the Central Government launches an assault on Southeastern Jehole and masses troops in Honan and Northern Kiangsu for drives.... Their failure is attributed to supply difficulties, heavy casualties, extremely⁵⁹ cold weather and lack of sufficient artillery.

Given this military inferiority, it was not feasible for the Chinese Communists to contend with the Central Government on a national scale. What seemed possible for the time being was to gain some legal recognition in the whole country, gain some seats in a coalition government, and gradually work their way to the top. This outlook and attitude of the Chinese Communist Party was well discussed in a dispatch sent by the Associated Press correspondent in China, John Roderick. While commenting on the possibility of the Communists establishing a rival government, Roderick said that the Communist leaders had not considered it because they knew that "to do so would mark a definite abandonment of all hope of gaining control of all China. The Communists are confident that they will be at the helm of a coalition government within a year."⁶⁰ This observation was confirmed in Marshall's letter to Truman on February 1, 1946. Referring to his meeting with Chou En-lai, Marshall cited part

of the translation of Chou's initial remarks on January 31, 1946 as follows:

The door towards democracy is now pushed open, regardless of how narrow the opening still is.... The Communist Party is prepared to cooperate with the United States in matters both of a local and national character on the basis as embodied in your aforementioned attitude.... Since in present-day China, the conditions necessary to the introduction of Socialism do not exist, we Chinese Communists, who theoretically advocate Socialism as our ultimate goal, do not mean, nor deem possible, to carry it into effect in the immediate future.⁶¹

In spite of adversity, the Communists had never doubted that they would win in the long run, even though they were temporarily weak. Their strategy of guerrilla warfare would finally, they believed allow them to take over the cities. Economically, they were self-sufficient. Politically they were far better disciplined than the corrupt Kuomintang. Yet, a quick victory was out of reach. Protracted war was unacceptable to the Chinese people, on whose support the Communist Party relied.

In the winter of 1945 there was an outcry all over China for a cessation of hostilities between the Kuomintang and Chinese Communists. As Lieutenant General Wedemeyer, Commander of American Forces in China, observed, "The inarticulate masses of China desire peace ... an opportunity to work, to obtain food and clothing for their families and a happy peaceful environment are their primary concern."⁶² Many of the more articulate agreed. On October 30, 1945, State Councillor Huang Yen-pei appealed for an end to war.

Soon after this the most influential liberal party in China, the Democratic League, published its statement calling for an end to war. On November 10, 1945, twenty-seven magazines in Chungking issued a joint statement also calling for an end to war.⁶³ On November 19, 1945, an Anti-Civil War Association was set up in Chungking.⁶⁴ On November 25, in Kunmin, 6,000 students and residents held a mass meeting, calling for an end to war. On November 27, 28, and 29, thirty-one universities and schools in Kunmin were closed by student boycotts. The protestors called for an end to war, a coalition government, the protection of civil rights and the withdrawal of American troops.⁶⁵ On December 29, 1945, sixty-one leading intellectuals in Shanghai wrote an open letter to the American people which was published in a left-wing magazine Zhou Bao Weekly. It stated that "the vast majority of the Chinese people cannot tolerate civil war any more." The letter urged the United States to "take effective steps immediately to prevent its armed forces and weapons from being utilized by either side in the Chinese civil conflict in their attempts to expand or prolong military confrontation."⁶⁶ On January 14, 1946, students in Shanghai demonstrated for the withdrawal of American troops and for a coalition government. On January 30, more than 10,000 students in Chungking held a demonstration, calling for unity, peace and democracy.⁶⁷

Along with those who could make their voices heard through the different media, were the common folks who for

eight years had borne the brunt of the Anti-Japanese War. Contrary to their traditional indifference to politics as subservient Chinese subjects, they voiced their anti-war sentiments in letters to various magazines and newspapers. On November 17, 1945, a man by the name of Pan Anye wrote: "After eight years of bitter experiences of Anti-Japanese War the Chinese people are extremely tired of hearing shooting again, particularly the kind of fratricidal shooting."⁶⁸ On November 30, a soldier by the name of Zhang Hong wrote: "The terrible civil war will only bring destruction and genocide to our nation. We must do everything to stop it!"⁶⁹ On December 20, a group of shop assistants wrote an open letter to General Marshall:

We are a group of unknown and obscure shop assistants. We do not have any political affiliations or personal ambitions.... We are the common people who suffer the most. Though we survived the war against the Japanese invasion, we might die in an anti-democracy and anti-freedom civil war.... We, with all sincerity, appeal to you, dear General, please do whatever you can to bring unity to China.... Meanwhile, we hope that the U.S. will not provide any materials or arms and ammunitions to either side before any agreement is reached between the two, because American aid at this time would only encourage the civil war and harm national unity.⁷⁰

There were other letters, though written at a later time, which manifested the wide-spread anti-war sentiments prevailing in China after Japan's surrender. On May 9, 1946, Mr. Wen Yuying, a soldier in the 99th Division of the National Army wrote from the battle front in Nantong, Jiangsu Province, saying: "Now that we have won the Anti-Japanese War, we are

not willing to die for a handful of bureaucrats whose only concern is to gain power in their party struggle."⁷¹ This unwillingness to fight for what was considered to be the interests of a select and distant few was a sentiment common among the people, especially when the National Government once again enforced conscription throughout the country. A letter sent to a literary journal Wen Cui, on October 27, 1946, and signed by Wu Banruo and seven others said:

We are most indignant to learn from newspapers that the Government is determined to continue the enforced recruitment.... Fellow countrymen! We should not be driven like a flock of sheep to the battlefield to kill our own brothers! Our blood must not be shed as the asset of the careerists to strengthen their one-party dictatorship. Fellow countrymen, it is time that we oppose civil war in an effective way by refusing to be drafted into the army.⁷²

Another letter written by thirty-seven small rice shop owners in Shanghai said:

The aggravation of this rice shortage was caused by the civil war. As long as the civil war goes on and the requisition of rice for military purpose continues, the shortage of rice will not be relieved and the price of rice will remain high. Therefore, the first and foremost thing to do at present is to stop the civil war, and discontinue the requisition.⁷³

The outcry for peace was not only pervasive in the mainland China, it was shared by the Chinese in Taiwan. On November 20, 1945, a reporter of the Central News Agency of the National Government in his dispatch published in the influential, pro-Government newspaper Tai Kung Pao in Shanghai, told of his visit to Xingzu, Taizhong and Tainan.

The elders and brothers in Taiwan told him that after more than fifty years under Japanese occupation they rejoiced to see the dawn coming. They expressed their hope for the unity of China and no more civil war.⁷⁴ Although these cries for peace were addressed to the National Government, the Communists could not ignore them either. If they had not come to the table and tried to negotiate, they would have been held responsible for the renewal of open warfare. They could hardly afford to lose their popular support. As Mao explained to the Party cadres, "Our concession on this point will help frustrate the Kuomintang's plot for civil war and win us the sympathy of the numerous middle elements at home and abroad." By going to negotiate, "we exploded the rumor spread by the Kuomintang that the Chinese Communist Party did not want peace and unity.... If the Kuomintang launches civil war again, it would put itself in the wrong in the eyes of the whole world, and we shall have all the more reason to smash its attack by a war of self defense."⁷⁵

Some of the Party leaders, especially those who worked in the cities under the Nationalist reign, wanted to take this opportunity to gain recognition for the Communist Party. Liu Shao-qi, on February 1, 1946, expressed this desire among certain Party leaders when he said in his report On the Current Situation that "by making these concessions, we will be able to win the legal status of our Party."⁷⁶ A notification to the Party members about the negotiations with the Kuomintang by the CCP's Central Committee also showed its

members' concern for the recognized legal status.

It stated:

The Kuomintang ... with pressures both at home and abroad, will probably recognize the legal status of our Party with certain reservations. We, too, with certain reservations, recognize the Kuomintang's status. This will bring about a new stage of peaceful development, with the cooperation between the two parties (the Democratic League also included). Without these concessions we will not be able to expose the Kuomintang's plot in favor of a civil war; therefore, we will not in he political initiative; nor will we be able to win the sympathy of the world-wide public opinion and that of the middle-of-the roaders at home; we will not be able to win the recognition of the legal status of our Party and a peaceful situation at home.⁷⁷

The Communists knew quite well that only by gaining legal status as a first step could they be accepted into a coalition government while the "democratic elements are arising within the Kuomintang."⁷⁸ Mao told his comrades at the Seventh Party Congress, the Communist Party was "willing to resume negotiations with the Kuomintang authorities as soon as they are willing to renounce their present erroneous policies and agree to democratic reforms."⁷⁹ When various groups of liberal Chinese made their voices heard "in the effort to break the monopoly of the Kuomintang,"⁸⁰ the Communists chose to stay "close to liberal opinion while trying to lead it forward."⁸¹ This concern with worldwide public opinion, with winning the support of the middle-of-the roaders was so manifest that even Professor Wang in Taiwan had

to acknowledge that "trying to win sympathy was part of the set policy of the Chinese Communist party."⁸²

Thus, given the domestic and international situations, Mao and his colleagues decided to resume negotiations with the Kuomintang, with Marshall as the mediator. If they could not win American support, they, at least, would succeed in detaching foreign support from Chiang Kai-shek. In either case, they had nothing to lose.

Chiang Kai-shek and Kuomintang's Options

Compared with the Communist Party, the Kuomintang had even less of a choice in accepting Marshall's mediation. Though Chiang Kai-shek was not interested in the negotiation, he was compelled by the situation to come to the conference table. What he wrote in his book Soviet Russia in China showed his lack of interest in the negotiation. Recalling the domestic situation after World War II, Chiang wrote:

(1) Politically speaking, the armed rebellion of the Communist bandits is a war of aggression against China by Soviet Russia. The Chinese Communists were doing the fighting while Moscow was pulling the strings behind the scenes.

(2) Legally speaking, the National Government, like all democratic governments, has to suppress internal rebellions so as to maintain political and social order. This is the responsibility as well as the jurisdiction of the Government.⁸³

Therefore, it was only justifiable for his government to suppress the Communists "rebellion" with force. His "Si Tian Zi No. 70" secret order provided further evidence of his

insincerity towards negotiations. In that order, he explained to his men that both the Political Consultative Conference and the negotiations were "political tactics used in coordination with the military suppression of the Communists."⁸⁴

What problems were facing Chiang at the time of Japanese surrender that made him choose negotiation instead of a full-scale civil war? In spite of the fact that the Nationalists were stronger than the Communists militarily, Chiang was well aware that there was no way for him to win a quick victory. Regardless of the fact that the government troops outnumbered the Communists by four or five times and were much better equipped and supplied with American aid, they were at something of a geographical disadvantage,⁸⁵ hundreds of miles away from the coastal lowlands and Manchuria. As the American Charge d'Affaire in China Robertson observed:

The Central Government finds it very difficult to establish lines of communication in area between Lunhai Railroad and Peiping, for the Communists ... are skirmishing in rural areas and severing or tearing up portions of the rail lines.⁸⁶

The Communist guerrillas restricted and harassed the movements of the Government forces to such an extent that to get to these areas "will be a costly and extended campaign."⁸⁷ Even after the Nationalist troops swept over Manchuria with their superior military forces, and were expecting to take over major urban centers and main lines of communications, the "control of hinterland may well remain [in] Communist hands,

indefinitely, resulting in [a] situation analogous to [the] Communist position [in] North China during [the] Japanese occupation."⁸⁸ Only the U.S. could move Chiang's men and help him to avert disaster. To help the Nationalist troops move into these areas 50,000 American Marines landed in the principle seaports so that "they would not be captured by Communists."⁸⁹ Seven hundred American planes were flying over the "hump" from Burma and India to the greater area of Shanghai for the delivery of Chiang's forces.⁹⁰ And 80,000 of Chiang's best troops were concentrated to be moved by air with all the speed the American Army and Air Force could muster.⁹¹ The railways were protected by the U.S. Marine Corps. With American flags flying in these areas, the Communists could not attack the Government troops once they moved into areas under American protection. Without American support it was "impossible for Chiang to occupy Northeast China and South Central China with the Communists in between the rail lines ... the entire country would be taken over by the Communists."⁹² It was very clear to Chiang that since his desired victory was largely dependent on American support, he had come to the table as he was advised to by the U.S. Chiang knew that his American-sponsored, trained and equipped thirty-nine divisions were just getting organized and would only be able to fight effectively if guaranteed continued American supplies. Chiang could not afford to lose American aid by offending the U.S.

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Besides the geographical disadvantages in the disposition of its armed forces, the Central Government also faced the problems of factionalism. It was a common knowledge in China that the Central and local armies were treated differently in terms of equipment and supplies. As a result, the generals of the local armies harbored resentments against the central power. In many cases, the local armies, inadequately equipped and insufficiently supplied, surrendered to the Communists. Not long after Japan's surrender, General Gao Shuxun in Handan, Hebei Province, refused to fight the civil war on the side of the Nationalist Government. He defected.⁹³ Many of his subordinates and soldiers followed him. War weariness was universal among the Nationalist troops. In retrospect, while trying to analyze the reasons of the Nationalist defeat in China, the Chinese Naval Attache in Washington mentioned:

After eight years of the Anti-Japanese War, the soldiers had not only gone through a hard life, but consequently were very much demoralized. After Japan's surrender, they were ordered to fight against the Communists. With their life going from bad to worse, it was even harder to keep their already low morale stable. As a result, they either surrendered or deserted the army.⁹⁴

Desertion was a threat to the Central Government not only in terms of military strength, but in terms of political strength as well. When John King Fairbank returned to China at the end of 1945 after two years absence, he wrote to John Carter Vincent, then Director of the State Department's Division of Far Eastern Affairs, on December 6, 1945.

The most striking change since two years ago in the minds of the Chinese intellectuals appears to be their final desertion of the Generalissimo.... They see no hope in his regime; it will continue to seek political control without achieving economic and social reform.⁹⁵

Fairbank's observation was shared by Wedemeyer, who wrote to Marshall from Shanghai, on January 7, 1946, that:

This suppression still existing in China will cause many of Chinese intellectuals, small businessmen and the students to affiliate themselves with the opposition.⁹⁶

With all the pressures in and outside of the Kuomintang, Chiang could not ignore the cries for peace from the inarticulate. Even less so could he afford to ignore the calls for democracy by the Westernized elements among leading Chinese intellectuals. In wooing the Americans, Chiang tried to impress the world of his sincerity in support for democracy at home by agreeing to form a new government on a coalition basis, embracing the Communist Party and the liberal parties. Thus he would "receive immediate American assistance."⁹⁷ On the other hand, he did not have to worry about his authority in the government being questioned by the U.S.⁹⁸ With his own authority in the coalition government assured by his American allies, Chiang set his men to the negotiation table. Only by giving the U.S. some hope of possible success could he keep getting the American aid necessary to defeat the Communists in the long run.

Negotiations

No matter how hard Chiang tried to use the negotiations as a cover for an ultimately military solution, he could not entirely disguise his real disdain for the process. In order to impress the Americans with his "liberalism," Chiang selected liberal members of the Kuomintang elite as his negotiators. However, neither Chang Chi-chung nor Shao Li-tze had any backing from either the military or political core. Their nominal assistant, Cheng Li-sheng, a representative of the CC clique, one of the dominant reactionary Kuomintang factions, was actually keeping an eye on the negotiations. He constantly reported to the Chen brothers, who headed the clique. Although both Shao and Chang favored a coalition government themselves and expected to play important roles in it, they had no direct access to Chiang and could only report to him indirectly through Chang Chun, Governor of Sichuan Province.⁹⁹ By expressing their personal views, these men impressed Marshall with Chungking's false sincerity in the negotiations. But however misleading the lull of hostilities might be the negotiations did not always look promising to all. As Wedemeyer correctly pointed out:

I believe we should be alert to all of the implications of the last indicated matter [redisposition of military forces] because during any lull in hostilities the Central Government may attempt to redispense forces and to strengthen their overall position, both military and political so that should hostilities flare up again they will have overwhelming power against the Communists.¹⁰⁰

The Central Government took the advantage of the opportunity presented by the repatriation of Japanese soldiers, the disposal of the enemy's equipment and the disposition of military forces to move its armies towards the disputed areas like Manchuria and Jehol and Chahar.

When the question of troops movements in Manchuria was first brought up at the Conference of Three (with Marshall as the American mediator, Chou En-lai as the Chinese Communist representative and Governor Chang Chun as representative of the Kuomintang), Chou En-lai accepted the exception regarding Manchuria because "the Chinese Communist recognized that the Chinese Government has the right to take over Manchuria, "which is in conformance with the announced U.S. policy" and "in conformance with the Sino-Soviet treaty."¹⁰² But the next day the Governor "asks for an exception of Jehol," as General Marshall put it.¹⁰² At a conference with Marshall and Chou En-lai on January 7, 1946, Chang Chun proposed that the exception would cover these regions in North China outside of Manchuria "which should be taken over in accordance with the agreement with Soviet Russia."¹⁰³ This was untenable because no such stipulation was contained in the Sino-Soviet pact. According to the supplementary note signed by Molotov on August 14, 1945, Russia recognized China's full sovereignty over the three provinces of Manchuria and promised to respect Chinese territorial and administrative integrity there. The CCP could not "recognize separately such a clause that any

place which is now occupied by the Soviet troops should be taken over by the National Government.¹⁰⁴ The reason for the Chinese Communists to accept the first exception of Manchuria with regard to the troop movements was because they "do not want to interfere with the Chinese obligation both towards the U.S. and the Soviet Union."¹⁰⁵ There was no reason for the further exception of territories neither mentioned by the U.S. or the Soviet Union in any written or verbal agreements. Nevertheless, "the negotiation hung on the insistence of the National Government to continue its troops movement into provinces of Jehol and Chahar to occupy important rail points of Chihfeng and Tolun in accordance with the outline of the plan of the National Government to take over from the Soviet forces."¹⁰⁶

While the negotiations continued, Chiang Kai-shek's key military and political associates were busily assuring officers at lower levels that the Government's policies had not really changed. The day after Mao's arrival in Chungking, He Ying-ching, the Commander-in-Chief of Chinese Field Forces, circulated secret copies of the Handbook on How to Suppress the Communists, written by Chiang himself for the purpose of crushing the Communists during the period of 1927-1936. On September 17, Chiang personally gave secret orders for the distribution of the handbook. On October 8, 1945, a Government plane made an emergency landing at Jiaozuo, a mining town under the Communist control. A captured letter signed by Chiang Kai-shek said, "Enclosed here are two copies

of the Handbook on How to Suppress the Communists ... Chung Chen.* Sept. 17." On October 24, Hu Tsung-nan sent the following cable to Gao Shunxun, which said, "Confidential. Generalissimo's Cable, dated Oct. 13. The suppression of the Communists now at this time ... must be carried out in the same spirit of fighting against the Japanese. Please abide by the Handbook on How to Suppress the Communists, written by me, and instruct your subordinates (those who work under you), strive hard to suppress them as soon as possible...."¹⁰⁷

With the issuance of these secret orders from their supreme commander, Kuomintang officers and police understood the real objective of the Central Government. Nor did they hesitate to act as commanded.

Several incidents on Marshall's arrival in China gave the lie to the sincerity in negotiation of the Kuomintang. On December 20, 1945, several thousand students from thirty-two universities and schools in Shanghai held a rally in celebration of Marshall's mission to China. In an open letter to the Special Envoy of the American President they expressed a hope that the U.S. would be fair and impartial in searching for peace and democracy in China and that Marshall would use his influence to bring an immediate cessation of hostilities. On their way to the Cathay Hotel to see Marshall, the students were attacked and beaten by a group of plain-clothed thugs.¹⁰⁸ On December 23, 1945, before Marshall's plane touched down in

*Chung Chen: Chiang Kai-shek's official name.

Chungking, Kuomintang police began to chase the Communist representatives off the field and were only dissuaded by American intervention.¹⁰⁹

Thanks to Marshall's valiant efforts, the negotiations began and a cease-fire agreement was reached on January 10, 1946. As a result, the Political Consultative Conference was convened. Members from the Kuomintang, Communist Party, democratic League, Youth Party and various non-party personages attended. From January 10 to 31, they held open discussions of the reorganization of national government and armies, a common administrative policy, the National Assembly and a draft constitution.¹¹⁰ Chiang Kai-shek's extemporaneous statement on January 14 highlighted the conference. To appease the Chinese liberals and to impress the Americans, he promised that the Central Government would take measures within ten days to grant civil liberties. He even promised that political prisoners would be released within seven days. The Communists and other minor parties at the conference publicly welcomed the announcement. They believed that "this action at least meant that no further arrests will be made."¹¹¹

Subversion of the Mission

After much debate and discussion, the Political Consultative Conference adopted a series of resolutions on February 1.¹¹² But when the agreements were transmitted to the Kuomintang Central Executive Committee for

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ratification, they met with an incessant flow of verbal attacks from disgruntled diehards, who would not put "the agreed measures to limit the governmental power of the Kuomintang into effect."¹¹³ They even called "in question the usefulness of any negotiations."¹¹⁴

According to the American Counselor in Chungking, a five point resolution was introduced to the final session of the Central Executive Committee "which, if adopted, would have effect of nullifying [the] entire Political Consultative Conference constitutional agreement."¹¹⁵ Marshall pointed out in his January 7 message that "irreconcilable groups within the Kuomintang interested in preservation of their own feudal control of China evidently had no intention of implementing [the PCC resolution]."¹¹⁶

For whatever reasons, Chiang failed to keep the promise announced in that January 14 speech. Instead of releasing the political prisoners and granting the people their freedoms of speech, press and association, there was an increase in police harassment and in political imprisonment. A report to the Secretary of State by the American Counselor of Embassy in Chungking, Robert L. Smyth, will give us some sense of the repressive actions taken by the Kuomintang:

Mass meeting of estimated 7 to 10 thousand people, Feb. 10 sponsored by Democratic League and local civic organizations to celebrate success (of PCC?) disrupted by organized hoodlums, estimated 300. Several prominent liberals beaten and suffered injuries, none believed critical. Violent press controversies are in progress. Non-government press alleges collusion

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government police agencies which government press ignores and denies. Weight of present evidence indicates at least prior planning and organization for demonstration aimed at repudiation PCC resolutions and discrediting the advocates of full implementation thereof....¹¹⁷

At this very meeting, several of its organizers, including some prominent figures such as Li Gong-pu and Guo Mo-jo were beaten.¹¹⁸ On April 3, thirty-nine staff members of the Jie Fang Pao in Peiping were arrested. A month later the newspaper was banned.¹¹⁹ On June 23, eleven representatives designated by a mass rally of 100,000 to carry to Nanking an appeal for peace were beaten up on their way to the capital.¹²⁰ In July, the Kuomintang went even further in their suppression of liberal anti-war activities. On July 11 and 15, Professor Wen I-duo and Li Gong-pu were murdered one after the other by the secret police.¹²¹ Members of the Democratic League fled to the American Consulate in Kunmin for refuge.¹²²

The failure of the Government to punish the perpetrators of these crimes cast doubts on the willingness of the Kuomintang to ratify the work of the Political Consultative Conference and carry forward the progress of peaceful reforms. At a press conference on March 18, commenting on the newly passed resolutions of the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang, Chou said:

There is nothing amazing in that the irreconcilable elements within the Kuomintang should deliberately undermine the PCC decisions, but what puzzles us is that the Generalissimo, who has personally presided

over the PCC, should have allowed the claims of these irreconcilables to be passed by the Plenary Session.¹²³

Peace Aims Abandoned

If the Communists were puzzled in March 1946, they were no longer so four months later. In the memorandum to Marshall on July 16, 1946, Chou En-lai wrote:

By the personal order from the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, all the forces of the Kuomintang Party, Administration, and Army are available at the command of Chen Li-fu to suppress opposition forces. (The order has been shown to the authorities concerned.)¹²⁴

The fact that Chiang Kai-shek was behind the Kuomintang hard-liners was obvious. Even in early January, Wedemeyer wrote to Marshall:

The Generalissimo's determination to hold a conclave of the National Assembly on May 5th without prior elections is indicative to me of his intention to insure that the National Assembly is overwhelmingly packed with old party line members of the Kuomintang.¹²⁵

Ching was as determined as the disgruntle diehards in his Party and could hardly hide his hatred of the Communists in private conversation. A.T. Steele, the correspondent of the Associated Press in China found Chiang's "suspicion and hatred of the Communists ... so deep and real" as to impose "a definite limit to the concession he will allow in spite of foreign pressure."¹²⁶ To convince the U.S. of the importance of "helping keep the Kuomintang in power"¹²⁷ Chiang tried to tie the Chinese civil war in the postwar struggle between the U.S. and Russia. This not only justified

his repressions against the Chinese liberal, who he thought served the Communists, but also made it necessary for the U.S. to continue aid to his government. In an interview with Miles Vaughn, the Far Eastern Manager of the United Press, he expressed "in very strong language that there exists no difference between the Communists in China, Russia, France or any other country, that it is the objective of the Chinese Communists to Sovietize all of China, that the Chinese Communists in Manchuria appeared to have the backing of the Soviet Union and that certain of their actions are possibly controlled by Moscow."¹²⁸ Through the American mass media, as John K. Fairbank pointed out, "the Kuomintang tells us we must check Communism in China."¹²⁹

Although much of this evidence, coming as it was from the Communist sources, might be questioned by an American audience, the evidence in the files of Wellington Koo, the Kuomintang Ambassador to Washington, offers ample corroboration of Kuomintang's intransigence. On April 6, 1946, within twenty-four hours, Chiang sent Hsiung Shih-hui, his commander-in-chief in Manchuria, three successive letters ordering him:

Our army should fight a decisive battle south of Sipingjie against the Red Brigands so as to totally annihilate their main forces. This will make it easy for us to control the whole Northeast area.... To push northward at full speed and deal a devastating blow against the enemy. Aid the army with temporary air covering so as to crush the enemy at one blow. This is fundamental for the control of the Northeast.

The second letter says: All the forces should be put together. Move the best forces north. In the third letter, he told Hsiung to "send reconnaissance planes to the Communist occupied areas in coordination with the army advance. In times of emergency or finding any important targets, straf and bomb."¹³⁰ Under these orders, fighting broke out again in several areas of Northeast China and "spread out from there."¹³¹ When Marshall returned after a brief consultation in Washington, the situation was out of control. The Nationalist troops were advancing aggressively in the Northeast. Chiang's promises, the hope of peaceful unification, of constitutional democracy and coalition government had all vanished into some limbo of history. Marshall's mission had failed. The future of China was now with the gods of war.

Communist Attitudes and Intentions with Respect to the Marshall Mission

If it is clear that Chiang never had any intention of entering in good faith into any agreement or political arrangement with Communists, but was merely biding his time until the moment appropriate for attack, there remains the question of what the attitude and intentions of the Communists were with respect to any such agreements or arrangements entered into under General Marshall's mediation. Chou made clear to Marshall what they expected: "If the U.S. wishes to convince the Communists to cooperate, all it has to do is pull

out the marines and stop supplying Chiang unilaterally, thus proving its good faith."¹³² It was generally believed among the Communist leaders that "suspension of American assistance to the Chinese Government and withdrawal of American force from China would make peace attainable."¹³³ On March 4, 1946, at the Yen'an airport, when asked his opinion of what was the solution to the military hostilities between the Kuomintang and Chinese Communists, Mao said: "The most effective way is [for] the U.S. [to] stop its aid to the Nationalist Government."¹³⁴

When the first round of talks produced the results Yen'an had hoped for -- a cease-fire and an agreement to form a coalition government -- the party leadership and the Communist press applauded the performance of Truman's envoy.¹³⁵

"Though certain aspects of the accomplishments made thus far do not entirely come up to our heart desire," as Chou En-lai told Marshall at one of their meetings, the Chinese Communist Party was very appreciative of Marshall's "nice efforts." In a letter to Marshall, Mao wrote:

I greatly appreciate your fair and just attitude in the course of negotiating and implementing the truce agreement. On behalf of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, I wish to extend to you our deepest thanks.¹³⁶

With the hope of gaining American understanding and, if possible, American support in the negotiations, the Communists made all the concessions they could. They agreed to reduce the number of their army to between twenty and

twenty-four corps and to withdraw from areas under their control in eight provinces south of Yangtze. They implemented that agreement.¹³⁷ When Marshall informed Chou that the U.S. would continue to move the Nationalist troops into Manchuria, Chou promptly replied that Yen-an would accept this practice and the exception of Manchuria from the scope of the cease fire.¹³⁸

Some of the policy makers in Yen-an truly believed that Truman and Marshall had reversed Hurley's policy and had helped usher in a new era of peaceful reform and reconstruction unprecedented in the history of China.¹³⁹ They told the American general that they were "prepared to cooperate with the U.S. in matters both of a local and national character on the basis as embodied in your aforementioned attitude."¹⁴⁰

What the Chinese Communists could not agree to was to abandon their independent army before a real coalition government was formed. The memory of the purge of the Communists by the Kuomintang in 1927 was always there.¹⁴¹ They had to keep their army before their share of power in the government was assured.¹⁴² Truman's public announcement of U.S. goals in China which placed the broadening of the current one-party government ahead of the reorganization of national armies matched the Communists' desire. The moderates in the Party were then very optimistic about the "impartial" American mediation. This optimism was reflected both in the Party's directives as well as in their newspapers.

According to a secret Central Committee directive, the Party told its cadres that a democratic faction had emerged in the U.S. "to oppose the Hurley policy" and to put an alternative acceptable to Yen-an.*¹⁴³ On February 1, 1946, Hsin Hua Jih Pao hailed the PCC resolution. It said: "China has doubtlessly entered a new stage of peace, democracy and reconstruction."¹⁴⁴ Liu Shao-qi, a member of the Communist polit-bureau, gave a Report on the Current Situation on February 1, 1946. In it he expressed moderates' views in the Party. Liu reported that "the civil war on a national scale has stopped. The Kuomintang will probably attack us here and there and therefore we must keep our vigilance. Yet, there will not be a civil war any more." In preparation for a coalition government, he went on to urge the cadres to learn the methods of parliamentary struggle. Liu criticized the exclusionary trend in the Party, labelling its attitude as "close-doorism," which means "our comrades do not want to learn the new methods.... Today our main task is to overcome the leftist trend...." Liu also told his comrades that this was the first time in many years that Chiang Kai-shek had said something nice. "The Central Committee has had a discussion on this. We believe that a new phase of peace and democracy has emerged."¹⁴⁵

*A reprint of an undated document of the Central Committee of CCP issued in January 1946 by the Bureau of Investigation, Report No. 229, March 11, 1946.

Not everybody in the Party shared this optimistic view of the situation. Yeh Chien-ying, a representative of the Communist Party at the Peiping Executive Headquarters, had no faith in American mediation. On his arrival in Peiping, Yeh told reporters that "all problems should be settled between ourselves (the Communists and Nationalists) and I can't see why there must be need of any foreign mediation."¹⁴⁶ Mao, though agreeing to negotiate with the Kuomintang, reminded his comrades "not to solely depend on negotiation." He said, "we should ever cherish any hope of kindheartedness of the Kuomintang."¹⁴⁷

That there did exist different opinions among the Party leaders with regard to the negotiations is tragically corroborated by Liu Shao-qi's Self Criticism during the Cultural Revolution. While criticizing his so-called "new phase for peace and democracy" as a reactionary capitulationist guideline," Liu said:

In the past I made several mistakes in matters of principle. On February 1, 1946, after the Political Consultative Conference I wrongly estimated the situation. I had my illusions about peace.¹⁴⁸

It is reasonable to assume that when and inasmuch as the ostensible objectives of mediation were achieved, the hand of the moderates in the Party was strengthened, and conversely when the mission failed in its ostensible objectives.

As the months of negotiations passed, and the Americans neither withdrew their troops nor ceased aiding Chungking with American supplies, the skeptics in Yen'an became

even more suspicious of Marshall's mediation. "You must admit that Washington has given them sufficient reason," Chou pointed out. "Your marines occupy a line from Peking to the sea, including our great port of Tsingtao, where hundreds of tons of U.S. arms have been delivered to Chiang."¹⁴⁹

When Marshall returned to China in April after his brief consultation in Washington, the Communist papers greeted him in a quite different tone than on the occasion of his first arrival. The Hsin Hua Jih Pao editorial warned that if "the U.S. Government resumes Hurley's policy of an anti-Soviet, anti-Communist, anti-democratic character ... then a full-scale civil war will result...."¹⁵⁰ Chiang Kai-shek's use of Marshall's personal plane on May 23 to fly to the northeast further deepened the suspicion that the Kuomintang's military advance into that area was with Marshall's consent. In any case by now there was among the Chinese Communists a profound disappointment with Marshall's ineffectiveness as a mediator and with an American "even-handedness" that continued to supply and support Chiang regardless of his defiance and disregard of ostensible American peace objectives.

According to a report passed along by a Communist source to a U.S. intelligence officer whom he believed to be fully sympathetic to the Communist cause in China, by the spring of 1946 a large portion of the Communist leaders were opposed to any further negotiations in Nanking. Chu Teh, who previously had gone along with the Party in accepting the

peace proposal, now joined by military commanders in provincial base areas outside Yen-an -- Lin Biao, Chang Hsueh-shih in Manchuria -- was said to lead this opposition.¹⁵¹ Mao, meantime, kept a discreet silence, avoided foreign journalists and tried to avoid being identified with one side or the other. By the summer, however, he had brought down the weight of his authority against the hope of peaceful KMT-CCP cooperation. According to Lin Biao, from this time on, Mao rejected the advice of "some well-intentioned friends at home and abroad."¹⁵² In August, at a conversation with Anna Louise Strong, Mao used the famous metaphor that all reactionaries are paper tigers.¹⁵³ For the time being, and for many years to come, the Communists' image of Kuomintang treachery and American enmity was irrevocably sealed.

Partiality of American Mediation

Americans gave no sign to dispel the Communists' fear that the U.S. would back the Central Government in the coming civil war. Lend-lease supplies and transport of the Nationalist troops to Manchuria continued. The U.S. remained silent at the Kuomintang's policy of harshness against liberals and at Chiang Kai-shek's insistence on freedom of action on the battle fields. Though Marshall tried to be even-handed, he was limited by his own prejudice against the Communists. His memorandum of Truman's verbal instruction to his mission was indicative of this. The essence of this

verbal instruction was that the U.S. would back the Nationalist Government regardless of its actions. This instruction predisposed him towards partiality for the Kuomintang throughout his mediation. Though this instruction came from the President, Marshall himself was its author.* On December 11, 1945, during his conversation with Truman, Byrnes and Leahy, Marshall called their attention to the possibility of a breakdown of the negotiations caused by the Generalissimo's failure to make reasonable concessions. If the U.S. abandoned support of the Generalissimo, the tragic consequences of a divided China and of a probable Russian resumption of power in Manchuria would follow. Marshall inquired whether or not "in that unfortunate eventuality, [the U.S. should] go ahead and assist the Generalissimo in the movement of troops into North China," even if the U.S. "have to swallow its pride and much of its policy in doing so." The President and Byrnes agreed, with this view of the matter, with the condition that "we would have to back the Generalissimo to the extent** of assisting him to move troops into North China in order that the evacuation of the Japanese might be completed."¹⁵⁴

Three days later, at a conference with Truman and Under Secretary Dean Acheson, Marshall brought up the question again. As his personal understanding of the directive, he

*Leonard Mosley in his Hero for our Times holds that Marshall was too busy to have worked on the draft, pp. 364-365.

**Author's italics.

stated that "the U.S. would continue to back the Nationalist Government, through the Generalissimo, within the terms of the announced policy of the U.S. Government." Here the context of the purpose for "the completion of the evacuation of the Japanese" was dropped.¹⁵⁵ The omission could not be accidental. It does not seem possible that this omission came from the President. Truman had made it clear to Marshall three days earlier that the move of Chiang's troops into North China would be carried out in order to complete the evacuation of the Japanese. Nor does it look like the brain-child of the other two. In Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department, Acheson's recounts shed light on the drafting of Marshall's instruction.

At the end of November, 1945, Marshall did not approve of the memorandum outline of instructions prepared by Acheson and John C. Vincent.¹⁵⁶ He then tried his own hand with the help of Generals Thomas Handy, Deputy Chief-of-Staff of the Army, John E. Hull, and Louis A. Craig. But Byrnes and Acheson were strong in support of "amending the Marshall redraft to preclude the transport of Nationalist Government troops by the United States into areas, such as North China, when their introduction would prejudice the objectives of the military truce and the political negotiations."¹⁵⁷

However, Marshall was dissatisfied with this idea, which was dropped at once.¹⁵⁸ Although Byrnes insisted, "the U.S. should stand pat and not give Chiang Kai-shek anything whatsoever until he agreed to come to terms with the Chinese

Communists and give them some places in a Cabinet,"¹⁵⁹ he failed to outweigh Marshall and the generals in the War Department. Thus, the execution of troop movements was left in Marshall's hands. In a series of meetings with the President, the Secretary of State, and the staff of the Department of State, Marshall persistently asked for specific agreement on how he should exercise his discretion with regard to the movements of Chiang's troops into North China. He again and again emphasized that the U.S. would back the Nationalists regardless of their behavior.

President Truman and Secretary Byrnes finally concurred. On December 14, at his last meeting with the President, Marshall, possibly for emphasis or possibly "as a safeguard against misunderstanding in handling this business orally,"¹⁶⁰ went over once again his instructions in the event of failure of the negotiation¹⁶¹ and kept a memorandum of that meeting with Truman and Acheson.¹⁶² Considering that Marshall rarely committed himself on paper, that he did so in this instance was important. In this way, Marshall's support for the Generalissimo underlay his mission. Handicapped by his misconception of the Communists, Marshall had no confidence in their cooperation in the negotiations.

It did not take much for Chiang Kai-shek to get a sense of Marshall's handicap. So he decided to go his own way. As Marshall observed, "the reactionaries in the government have evidently counted on substantial American support regardless of their action."¹⁶⁴ Greatly disappointed with the Nationalists' intransigence and still expecting to achieve some results out of his mediation, Marshall initiated an embargo on arms shipment on July 29, 1946. He believed this embargo would bring Chiang to reasonable terms. Yet much of this action was negated by the continued policy of extending various forms of aid solely to the Nationalist regime. A special bulk sale of American wartime surplus property agreement was signed in Shanghai on August 30 "with approval of General Marshall."¹⁶⁵ This agreement again transferred substantial stocks of American equipment to Chiang. Continued forms of American aid to the Kuomintang, combined with Washington's refusal to accept the Communist Party as a legitimate contender for power and recipient of American aid, eroded the Communist's remaining faith in Marshall as an honest broker. They could not accept continued American assistance to the Kuomintang, which was no longer fighting the Japanese. American planes and fuel, handed over to the Kuomintang through lend-lease, had been used extensively in the bombing of Communist controlled areas. Neither could they see the reason why the Communist areas, with one-fourth of the population of China¹⁶⁶ should only get 0.9% of all the relief supplies from the UNRRA.* These

*United Nations Relief a Rehabilitation Administration.

areas had borne the brunt of the Japanese invasion and suffered over 50% of the total damage in China.¹⁶⁷ The Communists understood that the Central Government was recognized by the United States and therefore it was entitled to receive American aid. Nevertheless, they believed the U.S. had some leverage which the Nationalists could not completely disregard. Had the U.S. imposed certain terms, "the Kuomintang would not have so much of a free hand as it had."¹⁶⁸

Even if without exerting official pressure on the Kuomintang, Marshall still held a moral power over the Nationalist Government. Several times during the negotiations, when there was an impasse, Chiang Kai-shek came around after Marshall stepped in. At "a mere suggestion" of the general, Kuomintang negotiators, after consultation with the Generalissimo, changed their uncompromising position and presented a proposal acceptable to the Communist Party."¹⁶⁹ In June 1946, when Marshall mentioned his possible withdrawal from the mediation because of the failure of a second cease-fire agreement, Chiang again gave up his unreasonable terms and accepted the second cease-fire.

Unfortunately, unable to break away from his preconceived assumptions of the "uncooperative" Chinese Communists, Marshall rarely used this moral power. On the contrary, he was more readily to defend American continued aid to the Kuomintang. According to him, the reason for American assistance in the movements of Nationalist troops to

Manchuria, he said, was "to assist the Central Government to establish its troops in Manchuria."¹⁷⁰ Here again, the purpose that "the evacuation of the Japanese might be completed" was dropped.

Fed up with American behavior and with less reason to fear American retaliation, Yen-an announced on July 7 its final break with the U.S., saying that "American imperialism is far more dangerous than the Japanese imperialism."¹⁷¹ On October 9, Chou En-lai told Marshall that he considered American assistance to the Kuomintang government improper. Marshall's response was that since he was no longer respected as impartial he would at once withdraw from any negotiations.

Before he left China, however, he had one vital concern. The memorandum of his conversation with Chiang reflected his fear of the collapse of the Kuomintang regime.¹⁷² It seemed to be quite out of place that the conversation was focused on the problems of Chinese economy instead of on the failure of the mission. Marshall was concerned there would be a complete economic collapse in China. He knew that the Communists were too large a military and civil force to be eliminated by military campaigns. He believed that by concentrating his efforts to solve the civil conflicts through military means, Chiang would only push his economy to the brink of bankruptcy. Unwilling to see the complete ruin of the Nationalist Government, Marshall tried to bring this notion home to Chiang before he left for home.

Marshall's preference towards Chiang and his government had been all too clear to the Generalissimo. Feeling assured of American support, Chiang insisted that "the American officers of the Executive Headquarters or Teams have the determining voice and authority both in the execution and interpretation of views held in divergence by the Government and Communist representatives."¹⁷³ This delegation of power from Chiang was rare. He was a man whose "head's made out of iron" and no one could "tell him a goddamn thing."¹⁷⁴ Because he was chronically suspicious of everyone, he would never have taken the chance to let others speak on his behalf unless he knew for sure that the person he chose would serve his best interests. In this case, Chiang's insistence that American officers should be given the deciding vote furthered the Communists' suspicions and the delicacy of Marshall's position.¹⁷⁵

Marshall, for all his good intention to bring an end to the civil strife in China, could hardly understand Chiang. His conception of a monolithic Communist movement made him equally insensitive to the expectations of the Chinese Communist Party. In the end, without having made much headway in terms of the original goal of the American mediation, Truman recalled his personal envoy. After a little more than one year's strenuous efforts, the mission straggled to a discouraged and discouraging end in December 1946.

Cause of the Failure

On January 7, 1947, Marshall issued a statement and publicly announced the end of his mission. He said, in the first place, the greatest obstacle to peace has been the complete, almost overwhelming suspicion with which the Chinese Communist Party and Kuomintang regard each other."¹⁷⁶

President Truman agreed with Marshall that the fault of the failure was on the Chinese side. In his memoirs Truman wrote:

The Marshall mission had been unable to produce results because the government of Chiang Kai-shek did not command the respect and support of the Chinese people. The Generalissimo's attitudes and actions were those of an old-fashioned warlord, and, as with the warlords, there was no love for him among the people. There is no doubt in my mind that if Chiang Kai-shek had been only a little more conciliatory, an understanding could have been reached.¹⁷⁷

But John Carter Vincent saw the mission's failure in a different light. In his letter dated on November 6, 1950, he wrote:

General Marshall could have succeeded had Chiang Kai-shek and the Communists been fully convinced that he had undivided and determined support of the American Government and people. But both in and out of the government there were those who on the one hand, raised a hue and cry that we were supporting the corrupt Nationalist Government and on the other hand, those who vociferated that we were letting down our wartime ally Chiang.... Chiang sensing the division at home, decided to go his own way.¹⁷⁸

Both views, however, tended to oversimplify a rather complex problem. The former, condescendingly, put the blame squarely

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on the two Chinese Parties whereas the latter emphasized too much the effect of American domestic politics. If we put the two sides of the coin together we can see the mission by the Truman Administration was doomed from the beginning. It was, in effect, "seeking the reconciliation of irreconcilable factions." The duality of that mission lay in the Administration's determination to "support Chiang Kai-shek against the Communists" while trying "to work out a political agreement between them."¹⁷⁹ There is no way the U.S. could ever have achieved these conflicting objectives.

In retrospect, we, however, do see some of the problems with the Chinese side that ruled out all possibilities for a successful mission. Yet, the way Marshall handled these problems made the success of his mission even less possible.

Although better equipped intellectually than Hurley, Marshall was no better versed in the wiles and complexities of Chinese politics.¹⁸⁰ The immediate goal of his mission was to bring the fighting to an end. This military problem was primarily a political one. Without a political agreement first, it was impossible to reach a military settlement. Yet, Marshall assumed that since the fighting was stopped, general discussion would follow.¹⁸¹ To make it easier for a cease-fire agreement, he consistently "tried to have as few arguments as possible as conditions precedent to the cessation of hostilities."¹⁸² He even took pains "to avoid matters that were wholly political in nature."¹⁸³ As a result,

his effort to limit the number of matters to be adjusted prior to the cease-fire only brought out temporary and superficial results.

The KMT and CCP, after twenty years of fighting and killing, had strong suspicion of each other. Now for different reasons, they came to the negotiation table. Both had their own axes to grind. The KMT expected that by giving some portfolios to the Communists it would finally put their troops under its control through the reorganization of the national forces. This would be the only way to strip the Communists of their military strength. The Communists, on their part, expected to get into the government first, and from there to expand their influence through political means. When the two parties were sure of their possible gains at the negotiation table, they sat down and talked. What they could not get at the table, they would get on the battlefield.

Though the KMT promised to broaden the basis of the national government, it was not willing to give the CCP any substantial presentation in that government. Whereas the CCP, though it agreed to integrate its troops into the national forces, would not hand over its armies to Chiang before it participated in the decision-making and policy-executing government organs. The two sides debated at the conferences, but did not produce any "definite program" or proposed any specific action, which "completely confused" Marshall.¹⁸⁵ Their disinclination to compromise to each other certainly

prevented any real accomplishment in Marshall's attempt to bring the two sides together.

Besides, even when the negotiators agreed to solve their disputes through political means, not everyone "could grasp the meaning to the same extent because they lacked that kind of experience," as Chou Eu-lai explained.¹⁸⁶ The commanders in the fields would only take orders from their respective headquarters, not from the diplomats at the conference table. Therefore, any agreement reached at the negotiation table would not mean much in the battlefield. Moreover, the military outcomes in the battle fields also affected the negotiations. When the Communists felt they were in a strong position the generals and their associates "would hold out for conditions that were not acceptable for negotiations."¹⁸⁷ When the Nationalists captured Changchun and continued advances northward, their negotiators were in a position "to negotiate less and less."¹⁸⁸ All these made implementation of cease-fire ineffective. Marshall was aware of this. He wrote to Truman, "... success depends on the developments in the fields more than the problems of negotiations."¹⁸⁹ When the two competing sides both believed that power came from the barrel of the gun, there was little our war hero could do to keep them at peace.

The root cause for the failure of the mission, however, lies in its contradictory objectives. Burdened with this duality, Marshall failed to be impartial in the mediation the way he thought he was. Though neither Truman nor Marshall

was particularly sympathetic towards Ching and his government, they chose what they considered the lesser evil out of the two. They knew enough about the corruption of Chiang and his regime. It was not a surprise to them that Chiang and his wife and their families cashed American aid into their own pockets. Truman later told Merle Miller:

They stole seven hundred and fifty million dollars out of the thirty five billion that we sent to Chiang. They stole it and it's invested in real estate down in Sao Paulo and some right here in New York.¹⁹⁰

Nevertheless, they still preferred a corrupt Nationalist government in China to a Communist take-over. Unaware of the contradictory nature of his objectives, Marshall was more tolerant of the Nationalists' intrasigence and less sensitive to the Communists' accommodations.

Due to his insensitivity, Marshall failed to pay enough attention to the Communist appeals for the withdrawal of American Marines. Upon his appointment, the Communist press had pointed out that "the success of Marshall's mission would depend on the immediate evacuation of all U.S. troops from China."¹⁹¹ They regarded the presence of American Marines as some kind of foreign interference in Chinese affairs. The American Marines had helped move Nationalist troops about the country. They might do more to help the Nationalists when the situation became more critical. Before Marshall's mission, the Communist Party thought that it was Hurley who had imposed the American troops on China and they expected Marshall to order a withdrawal. Yet, Marshall had no

sense of how the Chinese Communist Party felt about this. He thought, probably, that the slogans at the mass meetings throughout the country, including the Koumingtang areas, were Communist propaganda. Or perhaps, he did not want to withdraw the Marines and troops before the final victory of the Nationalist government was assured. Besides, there was the presence of Russian troops in Manchuria. It seemed likely that Marshall feared that "an early withdrawal of U.S. forces would jeopardize the fragile stability of that area."¹⁹²

For whatever reasons, he failed to realize the importance of this issue perceived by the Chinese Communists. Even if it was beyond his ability to do anything in that respect, he could, at least, have given a direct answer to the Communists' demands. Yet, there is not much evidence of his understanding of the importance of the issue in his correspondence to the president.

Along with the presence of American Marines was the continuous American aid to the Nationalists. Through the extension of Lend-Lease, the surplus property sale and other forms of aid, the Nationalist government kept on getting American equipments and supplies in its war against the Communists. The U.S. even offered them a special rate of discount and certain credit.¹⁹³ The U.S. government regarded these sales as American assistance to China's much needed economic rehabilitation program.¹⁹⁴ But the effect was far beyond what they chose to believe. The Nationalists fully exploited these American materials in pursuing the civil

war.¹⁹⁵ Therefore, instead of bringing the civil war under control, the American unilateral aid to the Kuomintang enhanced the Nationalists' potentials to wage war and therefore, added fuel to fire in the Chinese civil conflicts as well as jeopardizing Marshall's peace-making efforts.

Though Marshall tried hard to be even-handed, his efforts to be impartial were further called into question by Chiang's manipulation of Chinese politics. An incident in May, 1946, illustrates this. In late May, 1946, Chiang's troops were advancing in Manchuria, violating the cease-fire regulations. Presumably in an attempt to encourage his troops, Chiang decided to go and visit the army in the field. Before he left for Manchuria, he told Marshall that he had not gotten any news from the officers and that he planned to go to Mukden himself to take control of the situation there. Marshall was anxious to implement the cease-fire. To make the trip safer for the Generalissimo, he offered his personal plane.¹⁹⁶ Chiang's trip was so well timed, however, that when he and his wife got there, his troops had just taken over Changchun that very morning and continued advancing.¹⁹⁷ Chiang prolonged his stay while his troops were attacking the Communists unchecked. This created a serious doubt in the minds of the Communist leaders regarding Marshall's impartiality.¹⁹⁸ Besides, the fact that Chiang flew to Manchuria in Marshall's personal plane impressed the public that the American mediator had approved of the Nationalist advance there. Marshall was annoyed by this "coincidence."¹⁹⁹

Unable to identify Chiang with the dominant reactionary group in the Kuomintang, Marshall mistook Chiang for a true nationalist as opposed to the Communists. He shared Dr. John Leighton Stuart's view that "there is no other person or group who could be counted on to maintain the solidarity of the KMT or to integrate the minority parties. With all his shortcomings he sincerely seeks the welfare of his country according to democratic principles."²⁰⁰ This conviction greatly hindered Marshall's attempt to mediate even-handedly. When the situation became worse and the reactionaries in the KMT insisted on their freedom of action in the fields, Marshall still believed "... under the leadership of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek would ... lead to unity through good government."²⁰¹ Chiang kept a discrete silence at Marshall's constant remarks about the extremist behavior, because he thought if "he explained to Marshall that it was not their fault, he himself would be suspected of protecting his subordinates."²⁰² After all, Marshall's own prejudice against Communism made him less impartial than he tried to be, though he himself was not aware of this.

Marshall was also handicapped by various obstacles at home. Congress introduced proposals that would have extended Lend-Lease and other aid to the government of Chiang Kai-shek without laying down a condition that he worked with General Marshall. As President Truman observed, "The Chinese Government sought to gain advantages from our government by applying pressures from other directions."²⁰³ Marshall's

effort to be even-handed in his mediation was blunted by Congress.

On June 19, 1946, Dean Acheson told the House Committee on Foreign Affairs "Communist Leaders have asked and Marshall has agreed that their integration with other forces (the National Army) be preceded by a brief period of U.S. training and by the supply of minimum quantities of equipment." Congress rejected this proposal. Congressional opposition halted plans to send 69 American officers -- who had actually been selected and assembled in Shanghai to the Communist areas to provide military training.²⁰⁴ America's refusal to accept the CCP as an equal recipient of American aid shattered the last bit of Communist trust in the impartiality of the mediator.

The deterioration of relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union in the spring of 1946 affected both sides of the negotiations. They began to take harder attitudes towards each other. In March, the State Department protested that the Soviet Union had delayed the withdrawal of its troops both in Manchuria and in Iran. The CCP'S position on Soviet withdrawal was divided. Chou-En-lai held: "The sooner evacuate, the better."²⁰⁵ Chou warned his comrades that their association with Moscow was alienating themselves from the American government and from Chinese moderates. But his advice was rejected by some officials in Yen-an. Chu Teh told one foreign correspondent that Chou En-lai was mistaken in calling for the withdrawal of Soviet forces. Chin Pan-hsien,

another Party leader, staunchly defended the Soviet role in the Northeast.²⁰⁶ With the emerging of Cold War in Europe, American fear of Russian expansion grew. As Chou warned, the association with the Soviet Union cost the CCP in its public image in the U.S. Meantime, on March 6, 1946, Winston Churchill, in the company of President Truman, made his famous "Iron Curtain" speech at Fulton, Missouri.²⁰⁷ The deterioration of the situation in Europe encouraged both sides in China to harden their attitudes.²⁰⁸

Handicapped by their misconceptions about Communist expansion, Truman and his advisors decided to send General Marshall to China to bring the internal fighting to an end. However, based on the wrong assumptions, the mission had contradictory objectives. On the one hand, the U.S. tried to form a unified Chinese government on a broader basis, with the CCP sharing power with the KMT. On the other hand, American supplies and equipment only went to the KMT in the struggle between the two sides. This contradictory nature of the mission greatly limited the impartiality of the American mediator. Besides, due to his lack of understanding of Chinese complexities, his prejudice against the CCP and his illusions about Chiang Kai-shek, Marshall was insensitive to the stands of the CCP during the negotiations. Meanwhile, he failed to put timely and necessarily effective pressure on Chiang Kai-shek to bring him to reasonable terms. Even when the general tried to be even-handed, his hands were tied by American domestic politics. To add to all these facts,

standing in the way of a successful mediation was the deterioration of the U.S.-Russian relations in Europe during 1946, which encouraged both the CCP and KMT to harden their attitudes. Given the situation both in China and in the world, Marshall's mission was doomed to failure.

In conclusion, however, Marshall has some credit due him nonetheless. It was due to Marshall's effort that the Political Consultative Conference was convened, and its resolution was passed. The resolution, though not implemented during the KMT-CCP negotiations, helped shape the new Chinese government in 1949.²⁰⁹ Secondly, Marshall's valiant effort postponed full-fledged civil war for six months. This postponement gave a much needed breathing spell to the Chinese people after eight years of the Anti-Japanese War. Last, but not the least of Marshall's achievements, although it was unintended, was that he exposed Chiang Kai-shek's bellicose intentions. Many intellectuals were perturbed by the harshness of the KMT in its repression of liberals. Disillusioned by America's partiality in the mediation, many intellectuals became alienated from Chiang. This aided the CCP by building popular support for its victory in 1949. The victory was in part a product of this disillusionment and of the mission which had helped expose Chiang's repressive nature.

The particular lesson to be learned from the Marshall Mission is this. American policy as exemplified in that mission, aborts the possibility of moderation on both sides of

the conflict where socialist or nationalist revolutionaries confront established governments of the right. Its blind anti-Communist imperative makes American policy the slave of reaction, and its support of reactionaries cancels out the needs of those who exercise dictatorial power on the right to conciliate the moderates and liberals in their ranks. On the other side, the insensitivity of its policy and behavior to the diversity of force, opinions and potentials that constitute every "peoples" rebellion, weakens or destroys the force for accommodation, dispossesses the advocates of moderation, exacerbates anti-Americanism, validates the warnings and strengthens the hand of the extremists and fanatics. Its anti-Communist prophecies turn out to be self-fulfilling. It creates the very movement that it fears. It often ends up with criticisms from both sides of the competing forces in the countries concerned. American policy-makers today may probably learn something from the failure of Marshall's mission.

NOTES

Notes

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