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SOVIET CHINA

By M. JAMES AND R. DOONPING

OUT of the ruins of Old China, a New China is rising—Soviet China. Already one-sixth of China proper is under the rule of soviets—councils elected by workers and poor farmers. In this territory Chinese workers and poor farmers have overthrown the rule of bankers and business men, rapacious landlords, bandit generals and imperialists, and have taken power into their own hands. In the Constitution of Soviet China they declare that they stand in a common front with the working masses and oppressed peoples of the world and that they regard the Soviet Union as their firm ally.

Japan's virtual annexation of Manchuria, gateway to the Soviet Union from the East; the war at Shanghai; the concentration of American, French, Japanese, and British gunboats and soldiers in the Yangtze Valley, heart of revolutionary China; the feverishly intensified war preparations all over the imperialist world; the intrigues in Washington, London, Paris, and Geneva—all these point to one thing—imperialist war against the Chinese people and for the partition of China as the first step to an attack against the Soviet Union. Crumbling under the blows of worldwide crisis, these imperialist nations are despoiling China and trying to crush the Chinese soviets in the same way that they tried to crush the Russian soviets after the October Revolution in 1917. Cornered and desperate, the imperialist system is relying upon direct military intervention as a last hope of prolonging its existence.

Imperialism and Old China

Unlike capitalist nations, China is not a single economic unit, though it has a generally uniform race and culture. There are no big cities in China comparable to New York, London, Paris, or Berlin in which is concentrated financial and industrial power to serve as the basis for national unity. For many generations, the economic and political power of China has been divided

among a few powerful cliques of landlord-militarists and capitalist usurers, who have mercilessly oppressed and exploited the Chinese masses. These brutal rulers control their own special provinces and pay a merely formal allegiance to the reactionary "central" government of Nanking. The Chinese peasants and their families "constitute more than 70 per cent of the Chinese population. They work small patches of soil which they own themselves or rent from landlords. [In many parts of China over 80 per cent of them own no land.—*M. J. and R. D.*] Even in the best years they live on the verge of starvation. They are robbed by their landlords, usurious money-lenders, government tax-collectors and piratical war lords who roam the country. Hunger wipes out thousands of them every year." (*War in China*, by Ray Stewart, International Pamphlets, No. 19.)

Because of this decentralized semi-feudal economy, the imperialist powers were able, at the point of the bayonet, to open treaty ports as centers of foreign trade, and to partition China into several "spheres of influence." Through their control of finance and trade, these ports have become magnetic centers drawing the economic life of China into their respective spheres. Thus Shanghai and Hankow have become the nerve centers of the Yangtze Valley, Tientsin the economic heart of North China, while Canton controls the life of the Pearl River Valley in the South. As each section of the country has come under the imperialist domination of a foreign power, China has gradually become a semi-colonial as well as a semi-feudal country. This has intensified the misery of the millions of Chinese peasants and workers. On the backs of the toiling workers and peasants have lived the parasitic usurers and militarists; and on top of these native exploiters have rested the super-exploiters, the foreign imperialist overlords. . . . Old China having become unbearable, the masses began to rise in revolt.

The Revolution of 1925-27

On May 30, 1925, a mass demonstration of workers and students, protesting against the murder of a Chinese strike leader by a Japanese cotton mill official, was fired upon, at the command of

a British officer, by the police of the International Settlement at Shanghai. This incident released a tremendous revolutionary wave of strike struggles against the militarists and capitalists in the most important industrial centers.

The most notable of the struggles in the revolutionary period 1925-27 was the Canton-Hongkong strike. It involved 160,000 workers and continued without interruption for fifteen months from the summer of 1925 to October, 1926. This was quickly followed by an answering wave of mass peasant revolts against the Chinese landlords in the rural districts. Canton became the rallying center of the revolution. Impelled by the onward sweep of the mass movement, the Canton government, in the summer of 1926, launched a military expedition against the northern militarists.

This expedition fought its way victoriously from Canton to the banks of the Yangtze River, captured a number of provinces, and brought about the disintegration of a number of reactionary militarist groups. It was accompanied by the growth of an enormous mass movement. British concessions in Hankow and Kiukiang were seized by masses of organized workers and brought under the control of the revolutionary power. A general strike in Shanghai in April, 1927, developed into a successful insurrection. Shanghai workers, with 200 rifles, rose against 8,000 regular troops of the northern militarists, garrisoning the city, and organized 2,000 armed pickets. This successful insurrection, for the first time in Chinese history, revealed the workers as an independent political force, powerful enough to lead the revolution against both native oppression and imperialist exploitation.

At first the native exploiters, who suffered from foreign competition and who had to pay economic tribute to the imperialists, joined the Chinese masses in their struggles. But when they saw that the aroused workers and peasants were fighting not only against their foreign imperialist oppressors, but also against the Chinese militarist and landlord exploiters, the Chinese bourgeoisie turned on the masses and openly joined with the imperialists in the camp of counter-revolution. These elements, headed by Chiang Kai-shek, seized power in April, 1927, and set up a gov-

ernment at the city of Nanking on the Yangtze River. Since 1927 this Nanking regime has slaughtered hundreds of thousands of Chinese workers, peasants, and other supporters of the revolutionary movement.

In the meantime the revolutionary Canton government, after the successes of the northern expedition, was moved from Canton to the tri-cities of Wuhan—Wuchang, Hankow and Hanyang. It attempted to carry on the struggle against the imperialists, the northern militarists and the counter-revolutionary Chiang Kai-shek government. But the independent activities of the workers in the struggle for power, and above all the further growth of the peasant movement, which developed into an agrarian revolution, forced this Wuhan government, which had been established under the leadership of the petty bourgeois wing of the Kuomintang (the Nationalist Party), to go over to the camp of counter-revolution.

This temporary defeat of the workers and peasants was due in a large measure to the autocratic (“patriarchal”) leadership of Professor Chen Tu-hsiu (now a follower of Trotsky) of the Communist Party of China who persistently ignored the general line and instructions of the Communist International. He criticized and hampered the lower party units in their leadership of the workers and peasants in their struggles. Chen and his clique pursued a wrong line of compromise and capitulation. As a result the worker and peasant organizations lost their character as an independent force and were overwhelmed by the petty bourgeoisie. The counter-revolutionary elements in the Wuhan government took full advantage of the situation and brought about the defeat of the revolution. Trotsky and his followers later seized upon this betrayal and maliciously misinterpreted it to slander the policy of the Communist International.

This betrayal at Wuhan was answered by the revolutionary workers and peasants with a series of revolts, including the Nanchang uprising, led by Ho Lung and Yeh-Ting, and the peasant uprisings in Hunan, Hupeh, Kwangtung and Kiangsu provinces.

The Canton Soviet

These uprisings continued as the Kuomintang grew more and more reactionary and culminated in the uprising of the Canton workers who, under the leadership of the Communist Party, overthrew the left Kuomintang at Canton on December 11, 1927. The Canton Soviet was established and Su Choa Jen was elected its chairman.

The Canton Soviet immediately proclaimed its revolutionary policies which included the eight-hour day for workers; increase of wages; social insurance; management of production by the workers; nationalization of large enterprises and banks; dissolution of the fascist unions; nationalization of land and the distribution of land among the peasants and the soldiers; extermination of the landlords and the gentry; organization of the Red Army of the workers and peasants; confiscation of the property of the rich and its distribution among the poor; and complete freedom of assembly and speech for the toiling masses. The Canton Soviet also proclaimed the keynote of its foreign policy to be: "alliance with the Soviet Union and the overthrow of imperialism." The program was adopted at a mass meeting with the warm support of thousands of workers, peasants and soldiers.

The Canton Communards fought heroically for three days and repeatedly repelled the attacks of the enemy. But the native reaction, led by Chang Fa-Kuai (the "left" Kuomintang general), with the assistance of Japanese, French, British and American gunboats, threw its full weight against Canton. On December 14, the Canton Soviet was overthrown, and an unprecedented white terror by the Kuomintang ruled over the city.

Despite its defeat the Canton Soviet has world revolutionary significance. For the first time in China it put into life the slogan of the Soviet Power in a political and commercial center. It showed the way to the revolutionary movement in China. It gave tremendous experience to the workers and peasants throughout the world. It raised the Chinese Revolution to a new and higher stage. It became the "flag of the new, the soviet phase of the revolution."

The Kuomintang and world imperialism tried to cover their brutal massacre of the Canton workers with slanders against the Canton Soviet. Trotsky and his followers, the counter-revolutionary vanguard of the bourgeoisie, took over some of these lies and branded the revolutionary uprising of the workers as a "putsch," an uprising without the support of the masses. They repeated the shout of George Plekhanov (the Russian Social-Democratic leader who supported the tsarist government in the imperialist World War) who slandered the Moscow uprising of December, 1905, by saying that "it would have been better not to take to arms." But just as the slander of Plekhanov was exposed by the triumphant revolution of 1917, so the slanders of Trotsky are now being exposed by the victorious march of the Chinese soviets.

And even now, in the face of this irresistible growth of the Chinese soviets, the Trotskyites refuse to recognize their revolutionary significance. When the Communist Party of China prepared a mass demonstration in Shanghai on the fourth anniversary of the Canton Soviet, in 1931, the Trotskyites openly helped the Kuomintang and the imperialists by trying to persuade the workers not to participate in the demonstration! The workers in Shanghai answered the Trotskyites and their masters by staging a great anniversary demonstration and by establishing more soviets in central and southern China.

Civil War and the Kuomintang Regime

For some time after the defeat of the Canton Commune, superficial observers and well-wishers of the counter-revolution predicted a long period of stabilization and capitalist development in China. Trotsky even visualized a "Stolypin period * of Chiang Kai-shek," and in September, 1928, he went so far as to dream of a parliament in China. The Chinese bourgeoisie did not and could not live up to Trotsky's expectations. None of the problems

* Stolypin period is the name given to that period in Russian history which followed the defeat of the revolution in 1905. Reform measures, notably the land law, introduced by the tsarist minister Stolypin, initiated a period of rapid capitalist development for Russia which postponed the approach of a new revolutionary wave for several years.

of the revolution such as independence from imperialist domination, national unity, economic development, emancipation of the peasantry, and improvement of living standards of the workers, were solved by the Kuomintang-Chiang Kai-shek regime, and none could be.

The basic contradictions were so intensified that in the spring of 1929—less than one year after Chiang Kai-shek “unified” China—the Nanking-Kwangsi War broke out between rival groups of militarists. This war was followed by bigger and more extensive ones. These wars, reflecting irreconcilable conflicts between various semi-feudal militarist groups, and representing preliminary skirmishes of the coming imperialist war for the re-division of China, are far from being a thing of the past. Even now, while the cannons of Japanese imperialists roar in China, there are rumors of new wars between the different militarist-Kuomintang cliques.

Economically, the country has been deteriorating under the Kuomintang regime even faster than under the rule of the northern militarists. In 1930, the foreign trade of China declined more than thirty-five per cent below the previous year. The value of silver declined over 40 per cent. In Shanghai, 80 per cent of the textile industry was in the hands of foreign capitalists in 1930; and in 1931, over 87 per cent.

Each year the Kuomintang government has wasted over 3,000,000,000 Chinese dollars on military expenditures and the financial deficit has mounted higher and higher. In 1927, 10,000,000 people were starving; in 1928, 57,000,000 suffered from famine; in 1929, according to Kuomintang sources, over 52,000,000 were starving. Thus, all the problems of the revolution remain unsolved while militarist civil war, famine, flood and economic crisis ravage the country. But while the landlord-militarist and capitalist usurers were struggling with an impossible situation and making a mess of everything, developments of great historic significance have been taking place in the camp of the revolution. With Bolshevik determination and supreme revolutionary heroism and sacrifice, the trail toward a united Soviet China is being blazed.

The New Revolutionary Upsurge

The Communist International and the Communist Party of China recognized the inevitability of a new revolutionary upsurge in China after a temporary ebb. Events have proved unmistakably the correctness of this estimate.

After a period of depression, the labor movement has grown steadily. During 1928 about 400,000 workers participated in strikes; during 1929 about 750,000, and during 1931 about 1,000,000. In the first four months of 1931, about 100,000 workers went on strike in Shanghai alone. Strike waves spread all over the country. Moreover, nearly every economic strike carries within itself the elements of political struggle against the Kuomintang, the military police force of the native government, and the imperialists.

Today the city workers struggle under the iron heel of the Kuomintang counter-revolution and imperialism. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese labor movement is developing with irresistible momentum.

The Soviets Grew Up Out of the Agrarian Revolution

The revolutionary upsurge is manifested not only in the rising labor movement, but essentially and basically in the agrarian movement. The agrarian revolution is the source spring of the new revolutionary wave; it has resulted in the establishment of soviets in which the workers, peasants, and the poor rule.

After the Canton Soviet, peasant partisan movements continued and developed in the provinces of Kiangsi, Hunan, Hupeh, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, and Fukien. In April, 1928, one of the most far-reaching peasant uprisings took place in the province of Kansu, where the insurrectionary peasants fought against the government forces for several months before they were suppressed.

In other provinces such as Anhwei, Honan, and Szechuan, the peasant struggles took the form of hunger riots, and spontaneous organizations such as the Red Lances and Big Knives were formed. In many instances armed struggles were directed against

the oppressors. All these showed clearly their mass and class character.

The peasant movement reached a new and higher plane in southern and central China. Here the soviets grew up out of the agrarian revolution. The armed struggles and the establishment of soviets first centered around the boundaries of Kwangtung and Fukien provinces, immediately after the Canton Soviet. The leaders were mainly the red detachments under Chu Te and Mao Tse-tung. These detachments were the remnants of the revolutionary peasants' armies of 1927 and the workers from Canton and other big cities. The soviet movement then spread from Kiangsi to Hunan and western Hupeh where the red detachment under Ho Lung was active. In these regions partisan detachments sprang up like mushrooms after a rain. Soviets were set up and maintained. The soviet movement spread to the northern and eastern provinces. By the beginning of 1930, the partisan movement had reached in Fukien sixteen out of sixty-four districts; in Kiangsi forty out of eighty-one districts; in Hupeh thirty out of seventy-two; in Hunan forty out of seventy-five; in Kwangtung thirty out of ninety-four; and in Honan seven out of eighty-nine. The total population of these regions was then about 60,000,000 and covered a territory four times that of New York State.

At this time there was no central soviet government to organize and direct the struggle. It was the Communist Party of China that connected the various groups with one another and directed their struggle.

Suppression Campaigns

In the face of the rising labor movement, and especially the advance of the soviets, the Kuomintang-imperialist reaction attempted to maintain its rule by demagoguery, the fascization of the government and yellow trade unions, and above all by the most bestial white terror and repeated "suppression campaigns" against the "Reds." According to conservative estimates, within one year and a half (summer of 1927 to spring of 1929) the Kuomintang slaughtered over half a million workers and peasants. Dur-

ing four months in 1931 over 100,000 were butchered in the provinces of Kiangsi, Hupeh, Hunan, Kiangsu, Fukien, and Chekiang; while over 1,800 peasants were massacred in the northwestern part of Hupeh.

Women, children, left-wing writers and radical students, suffered the same fate under the Kuomintang regime. Especially were the revolutionary leaders singled out for execution. Chiang Kai-shek executed, in 1930, Peng Pei, Chen Kwein, Young Yen, and other leaders of the Communist Party of China. Hsiang Chung-fa, the secretary of the Communist Party, was murdered by the Nanking government in June, 1931. Walter Ruegg, head of the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat, and his wife were arrested in Shanghai and sentenced to death.

In attempts to "annihilate" the "Reds," the Kuomintang government, with the support of world imperialism, launched three major "Communism Suppression Campaigns."

At the end of 1930, the Kuomintang militarists held a conference at Lu Shan, a summer resort in Kiangsi province, for the purpose of drawing up plans for the suppression of the soviets and their Red Army in southern and central China. It was decided "not to return till the last Communist is annihilated." Three months was the time limit set for wiping out the "last Communist."

This was the beginning of the First Communism Suppression Campaign. Chiang Kai-shek had at his disposal a force of 200,000 men, with modern weapons of war, and advisers supplied by the imperialists. The Red Army had only 22,000 fighters poorly armed. Yet the soviets and the Red Army, with the full support of the masses, completely defeated the White Army. They disarmed a great part of the Kuomintang forces. They captured 5,500 rifles, forty machine guns, six field guns and a huge quantity of munitions. They took as a prisoner the commander of the eighteenth division of the Kuomintang army, Chang Hui-Tsan, together with three regiment commanders. Twenty thousand Kuomintang soldiers went over to the Red Army. That was the end of the First Communism Suppression Campaign.

The Kuomintang launched the Second Communism Suppression Campaign in March, 1931, with more advisers, munitions, airplanes and even poison gas. It put 400,000 soldiers into the field, many of them from the North. They thought these northern soldiers, who did not understand the dialects of South China, would be immune from Red propaganda, and that there would thus be fewer chances for them to desert to the Red Army. The Red Army in Kiangsi had increased to 100,000 men, although still heavily outnumbered. This second campaign met with even more decisive defeat than the first. Mutinies occurred in the Kuomintang forces. The Red Army recorded victories in Kiangsi, Hupeh, Hunan and Fukien. It captured the commander of the thirty-fourth division of the Kuomintang, Yo Wei Chun, along with two brigadier generals. It increased its strength and its supplies, and the soviets extended their territories through the defeat of the Second Communism Suppression Campaign.

The Third Communism Suppression Campaign began in July, 1931. This time Chiang Kai-shek himself met his Waterloo at the hands of the Red Army. Before he went to Kiangsi for the campaign, he boasted in a speech at Nanking, June 13, 1931, that "the Reds in Kiangsi will be exterminated within one month and peace and order will be restored in the reconquered territory within two months." With the help of many German military advisers, he commanded over 300,000 of his best troops armed with machine guns, poison gas, and airplanes, in addition to possibly 200,000 more troops led by local militarists. He received the whole-hearted support of the Chinese ruling class, the imperialists and the "left" wing of the Kuomintang, whose leader, Wang Ching Wei, declared that he fully agreed with the efforts of Chiang Kai-shek.

Despite all this support the net result of the third campaign was an annihilating defeat for Chiang Kai-shek. Eleven divisions of his troops were defeated, five of them being almost completely annihilated. As was finally reported in the *New York Times* of February 16, 1932, "It was in Kiangsi that Chiang Kai-shek's government waged a desperate anti-Communist campaign last summer at a cost of 100,000 soldiers and civilian lives and more

than \$250,000,000. The attempt to defeat the Red Armies proved vain, despite continuous deceptive official announcements from Nanking that the government had been victorious."

At present (April, 1932) the Kuomintang militarists, in order to veil their complete submission to the Japanese invasion, and to carry out the dictates of the imperialists, are sending five more divisions of the Kuomintang army to Kiangsi to suppress the "Reds." Chen Chia-tang, Cantonese commander, advised these troops "to avoid the snare of Communist propaganda." The result of the previous three campaigns and the increasing strength of the soviets and their Red Army give us reason to be confident that this Fourth Communism Suppression Campaign will likewise meet with a crushing defeat.

The reason for these defeats for the Kuomintang is not far to seek. As was admitted by Wang Jin Su, one of its commanders in the suppression campaigns, "fight against the Red bandits is quite different from the fight on the battlefield. . . . The whole of the people are the bandits and at the same time the bandits are the whole people. . . . The people in the bandit districts have long since become Bolshevised."

The First China Soviet Congress

On November 7, 1931, the fourteenth anniversary of the Russian October Revolution, the historic First China Soviet Congress was held at Shui-Kin in Kiangsi Province. A Provisional Central Soviet Government was established, and Mao Tse-tung was elected its first chairman.

Faced with the task of consolidating and strengthening the soviets, the Communist Party of China in 1930 had prepared for this Congress. A conference of the delegates from the soviet districts and mass organizations outside the soviet territories had been held on May 31, 1930. Later, a preparations committee was created to get ready for the National Soviet Congress.

The Kuomintang and the imperialists understood the great significance of this preparatory work and decided to stop it. In February, 1931, when the preparations committee met again in Shanghai, the imperialist police surrounded the meeting place and

arrested all participants. Two weeks later the arrested were handed over to the Kuomintang authorities by the imperialists and shot without trial. On this occasion, the Communist Party of China declared to the executioners: "Our tasks, our aims, which are enshrined in the hearts of millions, are above the vile and dirty work of the imperialists. The execution of our comrades will not intimidate us. The Congress will take place. Our future victory is your death. Remember this!"

The Communist Party of China kept its word. The First China Soviet Congress was attended by 610 delegates from the Central Soviet District, from the soviets in western Fukien, Hunan, Hupeh, Kiangsi and Honan, from various corps of the Red Army, the All-China Federation of Labor, All-China Seamen's Union, and from many other workers' and peasants' organizations. There were also representatives of the Communist Party of Korea. The Congress passed labor laws, land laws, and other laws benefiting the workers, peasants and Red soldiers. It declared invalid all unequal treaties and all foreign loans contracted by the Kuomintang authorities. It demanded that the imperialists withdraw their armed forces from Manchuria and the rest of China. It decided to confiscate all imperialist banks, factories, mines, railroads and other enterprises. It recorded the complete freedom of speech, press, and assembly for the toiling masses and the right of self-determination for all national minorities.

In the name of the Chinese Soviet Republic, the Congress issued a manifesto setting forth its home and foreign policies. It formally declared its close friendship and alliance with the Soviet Union. Appeals were sent out urging workers and the toiling and oppressed masses throughout the world to intensify their struggle against imperialism and for the defense of Soviet China and the Soviet Union. A special appeal was sent to the workers in the United States. The Congress drew up the constitution and elected members of the Provisional Central Government of the Soviet Republic of China. The Soviet Power of China was thus established as the revolutionary counter-part to the Nanking Government of the Kuomintang and imperialism.

This first Congress was the fruit of the hard, long struggles against reaction. It consolidated and strengthened the Chinese sector of the world revolutionary front. It gave tremendous impetus and renewed courage to workers and oppressed masses in the capitalist and colonial countries. It showed in a most effective way the crying need for workers in all countries to rally to the defense of the Chinese Revolution and the Soviet Union. At the same time the Congress proved to the international working class the reactionary position of the Trotskyites who declared that the revolutionary struggle against Chinese reaction was nothing but a "Comintern adventure," and "fireworks," and who raised the slogan of a "National Assembly" in opposition to the slogan of a Soviet China put forth by the Communist International and the Communist Party of China.

Territory and Population of the Chinese Soviets

Since the establishment of the Provisional Central Government of the Soviet Republic of China the soviets and their Red Army have been making further advances. Important cities around Hankow in addition to Nanchang, the capital of Kiangsi province, were recently captured by the Red Army. So the Soviet Republic of China now extends over about 330,000 square miles, *i.e.*, about one-sixth of China proper, with a population of about 90,000,000. The strongholds of the soviets are in Kiangsi, Hupeh, Anhwei, Fukien, Honan, and Hunan provinces. There are also soviets in Chekiang, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Shansi, Shantung, and Shensi provinces.

Kiangsi province is practically all under the control of the Soviet Government except a few cities such as Kiukiang and Kanchow whose capture appears imminent. The important soviet districts in this province are: Shuikin, the capital of the Soviet Government located in southeastern Kiangsi; Nanchang, the capital of Kiangsi province, and Ping Hsiang, big industrial and mining center.

In Hupeh province, as was admitted by a report in the *New York Times* (December 29, 1931), the "Hupeh Communists controlled sixty of the seventy hsiens, or counties, within the province

and have drawn a narrowing circle around Hankow and Wuchang."

In Fukien province soviets are deeply rooted in a number of districts such as Chungan, Shoa-wu, Ninghua, Dingchow, Shanghang, Lungyen, Yangting, and Yenpingfu, which is a good-sized city in the northern part of the province.

In Anhwei province the soviets flourish in the southwest. According to recent reports the Red Army in Anhwei captured additional cities. In Honan province soviets have been formed in the southern part on the borders of Anhwei and Hupeh. In Hunan province soviets were organized in the eastern part and are now extending to the middle west, including Liuyang, Liling, and other important districts. In Chekiang the soviets are in the southwestern part of the province. In Shansi, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Shantung, and Shensi provinces soviets are maintained and are developing. In addition to the definitely established soviet districts partisan peasant movements favoring the soviets are sweeping over such provinces as Szechuan, Kwangsi, Kweichow, Yunan, Kwangtung, Chekiang, Kiangsu, Shantung, Kansu and Sinkiang. In Manchuria, since the armed occupation by Japanese imperialism, local guerilla struggles against native reaction and Japanese imperialism have been increasing. The soviet movement is spreading there.

The revolution thus develops unevenly in various parts of China. The extent of its development is determined by the extent of the economic and political disintegration of the country, the diversity in agrarian relations in different regions, the armed occupation of the chief industrial and commercial centers by the Kuomintang and the imperialists, the dismemberment of China under various militarist cliques, the lack of uniformity in the influences of the industrial workers over the peasantry, and the differences in the revolutionary history of the various parts of the country. This makes it possible for the revolutionary movement to gain first a victory in parts of the vast country, thus paving the way for a complete victory all over China.

The Chinese Red Army

The Chinese Red Army is the main armed force of the Revolution. At the same time it is a political force spreading the revolutionary movement. This army was developed from the partisan guerilla troops who refused to yield to the Kuomintang reaction after the defeat of the Canton Soviet and who carried on struggles in the mountainous regions around Kwangtung, Kiangsi, Hunan and Fukien. It was here that the famous Chu-Moa Army (the partisan army under the command of Chu Teh and Mao Tseh-tung) began to gather strength in 1928-29.

During the same period another center of sympathetic detachments at the junction of northwestern Hunan and Hupeh was organized under the leadership of Ho Lung. Smaller but important forces were organized and developed in many other districts of Kiangsi, Kwangtung, Hunan and Fukien. These basic units grew bigger and stronger as they extended their guerilla warfare. Kuomintang soldiers, of whom over 95 per cent are pauperized peasants, have voluntarily joined the Red detachments in large numbers.

The Red Army is now a powerful force of about 150,000 soldiers. It is organized into four basic armies: the First and Third in Kiangsi, headed by Chu Teh and Peng Te-hsui; the Second army in Hupeh and Hunan under the command of Ho Lung; and the Fourth army in the new soviet region on the borders of Honan, Hupeh and Anhwei.

Utilizing the experiences of the Red Army of the Soviet Union, the Chinese Red Army has been reorganized on the principle of triple division—three companies in each platoon, three platoons in each section. In addition to the regular Red Army of 150,000, the armed force of the Chinese soviets includes the Red Guards, numbering about 600,000, the Young Red Guards with about 1,000,000, and the guerilla detachments of the peasants amounting to millions.

The equipment of the Red Army is inferior to the regular Kuomintang armies. It has about 125,000 rifles. Thanks to the suppression campaigns of the Kuomintang, the Chinese Red

Army has gained large quantities of munitions. According to the *Chinese Workers Correspondence* of Shanghai, September 3, 1931, the Fourth Red Army has "almost well equipped troops now. A machine gun company is attached to each regiment and a trench mortar to each division. For communication each detachment has its own telephone service and a complete set of radio outfit." Besides, the Red Guards have about 300,000 rifles, and the peasant guerilla troops have about 500,000. It is certain that the Red Army is becoming better equipped every day as the result of victories over the Kuomintang and local reactionary forces. Of course the Red Army fights not only with rifles but with leaflets and other educational literature which have been more effective than the poison gas and tanks of the Kuomintang.

The Red Army is composed overwhelmingly of workers and peasants. In the principal units about 10 per cent are workers, 10 per cent are small artisans and middle peasants; the remaining 80 per cent are poor peasants. The officers are mainly workers and poor peasants. The percentage of workers has been steadily increasing as the result of the capture of Changsha, the revolt in Tayeh, and the recent capture of Nanchang.

While the material conditions of the Red Army are nothing to boast of, the political and cultural developments are remarkable. A soldiers' association has been formed in each company to improve the social, political and cultural life of the troops. The campaign against illiteracy is one of the chief activities. Many soldiers who were illiterate are now able to read and write for the wall papers. Lectures and classes and general discussion meetings are organized.

Iron discipline prevails in the army. Heavy punishments, including shooting, are directed against any attempts at banditry. Some of the rules observed by Red Army men are: return everything borrowed, pay for everything destroyed, be just in buying, be gentle in speaking, do not confiscate any personal belongings of the soldiers of the White Army. In other words, the Red forces cultivate the habit of not disturbing the masses even in such small matters. As a result the masses have done their utmost to support the Red Army. The Trotskyites, the capitalist

press correspondents, the Kuomintang leaders and others who declare or even imply that the Chinese Red Army is made up of "bandits," are the most shameless liars.

General Economic Situation in the Soviets

As the Soviet Government of China does not yet control large commercial and industrial centers, the economic conditions in its territories are poor, although some regions are better off than others. But since the soviets represent the workers, the peasants and the poor, the economic conditions of the toiling masses in soviet territory are far better than those in the regions controlled by the militarists. In the soviet districts the lands of all landlords, temples, churches and other big private owners have been confiscated and distributed to the small and middle peasants, agricultural workers, Red soldiers, and the poor. The distribution of land was finally carried out in a correct manner after persistent struggles against the rich peasants. The Soviet Government abolished all exorbitant taxes and dues. A uniform progressive tax of 2 per cent of the rice crop over five picul (one picul equals 133 pounds) has been introduced. The standard of living of the poor peasantry has been greatly improved.

In soviet regions the workers enjoy the eight-hour day. Young workers are not permitted to work over six hours a day. Night work is limited to four hours. Child labor is prohibited. Minimum wages have been fixed by the government. Wages in soviet regions have increased from 50 per cent to 300 per cent as compared to the wages paid under the rule of the Whites. Out of its meager resources the government has also provided social insurance for workers. Even new industrial enterprises have been established in some soviet districts, for example, paper factories in Liuyang, mines in Lianghoa, and porcelain factories in Wansei.

The soviet factories have turned out a number of products that attract many traders from the outside. Small shopkeepers and traders are allowed to carry on their business provided they register with the Soviet Government and obey its laws and regulations. In many districts workers' and peasants' banks have been established. Soviet silver coins and bank notes are widely circulated

and were accepted even in the White districts before the Kuomintang discovered and prohibited the practice. And traders say they prefer to do business in the soviet territory rather than in the White regions where they are burdened with a number of old as well as new taxes and levies.

In short, although the economic conditions of the soviets are comparatively poor, the lot of the masses is much better than before. A dispatch in the *New York Times*, January 31, 1932, stated that "foreign missionaries writing from the zones recently overrun by the Reds report that the peasants and common people are giving a hearty welcome to the returning Communists. They said that after comparing their status under previous Communist rule with the bad government and confiscatory taxation enforced upon them after the arrival of the Nanking troops last summer, they enjoyed greater liberty and a greater degree of prosperity under the Reds than under Nanking." Of course this is much more generally true now as the soviets have since greatly extended their territories.

Cultural Developments

In spite of the constant struggle against the Whites, the soviets are successfully promoting the cultural development of the people, again in sharp contrast to the cultural decay and destruction under the rule of the Kuomintang. A number of Red elementary schools, Lenin schools, and higher educational institutions have been established. For instance, in Kiuyang in Hupeh province, there are over sixty Red elementary schools and one Lenin middle school. All books and school materials are supplied free to the pupils by the village soviets. Special schools and classes have been formed for the peasants who formerly could not read a word. They are now able to write letters and to deliver speeches at meetings. Military, medical, and other special schools also exist in some of the soviets.

Revolutionary dramas are performed before thousands of spectators, and revolutionary literature is widely read among the masses. Some of the leading publications are: the *Lenin Weekly*, a theoretical magazine of Marxism-Leninism; the *Party Life*,

mainly for members of the Communist Party; and the *Soviet*, a popular periodical. The *Red Fighter* and *Life in the Red Army* are for the soldiers in the Red Army. Besides there are various revolutionary pictorials. As a result of this enlightenment, the peasants are losing their faith in Buddha and other gods. Idols of gods have been burned and destroyed. Temples have been converted for better use of the community, in many cases for soviet headquarters, libraries and schools. Old religious holidays have been abolished and new revolutionary ones are observed, such as May First and Lenin Memorial Day. The cultural development has been so successful that one already sees a great change in the habits and thoughts of the people in the soviet territories.

Women and Youth

The women and the youth have undergone a radical change since they have been under the rule of the soviets. The fundamental policy regarding women is expressed as follows in the new constitution: "The Chinese Soviet Power secures the complete emancipation of women from the slavery of housework and makes possible their participation in social, economic, political and cultural life." This does not exist on paper only, but also in actual practice. The women have been put on a completely equal footing with men, with equal rights, equal pay, and equal hours of work. Women workers are exempt from dangerous work, and before and after childbirth they receive a two months' vacation with full pay. Women have the right to serve in all offices in the soviets and other organizations. At least two-fifths of the membership of the local soviets and other organizations are now women.

All forms of exploiting and suppressing of women have been prohibited. Slavery, concubinage, polygamy, and the custom of child marriage have all been abolished. Marriage is no more in the hands of the parents. Divorce can be arranged freely, although it does not often happen. Special schools are available for women. Nurseries, hospitals, and schools of art provide the women with opportunities for training. Many women who for-

merly hid from the public in their rooms and dared not utter a word before strangers, are now holding important positions in the soviets and schools, and are able to make political reports and speeches.

The women are active also on the battle front. They organize first aid, laundries, sewing, bootmaking and cooking brigades as well as information and transportation detachments in the Red Army. Many women who are members of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League, are given important tasks in agitation, propaganda and organization work in the soviets and the Red Army. The working women in some soviet districts joined in the front lines in the battle against the Kuomintang army. Once at Hunan, in northern Hupeh, the Red Army headquarters issued a call for volunteers to fill its ranks. In addition to thousands of men who responded, several hundred women walked a distance of many miles to offer their services.

While given ample opportunity for schooling and all sorts of political and cultural activities the youth have also performed great services for the soviets. The shock troops in many activities are composed of young workers, and the Young Red Guards have become a very important force in supporting the Red Army and defending the soviets. The number of these Young Red Guards is about 1,000,000; most of them are sons and daughters of the poor and middle peasants. Although badly equipped, they have defeated the enemy many times. For instance, the *Shun Poa* in Shanghai, a Chinese reactionary daily, reported that a division of the Kuomintang troops, attempting to advance against soviet territory at Chianka in Kiangsi province, was repulsed by Young Red Guards stationed near there. Even the younger children are doing their revolutionary duty in the soviets. Young Pioneers in China are doing such responsible work as scouting, sentry duty and carrying messages. And when they are discovered by the enemy they prefer death to giving out secrets. As set forth in the constitution of the Soviet Government, "the Chinese Soviet power will secure the protection of all rights of the youth and draw the young elements into political and cultural life in order to develop the new forces of society."

Economic Crisis and Spread of the Soviet Movement

The present soviet power in China is only the beginning. That the immediate purpose of the struggle is to spread the soviet power is clearly set forth by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in an open letter to its membership, December 11, 1931. The concluding paragraph of the letter summarizes the whole situation up to that date: "We have achieved the victory of the Soviet Republic in a number of big districts. We shall achieve the victory of the soviets also in a number of provinces."

The objective economic, social and political conditions in China are extremely favorable for a rapid development of the soviet movement. China is going through perhaps the worst economic crisis in a century. On top of the disastrous effects of the successive militarist wars, the world economic depression, and the downward plunge of the value of silver, the great flood of 1931 rushed in to complete the picture of destruction. Converting all funds for flood control into subsidies for military wars and anti-Communist expeditions, the bourgeois landlord regime criminally prepared the way for the flood, which according to the estimate of British flood experts, cost China a property loss of two billion dollars. Hundreds of thousands of acres of farm land were destroyed. In Hupeh province a lake was formed as large as the whole area of Scotland. According to official estimates about 350,000 persons were drowned in the Yangtse Valley alone and 50,000,000 were doomed to starvation. These peasants, homeless and foodless, certainly have "nothing to lose but their chains."

In the meantime the militarists continue to squeeze the very last means of subsistence from the toiling people. Innumerable new forms of taxation are devised by the reactionaries. For instance, in the provinces of Hupeh and Hunan, 40 to 50 new taxes have been introduced, among which are the following: tax on chimneys, tax for "destruction of Communists," and taxes on doors, shop signs, literary works, coffins and tombstones. Evidently a Chinese peasant cannot escape from the clutch of the

oppressors even after he is dead. Under such circumstances, is it surprising that the idea of soviets is spreading among the peasants like wildfire, and that soviets are rising throughout the length and breadth of China?

The Imperialist Intervention Campaign

Imperialist intervention is not a new thing in China. By stationing troops on Chinese territory and warships in Chinese waters, and by infesting China with their agents, such powers as Britain, Japan, France and the United States have been intervening in Chinese affairs for nearly a century. (In this connection read also *War in China* by Ray Stewart, International Pamphlets, No. 19, which gives a clear picture of why and how imperialism has worked in China.) However, it is important to distinguish between the present stage of imperialist intervention and former interventions, for the present intervention is no longer disguised; it is, on the other hand, open warfare against the Chinese Revolution.

The imperialists in 1927 bombarded the Canton Soviet and under the cover of foreign capitalist cannon fire, the Kuomintang army advanced to drown the soviet in blood. They also bombarded and aided the Kuomintang in crushing the Changsha Soviet. Japanese infantry fought against the Red Army in Yochow and twice repulsed the Red Army from Tayeh. French planes bombarded the Lung-Chow Soviet in Kwangsi province. American, British, French, Japanese, and other imperialist gunboats have frequently fired on the Chinese soviets and the Red Army along the Yangtse River.

The Japanese invasion of Shanghai is not merely an attempt to break the anti-Japanese boycott, as the capitalist press would have us believe, but is a robber war against the Chinese people, for the partition of China, and represents a step toward occupation of the Yangtse Valley, the heart of revolutionary China, in order to crush the soviet movement there. It is not an accidental coincidence that the Japanese invasion followed immediately upon the complete collapse of Chiang Kai-shek's Communism Suppression Campaigns. Japanese and world imperial-

ism have definitely set out to accomplish what Chiang Kai-shek so hopelessly failed to do.

The imperialists are dividing China and Japan is shooting her way into Soviet China from the east, while France is massing troops along the frontier of Indo-China. At the same time all the imperialist powers are concentrating warships and troops in China. Every power, of course, uses the same stock excuse of "protecting our citizens." But Admiral Wm. V. Pratt, Commander in Chief of the United States fleet, let slip the purpose for concentrating American warships in China when he said, "Our fleet will be ready to evacuate our nationals or to protect them if a crisis arises where mob rule prevails." Thus it is "mob rule," actually the rule of workers and peasants, that is the main objective of American naval concentration in Chinese waters.

The imperialists see that a war against the New World of the workers and peasants must be waged on all fronts, against the Soviet Union as well as against Soviet China and the revolutionary movement in other parts of the world. This explains the Japanese occupation of Manchuria preceding the advance on Shanghai. It explains also the English-Persian military alliance, the effort to form the Baltic and Danubian blocs, the demand for an "international police," and the increasing publicity given to the slanders of Trotsky against the Soviet Union.

It is obvious that all the imperialist powers, including the United States, while quarreling over the loot of China, are in one way or another, rendering assistance to the Japanese in the invasion of Manchuria and China proper. The reason for doing so was stated by H. B. Swope, assistant chairman of the United States War Industries Board during the World War, who, in a letter to the *New York Times* in November, 1931, frankly said, "It looks now as if Japan may have to establish in Asia that *cordon sanitaire* against the Bolsheviki which Foch wanted to erect in Europe." As was revealed in one of the Japanese documents whose authenticity the capitalists dare not dispute, "The Soviet-Japanese war must be undertaken as soon as possible. We must realize that as time passes the situation becomes more favorable

for the Soviets." (See the Tanaka Memorandum of 1927, *Communist International*, January 15, 1932.)

The Japanese imperialists are carrying out the supreme trust of world capitalism with the madness of a desperado. Failing in all other tricks of provocation, world capitalism is organizing a White Guard army under the direct sponsorship of Japan as a preliminary to the invasion of the Soviet Union. According to reliable information published in the capitalist press, "the first attack will be started under the direction of the White Guardist General Kosmin against the maritime province of which Vladivostok, the Pacific port, is the principal city. Simultaneously, the Japanese troops will invade Trans-Baikal province, west of Manchuria" (*New York Herald Tribune*, February 26, 1932). Though Japanese cannons have not yet started to boom on Russian territory, the war against the Soviet Union is becoming more and more imminent every day, and the war on the Chinese people and the partitioning of China represent a step forward in the war preparation against the Soviet Union. This has been verified by the recent invasion of the White Guardists into the Soviet Union from Manchuria, the crossing of a Japanese military plane over the soviet border, and the maneuvers of the Japanese fleet around Vladivostok.

Rising Revolutionary Wave

Coming at a time when China was already riding the waves of a revolutionary tide, the events in Manchuria and Shanghai gave the mass revolutionary movement a great impetus. In Manchuria, the workers in the factories, on the railways and on the docks replied to the Japanese invasion by repeated strikes. Armed struggles have been carried on by the workers and peasants in Manchuria where the soviet movement is taking root. In Shanghai, the workers in twenty-three Japanese spinning mills went on strike along with other workers during the early days of the invasion of Manchuria. The workers of the Shanghai Sen Chen Spinning Mill, 2,000 strong, at their meeting, September 30, 1931, decided to arm themselves and organize a workers' defense corps. On December 29, the capitalist press reported that

30,000 in the cotton mills went on strike in Shanghai and the strike movement spread to other cities. Many street demonstrations were held denouncing openly the Kuomintang and imperialism. When the Japanese marines opened fire on Shanghai, a general strike was declared. Revolutionary activities in Hankow, Canton, Peiping, and other cities are so militant, and the sentiment of rebellion is so strong, that martial law reigns most of the time.

Even capitalist correspondents are becoming aware of the rising tide of revolution. Hallet Abend, of the *New York Times*, writes from Shanghai on New Year's Day, 1932: "All China faces the New Year floundering in uncertainty. The Kuomintang admittedly has lost the large measure of popular confidence and support it once enjoyed, and the great danger now is that no other political party exists except the secret Communist organization." And on January 20, 1932, he reported that "students, labor unions, and other elements are openly denunciatory of the Kuomintang in Peiping and Tientsin, while in Shansi province students have established a 'people's tribunal,' which now is presuming to try Kuomintang officials for alleged misdemeanors." "Everywhere," he observed, "a decided swing to the left is evident."

Defend the Chinese Revolution and the Soviet Union

There is need for the strongest solidarity between workers of the capitalist world and the toiling masses in the colonies, in the struggle against imperialist war and for the defense of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Revolution. The situation is so grave, and history is moving so fast, that unless the workers and toiling masses exercise great militancy in their revolutionary activities, they run the danger of being caught unprepared for the emergency.

The enemies of the working class are preparing for the war with great speed. They know that all mass revolutionary activities, such as the struggle against unemployment, wage cuts, lynching, deportations, and capitalist terror, all contribute greatly in crystallizing the anti-war sentiment of the masses and in organiz-

ing the nationwide struggle against imperialist war. Thus, as a part of its war preparation, the employing class, together with its government and loyal agents, the social fascists, is doing its utmost to suppress the mass activities of the American workers by force of arms. It murders workers—Harry Simms in Kentucky, Joe York and three others in Detroit. It deports the foreign-born. It tries to fool the workers by fake jobless insurance schemes, bull-dozing relief measures and “block relief” systems.

The workers are answering these measures by a general intensification of activities all along the line, with particular emphasis on the special campaigns against the robber war in China, for the support of the revolutionary struggles of the Chinese masses and for the defense of the Soviet Union.

The second Five-Year Plan, which is to be launched at the accomplishment of the first plan in 1932, has as its principal aim the creation of a classless society, the completion of the building of Socialism and the tremendous improvement in the conditions of the masses.

The First National Soviet Congress of China December 11, 1931, sent a special appeal to the workers of the United States. It said in part: “To the workers of the U. S. A.: Since the Japanese imperialists occupied Manchuria, the American imperialists, in cooperation with Japanese imperialists, speed up their attempts to partition China and to organize an armed intervention against the U. S. S. R.! We call on you! Armed defense of the U. S. S. R.! Against imperialist war! Against American imperialism directing its running dogs to attack the Chinese Revolution! Unite the world proletariat! Long live the emancipation of the workers of the U. S. A.!”

This is the proper time to recall the glorious histories of the French Black Sea Fleet Mutiny, the rebellion of British troops at Archangel, the strike of the Seattle workers against shipping arms to aid the intervention in Russia, and the discontent of the American and Japanese forces in Siberia in 1920. These will always remain sources of inspiration for the international working class.

By a consistent policy of peace, the Soviet Union has con-

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