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THE CIVIL WAR IN CHINA

BY LIN YUTANG

THE question of China's undeclared civil war should either be ignored by the outside public as something too complicated for outsiders to understand, or it should be treated with the thoroughness and sincerity which it deserves. In view of the importance of the subject, it is my opinion that the American people are fully entitled to hear the facts about the history and origin of the conflicts. The Chinese Government does not wish to tell the story for the sake of face and appearance, and the Chinese Communists do not want to tell the story because it makes ghastly reading of their record in this war. Thus a complete black-out

on the six-year-old civil war is established. But obviously, without knowing the character and extent of this civil war, there can be no intelligent discussion of its solution, no understanding of the struggle ahead for China.

So far, the public abroad has had a decidedly one-sided picture. American commentators talk as if, first, the Chinese Government were deliberately discriminating against the Red Army and were seeking a civil war for the pleasure of it; second, as if the Chinese Government were not fully determined to avoid a civil war and solve the Communist question by political means; third, as if the government

LIN YUTANG, who returned from his most recent trip to China six months ago, is best known for his influence in creating an interest in Chinese literature in the rest of the world. He has been a teacher, dean of Peking Women's University and editor of various literary magazines. His books include *My Country and My People*, *The Importance of Living*, *With Love and Irony* and *Between Tears and Laughter*. This article is adapted from a chapter of *Vigil of a Nation*, to be published by John Day Co. in January.

ought now to give the Red Army supplies with which to fight its own National Army; and fourth, as if help given to Chungking would be used in fighting the Communists rather than Japan. These are untrue assumptions unworthy of a great ally.

These pro-Communist charges against Chungking have been rather fulsomely repeated in America, and the other side has regarded the story as a domestic issue. The result is only confusion. The government has strictly censored anti-Communist news both at home and abroad. Rightly, it does not wish to present a picture of disunity. But one must either ignore the Communist question, or stand above both parties and hear both sides.

Not long ago, when the National Army was surrounded and outnumbered by the Japanese on three sides and surrounded by the Communists on the fourth side in the Taihang Mountains, the result was the unprecedented capture of two high generals. The Communists united with the Japanese in destroying the Twenty-seventh Army of the National forces and ambushed and wiped them out at three places. After several such clashes had taken place, a government official told the facts to a foreign correspondent, but *the story was then banned by the Kuomintang censors themselves*. I was in New York then, and I could not understand the capture of these two famous generals, until I went to Chungking and heard the full story.

The history of this fratricidal conflict constitutes the most inglorious chapter of the China war, and I have

no desire to let the Japanese gloat over it. Unfortunately, the Japanese already know the full story and have been known to "celebrate" frictions between Central and Communist troops. It is doing nobody any good to minimize this civil war and call it occasional "clashes" when battles lasted as long as fifteen days, troops involved at one time numbered 40,000 men, when systematic and organized campaigns were carried on for years from one province to another, and when they involved successive attacks on three provincial government offices, the hounding out of the provinces of two governors and the capture of a third. Nobody's interests are served by glamorizing the Chinese Communists or by underestimating them. Following their aggressive tactics of expansion, against which the Central troops are powerless unless Chiang orders an open war, the Chinese Communists will control half of China if the Japanese succeed in cutting China in half and if another year elapses before they are driven out.

II

The facts themselves are sufficiently clear. The Chinese Communists have now established themselves, though incompletely, in five or six provinces of the occupied areas. As these areas were in the enemy rear, the Central control was incomplete and they were ideal ground for roving bands. But from the very beginning, there were

istrations and military commanders with guerrillas and regular troops, responsible for carrying on operations against the Japanese in Hopei, Shantung, Kiangsu and Anhwei.

Naturally, in their plan to seize control of these areas not assigned to them, the Communists found it necessary to eliminate the Central troops and the People's Armies (both Chiang's forces), and to attack Kuomintang agencies and Kuomintang-appointed county magistrates and governments. Granted that the Communists thought it their patriotic duty to take over the entire occupied areas, they could have done nothing else. In this war of penetration, they had every advantage. The Central troops, not being ready for open war, could not plan concerted large-scale campaigns against the Communists, while the latter could and did do so. Time and again, they were overwhelmed by surprise attacks with converging powerful forces. Arresting county magistrates and surrounding small local self-defense units were easy for the well-organized Communist Army. The main advantage of the Communist Army is that of a determined aggressor against a defender who has not made up his mind for defense. A further important incentive was the fact that it was much easier to capture rifles and ammunition from their Chinese brothers than from the enemy. After every victory, the Communists became stronger by so many rifles. Everywhere they went, their first job was to capture rifles and

ammunition from the *minchün* and the *paoantui* and collect grains and cash. And the Central troops had the further disadvantage of being far separated from their bases.

The plain fact, then, is that the Central troops have not gone into Communist areas to attack them, but the Communists have come out to attack other Chinese units in occupied areas in the name of fighting the Japanese. The Communists openly admit now they have run all over Shantung, Hopei, Kiangsu, Anhwei, and even Hupeh, and are a little proud of their victories and their growing strength. But they have not captured these territories from the Japanese but from other Chinese by bloody battles. From the very beginning, the process of penetration and expansion was characterized by armed and underground conflicts with other Chinese soldiers, and by extremely subtle and able tactics of boring from within. In no instance have the Communists been able to capture territories which the Japanese intended to hold. As they have not yet been able to establish perfect control over the occupied areas, where Central military and civil organizations are still operating today, the result is a continued futile and disheartening fratricide, while the Japanese have been able to get all they want in manpower and resources.

When, for instance, the Japanese attacked Wutai Mountain, the Communist base in Shansi, in 1940, the Communists, following their tactics of

fighting only when having preponderant numbers, abandoned the base. But when the Central troops under the Second War Area Command decided that Wutai was to be the base for the New 2nd Division, General Chu Teh flew back with his Communist forces to wrest control of the area. When the New 2nd Division was on its way to Wutai, it was subjected to hit-and-run attacks by the Communists at Taliushu, at Shouyang *hsien*, and at Tsao-chiachun on the Chengtai highway, where a battle was fought for two days, and was again ambushed at Shunan by a force of over 800. After staging such harassing attacks on the way, from which the Communists greatly profited in terms of scores of mules and much valuable ammunition, they finally made the main attack on the New 2nd Division at Yushuhsien. By that time, the New 2nd Division had already exhausted its supplies, and was doomed. Naturally many Chinese officers and soldiers were killed. The 130,000 dollars that its commander Chin Hsien-chang was carrying for his troops were taken as part of the Communist "booty." Two companies escorting the mules were massacred, and only one cook and one muleteer escaped. It is hard to understand how such destruction of Chinese manpower was to help in the war against Japan, by the weirdest stretch of materialistic dialectic. Multiply these cases by the thousands, and we can understand why there is no unity in the guerrilla warfare against Japan.

In Shantung, over 35,000 troops of the Communist forces joined in an attack on the government commissioner's headquarters in the Seventh District. Over 5,000 Communist troops under Peng Mingchih attacked the Seventh Brigade of the *paoan* *tui* near Shuhsien and Szeyang. While the Japanese were attacking Chihsia, the 5th column (*chihtui*) of the Communist Eighteenth Army Corps took the opportunity to attack the Central 27th Brigade and the county government at Chaoyuan. This is but a sample of what happened on a larger scale later in the overpowering attack on Central Commander Chin Chi-yung in Shantung in 1943. They had as much interest in wiping out the Central Chinese troops as the Japanese. When the Japanese retreated, the area would be theirs. The same pattern in Shansi. The same pattern in Hopei, Honan, Anhwei, Kiangsu. The motive behind such a pattern alone can account for the large-scale civil war. In spite of everything the Communists to date have not obtained complete control of these provinces, but have made enough trouble for the Central guerrillas not to be able to concentrate their energy on Japan. Neither the Communist guerrillas nor the Central guerrillas are fighting there for more than mere survival.

After the comparative success in southern Shantung, the next slice of territory to be pocketed was northern Kiangsu. According to captured documents, of which many were found after the defeat of the Communist

New Fourth Army, the plan for the attack on northern Kiangsu was formulated at Peih sien early in 1940. The minutes of the conference of political and military workers read thus:

1. A report was made that our (Communist) Party is determined to exert its best to capture political power in northern Kiangsu. This is to be divided into three stages, carried out in three periods. In three months, we shall be able to gain control of northern Kiangsu and the coastal region. The first period ends at Mid-Autumn Festival. The second period ends on October 10. The third period ends on New Year's Day, 1941.
2. The first stage consists in creating unrest in the region and uniting the small local bands into larger units. Through local unrest, we can go forward with our regional work, start opposition to the government, and store up grain and accumulate cash by taxation.
3. The second stage is that of sudden attacks. In this period, we are to concentrate strong forces, selecting the lightly-defended areas of the Central troops as our targets. We shall also disarm independent units and secure the ammunition of political agencies.
4. The third period is the period of encirclement and *coup d'état*. We shall occupy the whole of northern Kiangsu with all forces at our command.

III

The total impression in reviewing the facts of the civil war is somewhat dismal, all the more so because such internecine war could and should have been avoided. The civil war has now lasted six years and covered seven provinces, developing to the size of the Taiping Rebellion. The Communist expansion they are now boasting

about has not been a peaceful expansion, but one achieved by "bloodshed" and "armed struggle" against the Chinese, in the exact words of Mao Tsetung, the Communist Party boss. The Communist statistics must be read afresh. For every Japanese they claim to have killed, they have killed at least five Chinese. For every town they captured from the Japanese, they have captured fifty towns from other Chinese. Of the hundreds of "clashes" per year they claim to their credit, a large percentage must include those with the Chinese "enemy." While I take pride in the fact that they have captured ammunition from the Japanese, I am aware that half of their weapons have been robbed from other Chinese guerrillas and regular units. Against their claim to have held down 350,000 Japanese troops and 200,000 puppet troops in the occupied areas, must be counted the fact that they have held down half a million Chinese soldiers holding down the same Japanese and their puppets in the same areas. Alongside their vociferous criticisms of the absence of free press in Chungking and their energetic demand for national unity, why do the Chinese Communists and their American fellow travelers not give us some idea of the free press in Yen an and the facts of this civil war as they see it? Why do they prefer to present the "blockade" as an unaccountable mystery? Incidentally, neither Edgar Snow nor Mme. Sun Yat-sen nor the most rabid pro-Communists deny that there is no freedom

of thought or freedom of the press in Yenan, that it is a totalitarian régime with the smoothest regimentation of ideas, comparable to that of Soviet Russia. The facts must first of all be correctly stated; whether one likes them or not is a matter of opinion.

This explains why the Communists did not derail a single train when for a month they saw Japanese troops pouring down the Peiping-Hankow railway to destroy the Central troops in Honan through at least four hundred miles of their famed guerrilla territory. The truth is bitter, but the Americans must hear it. Naturally the Communists would fear nothing more than five hundred airplanes and three tank divisions for the Chungking forces. By the logic of their circumstances, they must combat it. Whether in this they are acting as patriots, however, is another question. The Communists have merely drifted into a position where they must discredit Chungking and, in discrediting Chungking, discredit China as a whole.

IV

The paramount question for China is national unity. Who sins against unity in time of war sins against the nation as a whole. The problem of China's unity means exclusively the problem of the Chinese Communist Party. Without the problem of the Chinese Communists, there is no problem of unity at all, since even the most backward provinces are not under suspicion of planning an open revolt

against the government. I may specifically mention the Kwangsi Generals Li and Pai, the Shansi General Yen Hsishan, and the "Christian General" Feng Yuhsiang, all of whom have fought repeated campaigns against Chiang Kai-shek, but all of whom have had the sense to forget old quarrels in time of war and national invasion. The Kwangsi generals threw in their entire resources and Kwangsi soldiery into the forefront of the battle in Shanghai without a thought of building up their own armed power for future control of portions of China. General Li Tsungjen has been serving on the Hupeh front now, and on every other front in the beginning of the war, for these last seven years, though one seldom sees his name in the papers. General Hsu Yungchang of the Shansi army, who steadily fought against Chiang in past campaigns, has been quietly directing campaign strategy at the Chungking Supreme Command all these years, and enjoying the complete trust of the Generalissimo. The Szechuen "warlords" have been fighting in Hunan, or directing the administration and development of Sikang. No possible disunity can arise from the generals or "warlords," and no one suggests it. No one suggests or even dreams of revolts from Yunnan, Szechuen, or Sinkiang. This fact alone, the unselfish devotion of all generals and all factions, but the Communists, to the cause of the nation above the cause of private expansion, has made it possible for China to fight Japan. The issue of the civil conflict has

been curiously confused with the question of the constitutional development of China. Actually, the cause was a military one — the Chinese Communist Army broke its pledge of September 1937 to take orders from the Chinese High Command and proceeded with the organization, disposition and movements of its troops in defiance of the Chinese War Department. The Chinese Communist Party should either have refused to sign the pledge to place its army under the direction of the High Command, giving as its reason the fact that there was yet no constitutional government in China; or it should have made the pledge and kept it. It should not have made the pledge, knowing the facts, and then suddenly discovered seven years later that there was no constitutional government in China and that therefore it was justified in keeping a separate army to back up its party claims. If that were a legitimate cause for revolt, all China's generals would be entitled to the same right, and China might as well not have started the war against Japan at all. The delay in constitutional development is historically unconnected with the Communist revolt. The cause of the Communist revolt was the opportunity the Chinese Communists saw in the war against Japan to expand their territory.

I have in all my previous writings taken a sympathetic view of the Chinese Communist Army, though not of the Communist ideology; but I cannot condemn too strongly their fratricide even before the war is fin-

ished. It seems to me that, at the worst, they should have set up an independent kingdom administratively, but fought as allies in military operations. Such is the normal feeling of a common citizen when his country is at war. This they have not done. It seems to me armed clashes with the national army, in time of war, would be called treason in any modern country, and such leaders would be relieved of their posts in short order and court-martialed. I do not think the people of Soviet Russia would stand for a cocky, benighted general who preferred in infinite love of his fatherland to clash constantly with the Red Army, defy Moscow's orders, and call the Ukraine his own, even though he might on occasion be fighting the Germans.

And I do not think Americans, in time of war, would stand for an army, of whatever color or creed, which moved freely from Wyoming to California, clashed with other American Army units stationed there, attacked Federal officers and employees and ended up by collecting its own taxes and printing its own currency. As far as the people of China are concerned, their feeling is not very much different from that which American and Russian people would have in similar circumstances.

I have been compelled to tell the full story of this Communist trouble, because it is affecting American supplies to China and the international position of China after the war. I wish I could say that there were no "Chi-

nese Communists," that they had co-operated splendidly and unselfishly in the war, and that the whole problem was unimportant, as some Chinese propagandists try to suggest. I am afraid that refusal to face the truth of the conflict may yet cause endless troubles in the years to come.

V

All the Communist charges are directed solely for the consumption of the outside public. They are distinct from other criticisms of government failures, like internal corruption and incompetence, inflation and absence of a free press, etc. The three charges — first, that American supplies would be used for fighting the Communists and not fighting Japan; second, that the Chinese Government is trying to start a civil war instead of trying to avoid it with the greatest patience; and third, that ex-War Minister Ho and ex-Education Minister Chen, noted for their anti-Communist stand, are pro-Japan — are so ridiculous that the Chinese public never hears of them, except as cabled back from American papers. As a Chinese, reading both English and Chinese papers, and talking with the Chinese people, I can remember my astonishment when I first found charges in the American press (which had never been heard of in China), to the effect that General Ho was pro-Japanese.

The past record of the Chinese Communists exhibits sufficient astuteness in propaganda and unscrupulous-

ness of method to warrant the assumption that, after the war, they will adopt whatever tactics and put on whatever front they may deem necessary to achieve political power in China and accomplish their final, unchangeable objective. Their unscrupulousness in creating ruthless internecine warfare even when the enemy is still on Chinese soil is matched only by their slickness in championing China's national unity abroad. And while they do not even pretend there is freedom of the press or of thought or individual rights in Yen-an and have established the most rigorous party dictatorship, they have succeeded in making themselves out as steady champions of freedom of the press and constitutional democracy in Chungking. We may therefore expect that, in the postwar period, they will not only put on a democratic front, but even a pro-capitalist front, as the American Communists are doing, in order to achieve political power. And because I have great respect for Mao Tsetung's political genius, I believe he will abandon violence and seek a legal position by "constitutional" means, planning to end up as China's Reichs-Chancellor.

The greatest harm the Americans can do themselves is to believe or to underestimate the Chinese Communists. A whole nation can misread history being enacted before its eyes, until it is one day rudely shaken by events. I suggest that the forces at work today in China have something to do with China's international alignment in the next world war.

POISON FROM EUROPE

BY FRANCIS RUFUS BELLAMY

DOWN in Argentina, behind the smoke screen of diplomatic double-talk, one of the most sinister figures of the Western Hemisphere is at work. His name is Fritz Mandl.

He was a munitions maker in Austria; now he is the central figure in Argentina's new armament program. He is Menace No. 1 to the peace of the Americas. Vain, loquacious, friend of royalty yet black-balled by Buenos Aires' exclusive Jockey Club, Fritz Mandl presents many contradictions but only one conclusion: he is poison from Europe.

His contradictions are extraordinary. He volubly insists at times that he is a friend of the Allies, yet he boasted publicly after Dunkirk of his excellent relationship with the Nazis. He calls himself a refugee from the Gestapo, but all Buenos Aires saw him bring a Nazi official from Germany to help him set up a munitions plant in Argentina.

Right now he is paying stranded Austrian princes pensions of 1500 pesos a month. His influential friends

are accustomed to receiving long, affectionate messages from him. Yet he has been known to discharge 600 faithful employes without warning. Before he was thirty, his father had given him the management of the family munitions plant in Vienna, the great Hirtenberger Works. He recently refused to have a public funeral for his father, because the services would have been apt to call attention to the fact that the Mandls are Jews.

Only where money and munitions are concerned are there no doubts about Fritz Mandl.

He was born rich in 1900. The Hirtenberger Works, founded in 1852, suckled him. European wars fattened him. At the height of the Spanish Civil War Franco was in his debt. Il Duce decorated him for help to Italy in the Abyssinian war.

Armaments have netted him over sixty million dollars during his lifetime. As a result of this harvest, weapons of destruction have always fascinated him. He goes into raptures

FRANCIS RUFUS BELLAMY has been an editor and publisher and has written many stories, plays, articles and books. Among the latter are *March Winds* and *Spanish Faith*. This piece on Fritz Mandl is derived from personal, confidential sources, as well as from authentic documents made available to Mr. Bellamy.

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