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## BACKGROUND TO THE FALL OF HUA GUOFENG

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Dorothy Grouse Fontana \*

“The truth is what those with great power and high office say it is.”<sup>1</sup>

WHEN HUA GUOFENG emerged triumphant from the death of Mao and the arrest of the Gang of Four, there were few pundits who would have predicted that a few years later he would drop almost totally from the political arena while twice-purged Deng Xiaoping would return to control much of the political scene. In fact, the major underpinnings of this reversal were laid in the first year of Hua's power. The process by which this happened raises many questions about the political process and the nature of power in China. Why did Hua, who had control of all the handles of power, lose? Why is it that the group that had every advantage and should have been in the driver's seat after Mao's death was not able to go on to victory? How was Deng able to undermine Hua successfully? It is these questions that dominate this study of the strategic time period of autumn 1976 through autumn 1978.

### *Setting The Political Scene—the Spectrum of Political Factions*

The political situation in the fall of 1976 was chaotic. Mao had recently died, the Gang of Four had just been arrested, the economy was in shambles, and the population was alienated and disaffected. Hua Guofeng emerged as the Party's new leader with almost all the major groupings in the political arena either supporting or passively accepting

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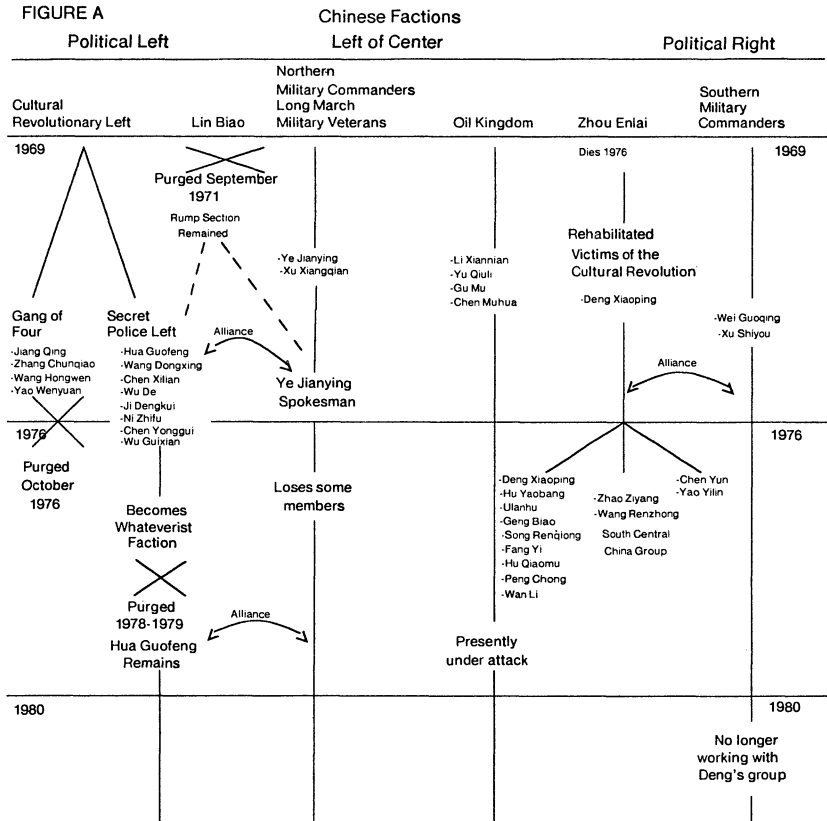
\*The author wishes to acknowledge the help and encouragement of Professor Lucian Pye.

him. Domestic unrest and economic stagnation were apparently viewed by most as too pervasive and critical to withstand a further power struggle at this time.

Several factions and opinion groups had emerged after the smashing of the Gang of Four (see Figure A). In this author's view, on the political left, the evolution of various groupings could be traced from two leftist positions that emerged after the Cultural Revolution in 1969. One group centered on Defense Minister Lin Biao,<sup>2</sup> who advocated development and strength through well-disciplined mass mobilization using the army as a model. He stood for Mao's Thought and People's War<sup>3</sup> and rapidly placed his men<sup>4</sup> in influential positions throughout the army and air force. The military was highly honored and its men imbued with Lin Biao's political philosophy. Yet when Lin Biao died in his failed coup attempt, only his most obvious followers were purged, probably because the political balance between the other factions was so shaky that no group was in a strong enough position to push a complete and ongoing purge. Thus there remained a "rump" or core of unpurged Lin Biao sympathizers and supporters, many of whom owed their promotions and political outlook to Lin. This Lin Biao rump group has remained influential among military men, localized primarily in the North and at the center where Lin's Fourth Field Army and Air Force ties were the strongest.

The second grouping on the left in 1969 was the so-called Cultural Revolutionary Left. It was composed, in this author's view, of three main subdivisions<sup>5</sup> that by 1976 had divided into two separate factions: the Gang of Four<sup>6</sup> and the Secret Police Left.<sup>7</sup> The Gang of Four, headed by Mao's wife Jiang Qing, originated from an academic and cultural orientation and favored mass mobilization through anarchistic decentralization as a means to achieve political consciousness. The members of this faction proceeded to revitalize Maoist mass organizations as a means of acquiring organizational support for this movement, while the vigorous employment of the mass communications devices in their power gave them greater visibility. Their numbers also included ex-Maoist Mass Organization leaders, many of whom later defected and joined the Secret Police Left.

The Secret Police Left had also evolved from the Cultural Revolution Left group surrounding Mao, but came to have far more in common with the Lin Biaoist positions. This group's original leaders predominantly had backgrounds with affiliations to public security organizations. As Minister of Public Security, Hua is considered a member of this group, at least until early 1977 when he began to distance himself from it. The group held the "development by disciplined mass mobilization" ideals of Lin Biao but did not advocate the army as personification of the ideal. By 1976 they had gained the backing of several of the ex-mass organization personnel of the Cultural Revolution Left group and through Hua's friendship with Ye Jianying had forged strong ties with both the Maoist



Long March Veterans and the Lin Biao rump. This group became known as the “Whateverists” for their attitude that “whatever policies Mao had made should be resolutely defended, whatever instructions Mao had given should be steadily abided by.” Finally, with the purging of the Gang of Four, some of the remaining Gang of Four rump also tried to come to the Whateverists for protection, despite the Whateverist’s earlier orchestration of the purge of the Gang of Four.

Meanwhile, slightly left of center in the political spectrum two other groupings had formed by 1976. One centered on the elderly Defense Minister Ye Jianying. Ye’s greatest strength came from his control of and ties with the central military apparatus, yet he was also a respected colleague and eventually became a spokesman for many of the Northern Regional Military Commanders and their provincial backers. While it would be a mistake to assume that all of the Northern Military spoke with one voice, Ye was certainly their major lobbyist in the administra-

tion.<sup>8</sup> His main constituency was the senior military men, many of whom were veterans of the Long March and comrades of Mao Zedong. These men were unwilling to allow a total discrediting and abandonment of Maoist thought for which they had worked all of their lives. Nor would they willingly abandon their long-standing prestige as political models for the population. Even today this group is credited with a major role in the stay of execution for Mao's widow Jiang Qing<sup>9</sup> and in protecting the Mao Memorial from closing or demolition. In general, however, this group's interests lay primarily with the welfare of the military they had served for so long. The left-of-center military veterans remained strong primarily in the North<sup>10</sup> and in Beijing, as was also the case with the Lin Biao rump. In fact, owing to their concern for military matters, Ye and his allies often became the spokesmen for the Lin Biao rump as well.<sup>11</sup> It must be remembered that

over 60% of the middle level army cadres were promoted from the ranks during the years when the Gang of Four held sway. In short, those who advanced during the "cultural revolution" hold a rather strong position at the company and regiment level. There are also commanders at the division, corps and military district level who by no means approve of the revision of Mao's "military ideas." In their opinion, the rejection of these "ideas" is tantamount to rejection of these cadres themselves.<sup>12</sup>

Ye Jianying himself was of particular interest. He apparently had not only formed a strong alliance with Hua,<sup>13</sup> but had also developed a sympathy for individual leftists, even though his politics were by no means synonomous with them. Ye's friendship with Hua quite possibly originated in their joint tenure on the Group to Investigate the Anti-Party Crimes of Lin Biao and Chen Boda.<sup>14</sup> It was here that they and other members of the Cultural Revolution Left worked to restrict the purging of leftists and eventually confirmed the "rightist" nature of Lin Biao and his crimes. Ye and his allies have been and presently remain the main support for Hua, particularly since the Whateverists were effectively eliminated in December 1978. In addition, Ye's group has over time become increasingly dissatisfied with Deng. Overall, it appears they have many reasons for complaint. They resent the downgrading of Mao who elevated them, their loss of political power through the abolition of the Revolutionary Committees on which many military men in the provinces served, and finally the consistent lack of military funding,<sup>15</sup> which has brought even greater frustration.<sup>16</sup> Deng's campaigns to "put the army in order" and to "rejuvenate" it have met consistent resistance while his four reshufflings of command cadres have still not overcome the opposition.<sup>17</sup>

While Ye's Northern Military alliance dealt primarily with military matters, the other left-of-center political faction appeared to coalesce around Li Xiannian. These men, who had run the economy and government throughout the Cultural Revolution and up through 1978, experi-

enced only minor troubles from the radicals during that time. This group would later become known as the “Oil Kingdom Faction” for its emphasis on the development of China’s petroleum industry.

Li Xiannian’s group seemed to favor leftist economic policies. In fact, this group in many ways appears to carry out the “Maoist” economic model as it related to industry. Mao, like Stalin, favored heavy industrial growth, but differed in urging the use of political rather than material incentives, and sometimes the decentralization of heavy industry. Li’s group apparently hoped to fund the growth of heavy industry with revenues derived from the newly emerging petroleum industry, and favored big industrial projects, central control, and use of the Plan.

This group has come under strong attack, particularly at the fall 1980 National People’s Congress where the Bohai Gulf Incident seems to have been used as an excuse to fire the Petroleum Minister and “gracefully” demote Yu Qiuli to his new job in energy planning. In addition, the willing retirement of Deng and Chen Yun from the State Council was thought to be merely a device to put pressure on Li Xiannian also to retire gracefully. While both Deng and Chen promoted their own followers to power<sup>18</sup> to compensate for the loss of power eventuated by their “retirement” and Deng retained his other more powerful posts,<sup>19</sup> no such countervailing force acted in Li’s behalf. In addition, by early 1981 the mayor of Beijing, who was also in Li’s patronage structure and had worked closely with Yu Qiuli, was removed after extensive attack. He was replaced by an old comrade of Deng Xiaoping’s.<sup>20</sup>

Lastly, this author differentiates two loose confederations of opinion groups remaining on China’s political “right.” These were made up of a Southern Military-Provincial Coalition (mostly Third Field Army) associated with Guangdong political boss Wei Guoqing and Canton Military Region Commander Xu Shiyu;<sup>21</sup> and a group of “Victims of the Cultural Revolution” whose most notable spokesman was Deng Xiaoping. The Southern Military-Provincial Group’s principal concern seemed to be acquiring major funding to modernize their army and navy forces, which they saw as weak and outdated, especially in light of the ongoing danger from Vietnam. This was probably due to the predominant military background of its members. They apparently also wanted a strong Taiwan policy.

The Southern Military-Provincial Group had spirited Deng Xiaoping out of Beijing after the Tiananmen purge, protected him from the radicals, and pushed for his reinstatement. Until early 1979 this group acted as his ally. Over time, however, it seems to have become clear to them that Deng was unable or unwilling to deliver on his promises. Deng’s conciliatory position on Taiwan, cuts in the military budget, and probably most importantly the December 1978 decisions both to downplay steel production, which would have been essential to expansion of military armaments, and to backtrack on huge commitments to foreign goods and plants that would have contributed to military modernization,

all served to antagonize the Southern Military. The denial of Xu's wish to become Defense Minister was a further devious factor. This situation in turn led to a split between Deng and the Southern Military Commanders that climaxed amid rumors during the summer of 1980 that Xu Shiyou had tried to shoot Deng in an argument. Whether the shooting incident was true or not, the existence of the rumors themselves was ominous. Added to that has been a gradual increase in power and prominence of old Deng colleagues representing Second Field Army interests in provinces previously dominated by Wei and Xu's Third Field Army patronage structure, leading to inevitable and gradually expanding clashes of interest between the two erstwhile allies.<sup>22</sup> In fact, the spring 1981 Sino-Vietnamese border clashes could in part have been triggered by Wei's and Xu's desire to embarrass Deng and highlight the dangers of reducing military expenditures. This would account for the reticence of the *People's Daily* in reporting some of the casualty figures. Nevertheless, before 1979 the Southern Military was an energetic ally of Deng's, particularly during the crucial 1976-78 time period when he so effectively undercut Hua and eliminated the Whateverists.

The second group of rightists was a loose constellation of cadres most conveniently dubbed the "Victims of the Cultural Revolution."<sup>23</sup> This group was made up of senior party and government cadres who had been purged during the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath and then rehabilitated. It appeared to have at least three separate subdivisions,<sup>24</sup> although during the 1976-77 time period they tended to work in concert. The only possible exception was Zhao Ziyang. While helping to undermine Hua and the Whateverists, he, unlike the others, was unwilling to accede to Hua even nominal political support. It was not until 1978 that "the Victims of the Cultural Revolution" divided into a Dengist faction that this author believes favored heavy industrial programs, centralization, party control, and economic development under the Plan; and a Zhao Ziyang-Chen Yun group leaning toward decentralization, market principles, light industry, economic experimentation, and consumerism. The current promotions in the Party and State can be inferred to have reflected a balancing act between these three factions: Deng's colleague Hu Yaobang will get the party chairmanship once Hua steps down; Zhao Ziyang, the leader of the South Central Group, got the position of Premier when Hua gave it up in fall 1980; and Chen Yun's follower Yao Yilin has taken over the crucial State Planning Commission.

While Hua's power originated in the Whateverist faction, it soon became apparent that he had two major pillars of support. Although the first support remained the Whateverists, his second support was the Northern Military Leaders, both in the provinces and at the Center around Ye Jianying (see Figure B). In general, it appeared that Deng Xiaoping's major initial campaign of 1976-77 was to attack and discredit only one of Hua's supports, the Whateverists. This group was more vul-

**FIGURE B: Estimate of Provincial Alliances at the End of 1976**


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Provinces
Anhui, Ye Jianying and Hua Guofeng
Fujian, Chen Yun and Deng Xiaoping
Gansu, Hua Guofeng
Guangdong, Wei Guoqing and Deng Xiaoping
Guangxi Zhuangzu Zizhiqu, Wei Guoqing and Deng Xiaoping
Guizhou, Wei Guoqing and Deng Xiaoping gaining upper hand after purge in early 1977
Hainan Dao, Hua Guofeng
Heilongjiang, Hua Guofeng
Henan, split between Deng Xiaoping and Hua Guofeng
Hebei, Hua Guofeng
Hubei, Hua Guofeng
Hunan, split with Hua Guofeng having upper hand
Jiangsu, Hua Guofeng
Jiangxi, Deng Xiaoping
Jilin, Hua Guofeng
Liaoning, Hua Guofeng
Nei Mongol Zizhiqu, split with Deng Xiaoping having upper hand
Ningxia Huizu Zizhiqu, split between Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping
Qinghai, Hua Guofeng
Shandong, Hua Guofeng
Shanxi, Hua Guofeng
Shaanxi, Hua Guofeng
Sichuan, Zhao Ziyang
Xinjiang, Hua Guofeng
Xizang Zizhiqu, split with Deng Xiaoping having upper hand
Yunnan, split with Wei Guoqing and Deng Xiaoping gaining upper hand after purge of provincial leaders in early 1977
Zhejiang, Hua Guofeng
Major Municipalities
Beijing, Hua Guofeng
Shanghai, split with Deng Xiaoping having the upper hand
Tianjin, Hua Guofeng

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nerable to attack because of their strong leftist ties and was undoubtedly perceived as the most dangerous foe.

### *Hua's Political Advantages*

By the fall of 1976, Hua had emerged triumphant with major apparent advantages; the cards seemed stacked in his favor. A quick overview of these advantages gives an appearance of great strength. With the fall of Jiang Qing, Hua remained the only figure eligible to wear the legitimizing mantle of Mao's approval.<sup>25</sup> He had gained public approval for his swift removal of the unpopular Jiang Qing and her Gang of Four. Meanwhile, his major political rival, Deng Xiaoping, was in disgrace. Most importantly, Hua's coalition had predominant control of the Polit-



buro and thus party decisions,<sup>26</sup> and a wide base of support from leftist party cadres. Hua's allies in the Whateverist Faction controlled Beijing and provided complete access to the extensive and sometimes embarrassing data on all party members in both the Party Archives and the Secret Police files, as well as access to Mao's complete works for use in stressing Hua's legitimate inheritance from Mao.

Hua's friendship with Defense Minister Ye Jianying, with his own constituency of military provincial men, further broadened his strength, while he and Ye were apparently also called on to act as sometime spokesmen for or protectors of the Lin Biao rump. These connections in the military gave Hua a broad base of support among Northern Military Leaders. It is conjectured that Hua also gained the more distant and problematical support of the Oil Kingdom Faction of Li Xiannian, which gave Hua further access to the control of governmental and economic policies, though lack of common goals between them would rapidly lead to trouble.

Finally, Hua had the support of the leftist party cadres who had been promoted to power over the heads of purged rightists during the Cultural Revolution and afterwards. Of the Chinese Communist Party's 38 million members, 18 million joined during the years of the Cultural Revolution. Most of them had leftist leanings. These leftist cadres had genuine reason to fear a resurgence of "rightist" and rehabilitated men who would attempt to refute the legitimacy and legality of the positions held by their younger leftist replacements and return to power. In fact, rightist attacks on the basic precepts of the Cultural Revolution would also undermine the political rationale that had justified the promotion of these leftist cadres. This in turn made the leftist party cadres dependent on Hua to defend the Cultural Revolution.

### *The Factors at Work Against Hua*

If the cards appeared stacked in Hua's favor, who or what were the jokers in the deck? These problems will be touched on briefly here and dealt with more extensively below. At the center, Hua had to keep peace between his disparate allies: the Whateverists, the Northern Military Leaders, and the Oil Kingdom Faction. He apparently became overly involved and distracted by political maneuvering within the government and the Politburo on the assumption that as long as he controlled the center he would remain in power. Uneasy compromises among the various groups that Hua laboriously worked out seemed to be undermined and exploited both externally and by the disparate goals the groups held.

Additionally, many of Hua's leftist allies had ties to previously disgraced leftists such as Lin Biao and the Gang of Four.<sup>27</sup> Hence, criticisms of already disgraced people and policies were also by extension strong attacks on current leftists in power. Consequently, the purges of Gang of Four supporters in the provinces could easily be expanded to encompass

other leftist sympathizers who had at some time had ties to either the Gang or Lin Biao. Trying to limit or control a purge that is being fueled by others can be very difficult, as students of Stalin's Russia will substantiate.

Within the government, Hua had to contend with the fact that he had assumed the Premiership without prior proper and *legal* National People's Congress ratification. Hence, any attempt to enforce legality in the country would leave Hua vulnerable to attack. More importantly, the legality of Hua's accretion of power within the party was particularly vulnerable to attack. His assumption of the Party Chairmanship and Chairmanship of the Military Council by a Politburo resolution in October 1976 was not legally ratified by a Party Congress until the August 1977 Eleventh Party Congress, ten months later.

In actuality, the governmental and party structure itself seemed to become Hua's worst enemy. The chief feature of the Chinese political structure that worked against Hua was the very fluidity in the nature and content of jobs in China. Max Weber explains this problem best in his theory of the "Transitional Society" in which the content of jobs not yet institutionalized or routinized consequently remain fluid. Thus Hua and his supporters could be undercut by removal of duties or powers from their political jobs, often while they were immobilized by political attacks. Deng was able to do this repeatedly and at all levels, from the Revolutionary Committees to the position of Premier. Hua's position as Head of the State Council was effectively undermined when Deng reinstalled the Secretary General's Office and reelevated the Party Secretariat. The Secretary General took over one of the Premier's major duties, that of overseeing the day-to-day implementation of Politburo decisions.<sup>28</sup> In fact, Deng cleverly used the State Council and the State bureaucracy, which he restructured after his return in July 1977, to take over power increasingly from the Party bureaucracy at the center. Then, when Deng's supporters moved in from the provinces to the center, they were placed directly into State appointments. Similarly, Hua played directly into Deng's hands with his increasing emphasis on the importance of economic decisions since this of necessity also elevated the state apparatus and bureaucracy that had to make and carry out those decisions. This gave Deng's State apparatus even greater leverage.

In addition, Hua had acquired his own enemies. First, Hua's major detractor was the ambitious Sichuanese leader Zhao Ziyang, who made his hostility and opposition to both Hua and his policies immediately apparent. Zhao viewed himself as an agricultural expert whose policies were in opposition to Hua's.<sup>29</sup> Hua's status as agricultural expert was resented and scorned. Zhao felt no compunction about trying new economic and agricultural experiments in his province, while ignoring official policy on these issues. He also ignored the obligatory campaigns in praise of Hua<sup>30</sup> that originated in Beijing. Zhao worked consistently to resist and undermine Hua from the very beginning. Second, Hua had to deal with the

alienation and bitterness of an entire populace who had confronted both injustice and want under the rule of Mao and with his leftist sympathizers. It was this popular malaise that Deng was able to harness in the "Hundred Flowers Movement" or "Democracy Movement." He seemed able to direct public disaffection towards those who perpetuated or gained legitimacy from the later Mao years, including Hua.

On the other hand, while Hua was gaining enemies, Deng had two strong groups of allies. The first was the Southern Regional Commanders, most notably Wei Guoqing and Xu Shiyou, who allowed Deng to reinstate and rehabilitate freely his purged colleagues and followers throughout the South. Concurrently, these Southern Military leaders applied strong pressure on Hua to bring about Deng's second reinstatement. In fact, Wei Guoqing's nominal acceptance of the legitimacy of Hua's government, and his apparent agreement to suspend his judgment on Hua's solutions to the country's desperate needs, allowed Hua to move fairly effectively. However, by the beginning of 1977, Wei began to withdraw even his previously nominal support of Hua,<sup>31</sup> seeing he could get neither Deng's reinstatement nor other considerations such as funding through cooperation with the government. At the same time, he even more forcefully demanded Deng's reinstatement. Wei's withdrawal represented a major blow to Hua, striking at the heart of his government's legitimacy. Deng's second group of allies was the rehabilitated cadres, who provided the experience and expertise that would allow Deng to establish an alternate group of cadres able to replace the one that had preempted and usurped it years earlier.

### *Upsetting Hua's Fragile Coalition in the Center*

A careful examination of the above factors can provide insights into the reasons behind the fall of the Whateverist Faction and the major political weakening of Hua Guofeng. Hua's first problem was to keep peace between his disparate allies in the center. He appears to have made the error of assuming that if he controlled the center and with it the Party, he would then control China. Thus he put all his energies into dealing with the political maneuverings at the center, particularly in the Politburo, while allowing his followers in the provinces gradually to be undermined. To gain the cooperation of Wang Dongxing and the Whateverists both to discredit and arrest the Gang of Four and to support Hua's own pretensions, Hua was apparently forced to make certain commitments. Party leaks originating in Southern China and reported in Taipei claimed that Politburo members Chen Xilian, Wang Dongxing, and Wu De agreed to support Hua in exchange for his acquiescence to their six demands.<sup>32</sup> These demands included a guarantee that their military organization, subordinate units, and cadres remain unchanged; that only unanimous concurrence of the Politburo could call the Third Party Plenum, leaving

the present Central Committee virtually impotent; and finally that the Cultural Revolution not be attacked while the campaign to criticize Deng and his "Right Deviationist Wind to reverse verdicts of the Cultural Revolution" be continued.<sup>33</sup> Yet even while Hua seemed to be forced to accept certain demands from the Whateverists, in economic policy the two were very close together. With their common background in public security, they probably saw popular discontent as the country's major problem and felt that raising the population's standard of living to head off revolt in the countryside was imperative. This was to be done through an emphasis on light industry and consumer goods, and a raising of salaries and agricultural subsidies. The Whateverists, and in particular the veteran Dazhai cadre Chen Yongkui, also agreed with Hua's views on greater investment in and attention to agriculture.

Meanwhile, Hua's allegiance from the senior military men around Ye Jianying and the leftist Lin Biao sympathizers probably rested on three premises. The first was Hua's friendship and cooperation with Ye, which served to provide funds for the Northern Army. Since this would withdraw funds from Hua's ambitious agricultural programs and his investments in light industry as a means of raising the population's standard of living, he was already being pulled in two directions. In addition to the problem that Hua could deliver only a limited amount of funds to the military was the need for that money to be divided among the pro-Deng Southern Military on the uneasy Vietnam border, the pro-Deng navy whose strength was crucial to both commercial maritime interests and defense of offshore islands threatened by an increasingly hostile Vietnam, the pro-leftist Northern Military stretched thin along the dangerous Soviet border, and the nearly impotent air force with similar leftist leanings.

The second premise for the Northern Military's support of Hua seemed to be his continuation of the anti-Soviet leaning, which had been central to both Mao's and Lin Biao's<sup>34</sup> doctrines. Since the Southern and pro-Deng factions continued to undermine this foreign policy position by urging renewed Sino-Soviet talks<sup>35</sup> and a decrease in political hostilities, Hua was again caught between irreconcilable demands.

The Northern Military's third demand apparently was that Mao Zedong continue to be honored. Mao had come to represent the prestige of the military and particularly that of the Long March Veterans,<sup>36</sup> while the honoring of Mao would also insure the more leftist climate that the younger Lin Biao sympathizers desired. Of course, since Hua's legitimacy rested on his position as Mao's heir, he strongly concurred with these Northern Military men on this issue.

Lastly, Hua seemed to have gained limited cooperation from the Oil Kingdom Faction of Li Xiannian and Yu Qiuli, who had been running the government and the economy. These men not only had a great deal of power but tended to be moderate leftists in economic policy, favoring the command economy and heavy industrial growth on the Stalinist model.

Their position clearly clashed with Hua's and the Whateverists' desire for major investment in agriculture and expansion of light industry and consumer markets. When the Northern Military's demand for more funds and investment were added, it was clear that extensive political maneuvering would be necessary to arrive at compromises between the mutually contradictory positions and demands of the various factions in the Center.

Deng and his allies appeared to have done what they could to aggravate these tensions. It seems that Deng worked both to cause problems between the Oil Kingdom Faction and Hua and to gain the Oil Kingdom Faction's support for himself, even though it appears likely that Li did not support Deng's rehabilitation in 1977 without imposing preconditions.<sup>37</sup> Deng apparently advocated that Li Xiannian become the new Premier and followed it up by releasing rumors to that effect in Hong Kong. While gaining consensus from the Oil Kingdom Faction on the removal of Beijing Mayor Wu De, Deng probably also backed a colleague of Li Xiannian named Lin Hujia to become the new Mayor. In addition, Deng and his allies openly sided with the Oil Kingdom Faction in economic discussions. They virtually ignored Hua's agriculture-oriented "Second Learn from Dazhai Conference,"<sup>38</sup> discussing instead the petroleum-oriented Daqing Conference. Thus they encouraged and strengthened the Oil Kingdom Faction in making their own demands within the Politburo. Apparently the decision to call the late 1976 "Second Learn from Dazhai Conference" and the early 1977 "Learn from Daqing Conference" one after the other was a compromise with the Oil Kingdom Faction orchestrated by Hua. Hua wanted the Second Dazhai Conference as a means to reemphasize the prominence he and his agricultural policies had achieved during the First Dazhai Conference. However, he was also forced to give the Oil Kingdom Faction, backed by Deng's followers, their own conference.

The positions of Deng and his allies also caused dissension between Hua and his Northern Military allies. The Southern Military's demand for money spurred greater competition in the North, placing greater pressure on Hua. Meanwhile, Deng's position that China must engage in talks with the USSR in order to reduce tensions and buy time for further economic and defense buildup<sup>39</sup> tended to alienate the Northern Military who adhered to Lin Biaoist and Maoist views on unremitting hostility toward Moscow and a "People's War" strategy to meet the Soviet invader. The November 1976-February 1977 Sino-Soviet talks were repeatedly undermined by the Northern Military Leaders.<sup>40</sup>

Thus Deng tendentiously stirred the pot in the center, leaving Hua to cool tempers and maneuver fragile compromises. Deng's allies were free to work actively in the provinces while he consolidated the state apparatus at the center. Hua was apparently so concerned with holding his coalition's control at the center that he was unable to stop Deng and his

allies' accretion of influence and power in the provinces and in the state apparatus. Just as Mao before him, Deng encircled and defeated the center by controlling the surrounding countryside, and in this case using the provinces to help overrule the center.

### *Deng Gains Control of the Provinces*

Deng's actions in the provinces appear to have been three pronged. Overall he undermined, weakened, and purged Hua's allies wherever he could and replaced them with his own supporters. Deng's first line of attack was apparently to begin where his allies or past Zhou Enlai followers were strongest. This included the Foreign Ministry<sup>41</sup> where Jiao Guanhua was immediately removed, as well as other government ministries, the navy, and the southern provinces. By consolidating his power in areas where he was already strong, Deng provided himself with a more secure support base. He also began a personal vendetta against those he held responsible for his downfall in the 1976 Tiananmen affair,<sup>42</sup> particularly Wu De.

Deng's second line of attack in the provinces was an energetic campaign to rehabilitate and reinstate previously purged cadres. He thus acquired a group of able and experienced cadres who owed him allegiance and gratitude and simultaneously provided a solid nucleus for reforming the party-state apparatus with pro-Deng personnel. By 1979 in Guangdong alone<sup>43</sup> more than 40,000 basic level rural area cadres had been rehabilitated after unjust treatment during the Cultural Revolution.

It appears that Deng then took advantage of the country's unusual power structure, which was based on the Revolutionary Committees that were instituted during the Cultural Revolution and were in charge of running affairs at many levels in the provinces. They were composed of military men and party and government officials. In short, party and government had been merged and thus were part of the same institutional structure, unlike the dual hierarchy structure of other communist countries. As a result, Deng, whose strength was based in the state apparatus, had the unique opportunity of placing his men in the Revolutionary Committees where they in turn gradually became the dominant power,<sup>44</sup> out-manuevering, dominating, and undermining Hua's party officials in these committees. Meanwhile, Deng's activities with the State Council at the center ran a parallel course. He created and capitalized on confusion between prerogatives of the party and state apparatus, and thus was able to do something never before achieved in a communist country: he rose to power through the state and not the party apparatus.<sup>45</sup> Thereafter Deng's awareness of the potential dangers inherent in the Revolutionary Committee structure probably led him to abolish that structure as soon as he regained power. He thus returned China to the dual hierarchy structure it had previously held in common with other communist societies.



Deng's solid nucleus of rehabilitated cadres who were newly appointed to the Revolutionary Committees and the bureaucratic structure was apparently encouraged to expand its duties and prerogatives. In this way these cadres increasingly acquired more and greater power at the expense of the demoralized, intimidated, less experienced, or younger cadres who were the basis of Hua's power throughout the party and state apparatus. Political attacks tying leftist leaning cadres to the discredited policy or personnel of the Gang of Four were used to immobilize and intimidate them so they could gradually be stripped of power. In addition, a continuing purge of "tainted" cadres was pursued. Once a cadre was purged, he was rapidly replaced by one of Deng's rehabilitated colleagues who in turn pushed his influence ever wider by usurping other cadres' powers and thus expanding his own areas of responsibility. The very demoralization and unwillingness among party and government cadres to take responsibility also worked to Deng's advantage. Few cadres were willing to take responsibility or initiative on matters that might later lead to their purging. The past repeated reversals in "party line" had laid many conscientious and able cadres open to attack, so they were cautious in committing themselves to new "party lines." These cadres "raised the objection that 'we now criticize what we did in the past, and do what we criticized in the past.'"<sup>46</sup>

Deng's third line of attack was to initiate purges against Hua's supporters. His undermining of Hua's followers and potential supporters was easily accomplished by a gradual widening of the purges of the Gang of Four and their "henchmen." Since all the leftist and center-leftist groups had at one time either worked with or supported the now proscribed Gang of Four or Lin Biao factions, attacking them through their past connections was merely a matter of dredging up past history. Those in the left-of-center grouping around Hua seemed to realize their vulnerability to just such an attack and attempted to stop it by rigorously calling for a restriction on the scale and extent of the purges. They called for purges of only the Gang's closest confederates and for rehabilitation and reeducation of others who had been misled by the Gang. They avoided either denouncing or resurrecting Lin Biao and his crimes, and instead rallied around the call to emulate both Lei Feng, a revolutionary soldier whom Lin Biao had honored and propagandized, and the Hard Boned 6th, a military unit with ties to Ye Jianying. Their slogans insisted that purges must "narrow the attack." They stressed that "the principle is to reduce the target of attack. It is necessary to apply the principles: profit from errors of the past to avoid new ones in the future, and heal the sickness to save the man."<sup>47</sup>

Major differences began to appear between the North and South in the diligence and expeditiousness with which their purges were carried out. Deng's allies, mainly in the South, envisioned a slowly expanding purge, while the members of Hua's Northern-based coalition continued

to call for a limiting of the "target of attack." Progressively the North's calls for "healing the sickness to save the patient" would be countered by the South's urging that "leaders must promote struggle," and its call for "beating the dog in the water." One such Southern exhortation explained:

The issue is for the leaders at all levels to . . . boldly arouse the masses and quickly whip up an upsurge in exposing and criticizing the . . . "Gang of Four" and in struggling against them. The masses should be aroused to fight a battle of attack and annihilation . . . to display the revolutionary spirit of fighting on to the end and beating the dog in the water to vigorously pursue and fiercely beat the "Gang". . . . It is either the east wind prevailing over the west wind or the other way around, and there is no room for compromise . . . when one makes mistakes he should conduct self-criticism and correct the mistakes . . . if anyone adopts a passive attitude or puts up resistance, if he continues to make mistakes . . . the inevitable result will be his being cast away by the mass movement.<sup>48</sup>

In addition, Deng followers expanded the condemnation of the Gang of Four to a similar indictment of Lin Biao. The North around Hua had scrupulously avoided attacking Lin. When one considered that 60% of the middle level army cadres were promoted from the ranks during Lin Biao's reign and that 18 million new party members of the 38 million member Communist Party also joined during the time when leftist attitudes were fostered by Lin Biao and to some extent by the Gang, it was clear that these cadres would have to be removed, neutralized, or coopted for Deng's return to be effective. Otherwise they would sabotage Deng's new policies either through passive neglect or active resistance. The widespread nature and depth of the situation has continued to be a major problem for Deng and probably accounts for the decision to include the Lin Biao supporters in the trial with the Gang of Four. By trying Lin Biao supporters, Deng was able to provide a focus for fueling the continued and expanding purge of Lin Biao sympathizers in the army and party. This in turn would enable him further to attack and undermine Hua's major bases of support among the leftist army and party cadres.

Thus Hua's supporters have been gradually tied to the left. Once under attack and while they were too embattled to intervene or retaliate, their positions were further weakened and eroded by Deng's followers, who assumed some of their major duties and powers, as in the case of Li Desheng.<sup>49</sup> The leftist sympathizers were gradually surrounded by pro-Deng or rightist sympathizers who in turn slowly accrued greater powers from those who were paralyzed or distracted while under attack. Hua's supporters in Liaoning, Heilongjiang, and Zinjiang were rapidly dealt with in this manner, and this technique was later expanded to other provinces as well. Seypidin and Li Desheng were only the most prominent early victims.<sup>50</sup>



*The Democracy Campaign as a Weapon*

Deng seems to have next sought a way both to strengthen his own support and to simultaneously attack and weaken the leftists. He found it with the Democracy Movement, which allowed him to tap the widespread popular discontent felt throughout the countryside toward the country's heritage of leftist policies and personnel. Meanwhile, his own position as heir to the widely loved and respected Zhou Enlai, and the genuinely popular nature of his proposed reforms in the countryside made him the clear benefactor of the backlash against the years of leftist mismanagement. Thus, arguing that open expression would (1) give the government a better idea of problems needing redress, (2) provide a safety valve for expelling dangerous discontent, and (3) both pacify the population and convince them that they would have a voice in the government and hence a reason to defend it, Deng officially launched his Democracy Movement in November 1978, although its coming had been foreshadowed much earlier.<sup>51</sup> Whether Hua willingly backed the Democracy Movement or was forced to it, as some observers believe, the result was equally bad. The movement dangerously backfired on Hua just as Mao's Hundred Flowers Campaign had blown up in Mao's face. Rather than safely venting popular discontent, it emboldened and spurred it on to greater heights.

It can be surmised that this genuine discontent became a tool for Deng to manipulate, turning into a strong weapon in his hand. The Democracy Movement was used in three ways to expose and attack Hua's power structure. First it was used to fuel and justify the expansion of Deng's attack on the leftist followers of Hua at all levels. Those with grievances stepped forward and leveled them against current power holders. In this way Hua's men could be selectively attacked,<sup>52</sup> since witnesses from the past could be called forward to testify that intended targets had either had ties with proscribed leftists or had carried out now discredited leftist policies. Embarrassing new leaks<sup>53</sup> and damaging attacks could be passed off as a part of the Democracy Movement as well. This in turn made it easier to widen the ongoing purge of Gang of Four leftists to include any who had cooperated with them in the past.

While the Democracy Movement appeared to be used as a weapon against specific personnel, it also had another thrust. The overwhelming weight of evidence from the campaign showed that China needed to return to some form of legal structure in order to counter the excesses of revolutionary zeal that had led to anarchy, violence, tyranny, and injustice. The demand for a return to "legal practices" within the party and state was in addition an indirect attack on Hua and his followers who had assumed their jobs without legal sanctions, often as a result of the purge of the previous job tenant.<sup>54</sup> As early as November 1976, it appears that Deng and his supporters made known their opposition to Hua's joint tenure as Premier and Party Chairman. Since Deng was apparently

working to gain control of the governmental structure first before attacking Hua's power in the party structure, he tried to get Hua to give up the Premiership.<sup>55</sup> The Premiership was a particularly sensitive position not only because it controlled the state apparatus, but also because it allowed Hua to meet regularly with top military men, many of whom were his strongest backers. Since Hua's joint assumption of power did not have governmental sanction as stipulated in the Constitution, Hua's extralegal assumption of power became the immediate target of Deng and his allies.<sup>56</sup> Hence, by emphasizing the need for legality, Deng was highlighting Hua's illegality. Even further, he was showing that Hua's followers in the leftist camp had a history of abusing and ignoring the law.

Lastly, the Democracy Movement's revelations of injustice, waste, and economic ineptitude could only raise doubts about the judgment and quality of Mao's choices of leaders and economic policies. This in turn cast further shadows on Mao's wisdom in choosing Hua, saying in effect that while Hua had gained legitimacy from Mao, that legitimacy might not be worth having.

The assumption that Deng viewed the Democracy Movement as a weapon and an expedient was perhaps most strongly supported when he ruthlessly squashed it once it had served its purpose of undermining the Whateverists around Hua. Democracy wall was first moved to an obscure park and later abandoned entirely while the editors of newly emerging outspoken publications were arrested and tried. Thus, the Democracy Movement in China was a weapon and tool, not a belief and a spirit, and was eliminated and discarded once it had served its purpose.

### *Summary*

Hua rose to power on the strength of his alliances with the Whateverists and the Northern Military Leaders, while his own power base was far more limited. Though he had many apparent advantages, he was outmaneuvered and gradually forced back by Deng and his Southern allies. They kept Hua preoccupied at the center holding together his fragile coalition while they ruthlessly purged, attacked, and undermined his supporters and those of his allies in the provinces. Simultaneously, they built up their own power base in the state bureaucracy. Widespread public disaffection with past leftist policies and excesses made Hua's position even more untenable. Focusing on the more dangerous but also more vulnerable Whateverists, Deng was able to undermine Hua seriously when he succeeded in purging the Whateverist leaders. It seems likely Deng viewed Hua's Northern Military supporters as the lesser opponent, based on the fact that many of their leaders, because of their age, would gradually fade from the picture. Hence only the most prominent of these were removed at first.

By the watershed Third Plenum of the CCP in December 1978, the Whateverists were effectively eliminated, and their most powerful leaders

stripped of their influential jobs. All were "let down" easily, remaining in nominal posts until they could be legally and gracefully removed from office by the fall 1979 Party Congress.

Thus by the end of 1978, one of Hua's two major pillars of support had been undercut and effectively removed by paralyzing and demoting the chief Whateverist leaders who had supported him. From there the Democracy Movement would be used to further the attacks on Hua's leftist followers and sympathizers at lower levels of the party and military as well as to continue targeting Hua and remaining powerful Hua supporters. With the Whateverists removed, the major remaining strength of the greatly weakened Hua grew out of his Northern Military allies both at the center and in the provinces, particularly the aging Ye Jianying. Hua's remaining constituents were the large numbers of leftist party members and middle level military cadres who had thus far escaped purging, and even today still present serious problems for Deng.

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## NOTES

1. This was reported as "a common phrase which is circulating in China" by David Bonavia, "Maoism Still Fetters the Masses," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 21, 1979, p. 22.

2. Lin Biao was considered Mao's heir until his assassination attempt on Mao failed in September 1971. Lin died the night of September 12, 1971, whether in a plane crash or by execution remains unclear.

3. Lin Biao's most important theoretical work was on People's War.

4. Lin Biao was from the Fourth Field Army and therefore placed men who shared his same field army background in powerful places. This was common practice among China's military. The Field Army Concept is best discussed in William W. Whitson and Chen-Hsia Huang, *The Chinese High Command: A History of Communist Military Politics, 1923-1971* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973).

5. These subdivisions included the group who would later become the Gang of Four, the group who would later become the Secret Police Left, and a group of ex-Maoist Mass Organization leaders who rose to prominence with the Gang of Four but had moved over and sided with the Secret Police Left by 1976. This last group was called the "Wind Faction" in attacks launched against them starting in early 1978.

6. The Gang of Four included Mao's widow Jiang Qing, theoretician Zhang Chunqiao, Shanghai radical and *Red Flag* editor Yao Wenyuan, and Shanghai labor leader Wang Hongwen. Many people claim that Mao himself should have been the fifth member of the Gang, while Mao's nephew Mao Yuanxin was also a close accomplice.

7. Jürgen Domes originated the term Secret Police Left; see, for example, Jürgen Domes, *China After the Cultural Revolution: Politics Between Two Party Congresses* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977, p. 200). Its most prominent members had backgrounds in Public Security and Secret Police work. They included

Hua Guofeng, head of the Ministry of Public Safety for one year; Ji Dengkui, first political commissar of Beijing Military Region; Wang Dongxing, head of Mao's 8341 Bodyguard unit and the Secret Police; and Chen Xilian, head of the Beijing Military Region.

8. It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine the various factions in the military. Ross Terrill comments on Ye Jianying's frequent representation of PLA demands in the administration in *The Future of China After Mao* (New York: Dell, 1978), p. 153.

9. David Bonavia, "Exit Jiang Left—With Hua Not Far Behind," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 2, 1981, pp. 12–13.

10. The Maoist Civil War base was in Yanan and much of the fighting during the war against Japan and the Civil War was done in the North.

11. It would be a simplification to imply that there were only these two groups in the Northern Military. For the present discussion, however, the Northern Military Regional Commanders, Long March Veterans, and Lin Biao sympathizers were fairly united in their support for Hua, even though some of their policy positions differed.

12. "The Army's Role in China's Power Struggle," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 32:51, pp. 6–7.

13. Ye Jianying became a close ally of Hua's. In fact, Terrill reports that the crucial meeting in which the Gang of Four was arrested was held at Ye's house rather than the more usual government compound at South and Central Lake. Ross Terrill, *The Future of China After Mao*, pp. 108, 110.

14. In September 1971, the Special Investigation Group of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party was formed to investigate the Lin Biao-Chen Boda Anti-Party Clique. The original members were Ye Jianying, Zhang Chunqiao, Li Desheng, Ji Dengkui, Wang Dongxing, and Chen Xilian; Hua Guofeng and Wang Hongwen as well as others were included later. For discussion, see Domes, *China After the Cultural Revolution*, p. 27, and Parris Chang, "The Rise of Wang Tung-hsing," *China Quarterly* no. 73, March 1978, p. 133.

15. The military budget was cut 13.2% in 1980. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 6–12, 1981, p. 1. In 1981 the military allocation was cut by 6.4 billion RMB (i.e., from \$14.8 billion to \$12.8 billion). "Deng's Hand on the Gun," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 13, 1981, p. 12; and "Leadership Divisions," *China Business Review*, March–April 1981, p. 45.

16. The dispute between Deng and Ye has surfaced in many areas. Ye has come under increasing pressure from Deng to retire. Discussions of the Ye-Deng divergence appear in "Divergences Between Yeh and Teng," *Issues and Studies*, 16:7, July 1980, p. 1 and David Bonavia, "The Army Stays the Gun," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 16, 1981, pp. 10–11. *FEER* suggests that Deng's military opponents are even slipping explosives to leftists, using them for terrorist bombings in Liaoning and Shanghai, old Gang of Four strongholds. The indecision over how far to denounce Mao and implicate him with the Gang, and the repeated on-off attitude toward the Mao Mausoleum also showed these policy differences. Ye's absence from the 1981 New Year festivities in conjunction with Hua's boycott of the event was also important, while it is rumored that Ye's continued stay in Canton in 1981 led to repeated delays in holding the Standing Committee meeting.

17. The army's resistance to Deng is discussed in "The Army's Role in China's Power Struggle," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 32:51, pp. 6–7.

18. Chen Yun's close associate Yao Yilin was given the State Planning Commission, while it was apparently agreed that Deng's colleague Hu Yaobang would get the

Party Chairmanship once Hua was forced out. Other Deng colleagues have also moved up. Incidentally, the third powerful rightist group leader, Zhao Ziyang (of the South Central Group), was given the Premiership in this balancing act.

19. He kept his posts as Vice Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee and member of the Central Committee's Military Council.

20. Deng supporter Jiao Ruoyu was given the Mayorship of Beijing after the removal of Li Xiannian supporter Lin Hujia in early 1981.

21. Wei and Xu, by exploiting their Third Field Army ties, consolidated a "kingdom" in the south of China. By March 1977 Wei and Xu had already gained control through former subordinates of ten provinces and four of the eleven military regions.

22. For an excellent and detailed discussion of the expansion of Deng's influence in Yunnan province at the expense of Wei Guoqing, see Dorothy J. Solinger, University of Pittsburgh, "Politics and Leadership in Yunnan Province: Leftism, Factionalism and the Border," paper prepared for presentation at the 1981 Annual Meeting of the Association of Asian Studies, Toronto, March 15, 1981.

23. The author wishes to thank Parris Chang for his enlightening discussion on this matter. More recently, his article "Chinese Politics: Deng's Turbulent Quest," *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1981, vol. 30, discusses this as well.

24. These three groups were associated with Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, and Zhao Ziyang (The South Central China Group). Chen Yun seems to be acting in the tradition of Xue Muqiao, urging the use of market principles and economic experimentation. Zhao Ziyang has been associated with greater freedom, economic reform, and new approaches for the agricultural sector, while also agreeing with much of Chen Yun's economic experimentation and expansion of light industry. He put into effect major departures from the accepted Hua agricultural model. Zhao's huge success in Sichuan, a crucial Chinese agricultural province, was of great importance to his subsequent rise.

25. This eventually became a disability for Hua, once it became known that Mao's illness and senility had made it almost impossible for him to make informed decisions during 1976.

26. Hua's supporters held a predominant position on the 1976 Politburo after deaths and purges had taken their toll. The author's estimate of the line-up of the Politburo and Alternate members follows: Hua Guofeng; Ye Jianying (Northern Military, pro-Hua); Li Desheng (Northern Military, pro-Hua); Chen Xilian (Whateverist, pro-Hua); Chen Yonggui (Whateverist, pro-Hua); Ji Dengkui (Whateverist, pro-Hua); Xu Shiyou (Southern Military, pro-Deng); Li Xiannian (Oil Kingdom, either neutral or pro-Hua); Liu Bocheng (Second Field Army Ties, pro-Deng but believed senile and ill); Wang Dongxing (Whateverist, pro-Hua); Wei Guoqing (Southern Military, pro-Deng); Wu De (Whateverist, pro-Hua); Su Zhenhua (Second Field Army Ties, pro-Deng); Wu Guixian (Whateverist, pro-Hua). Deng was able to get many more of his colleagues on the new Politburo that emerged the following year.

27. These allies with ties to the left included some of the Northern Military leaders in both the center and provinces; the leftist provincial leaders, many with military ties; the Whateverists who had been the Secret Police Left Wing of Jiang Qing's Cultural Revolution Left Group; unpurged Lin Biao sympathizers; and the large number of leftist cadre who had moved into office under the auspices of leftist groups since the end of the Cultural Revolution.

28. David Bonavia, "Musical Chairs in the Provinces," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 8, 1980. p. 22.

29. While Hua represented an agricultural policy of Learn from Dazhai, Zhao had for years been on Land Reform Committees and had headed the Rural Work Department under the Southern China Sub-bureau. He had contributed several articles on agriculture to the *People's Daily*. He had every reason to be jealous of Hua's stature as an agricultural expert. Zhao used his tenure in Sichuan to launch major agricultural departures from Hua's and therefore the center's agricultural policies. On Zhao's background, see "Chao Tzu-yang First Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Szechwan Provincial Committee," *Issues and Studies*, November 1978, pp. 83–88.

30. Zhao not only resented Hua's stature as "agricultural expert," but he also had a great hatred for the leftist policies represented by the Secret Police Left and Hua. Zhao was a rehabilitated cadre who had been ruthlessly denounced in the Cultural Revolution as the "black agent in Guangdong of China's Khrushchev" (Tao Chu). Zhao made his hatred known. Even at the perfunctory provincial rally in support of Hua's appointments, Zhao attended but gave no reported speech or endorsement of Hua. (Chengdu Sichuan Provincial Service in Mandarin, 2140 GMT, October 22, 1976, *FBIS*, October 26, 1976, pp. J1–2). The only enthusiastic praise came in a salutation message sent to Hua and the Party Central Committee from Chengdu PLA units of the province of Sichuan the same day. The text was only released seven days later, however, and then in Beijing, not Chengdu. (Beijing NCNA Domestic Service in Chinese, 1203 GMT, October 30, 1976). Even the *Sichuan Daily's* public congratulations to Hua for his appointment did not appear until November 15, three weeks later than the other provinces. (Chengdu Sichuan Provincial Service in Mandarin, 2140 GMT, November 14, 1976, *Sichuan Daily*, November 14, editorial, *FBIS*, November 16, 1976, pp. J1–2). The slogans in Sichuan got no further than praising the wise decisions of the "Central Committee headed by Chairman Hua," (Chengdu Sichuan Provincial Service, 2140 GMT, November 14, 1976), not Hua's decisions themselves, as appeared in other provinces at the same time. (See Urumchi Xinjiang Regional Service in Mandarin, 1030 GMT, October 23, 1976, "Saifudin Voices Support," *FBIS*, October 26, 1976, p. M3). From October 22, 1976 on, Zhao would attend no other meetings either in honor of Hua or in honor of decisions and campaigns ordered by Hua until the March 28, 1977 Dazhai Conference in Sichuan, which occurred immediately after the foreign press on March 23 had commented on Zhao's previous obvious omissions. (Taipei CNA in English, 1442 GMT, March 23, 1977, "CNA: Split Developing Among New PRC Power Holders," *FBIS*, March 25, 1977, pp. E1–2).

31. This was seen by early 1977 both in Wei's speeches and in public campaigns in the Guangdong Provincial Service. They began to ignore or underplay obligatory campaigns coming out of Beijing while launching their own initiatives to clear Deng's name. The first major outbreak of bitterness between Wei and Xu Shiyu in the South and Hua's followers in the North came in a rumored clash between Xu and Chen Xilian at a February 1977 Politburo meeting in which Xu was reported to have said, "Let's see who is stronger if a war erupts between North and South." (Taipei CNA in English, 0252 GMT, May 20, 1977, *FBIS*, May 20, 1977, "Military Leaders Clash Over Deng Rehabilitation," p. E1). Though a compromise on the Deng issue was apparently hammered out by the March Working Session of the CCPCC, disaffection remained strong. Posters appearing in Beijing charged that "Wei sought to provoke sectarian struggle within the 'party' and make the North and South factions go their separate ways." (Taipei CNA in English, 1404 GMT, May 22, 1977, *FBIS*, May 23, 1977, p. E1–2). These were matched by posters in Canton attacking the "new Gang of Four"—meaning Hua, Ye, Li, and Wang—for being unwilling to relinquish power.



(Hong Kong AFP in English, 0452 GMT, May 28, 1977, *FBIS*, May 31, 1977, p. E1).

32. The six demands are listed in Taipei, *Central Daily News* in Chinese, March 30, 1977, p. 3, *FBIS*, "Posters Oppose Three Politburo Members," April 8, 1977, pp. E2-3.

33. One must be somewhat leery of the source of the report since it came out of Taipei and originated in Pro-Deng Southern China. Nonetheless, many of Hua's actions seemed to indicate that some form of agreement of this type had been reached.

34. Lin Biao was closely associated with a foreign policy position that Harold Hinton has called "the dual adversary strategy." (Harold C. Hinton, *China's Turbulent Quest*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972, p. 285). This policy is one of maintaining a "struggle" against the two "superpowers," while trying to gain support from the "small and medium states" against the superpowers. See also Dorothy Grouse Fontana, "Recent Sino-Albanian Relations," *Survey*, (97) Autumn 1975.

35. These talks resumed again on November 27, 1976 after an eighteen-month hiatus. (Hong Kong AFP in English, 1210 GMT, November 26, 1976, *FBIS*, "USSR's Illichev to Arrive 27 November," November 26, 1976, p. A19).

36. Hua was not only editing the Fifth Volume of Mao's works: he spoke at the ceremony for laying the cornerstone of Mao's Memorial. Hua also appeared at state occasions in military uniform, which was viewed as paying honor to the military.

37. Observers at the time had doubts about Li Xiannian's position on Deng's rehabilitation. David Bonavia ("Peking's Year of Change," *FEER*, April 29, 1977, pp. 16-17) felt Li opposed Deng's return and wanted the Premiership for himself. Meanwhile, Peter Weintraub ("Teng Running Out of Time," *FEER*, March 25, 1977, pp. 18-20) argues that Li favored Deng's return. After reviewing wall poster campaigns at the time, this author believes that despite Deng's wooing, Li either opposed the rehabilitation without preconditions, or at best was neutral. Further, the reestablishment of the six regional system in China following the Daqing Conference could very easily be viewed as a concession to Li's faction by Hua in return for its support on the Deng issue.

38. This conference, held in December 1976, was supposedly to establish and propagandize government policies and attitudes on agriculture. The conference would reinforce Hua as the legitimate heir of Mao by carrying on the Maoist precepts of Dazhai. The South either ignored the Second Dazhai Conference, damned it by faint praise, or followed through on obligatory campaigns late and at lower levels.

39. Deng was associated with this position in 1975 when he released and feted Soviet helicopter crews who had been captured after straying and possibly spying over Chinese territory. As a result, the series of 1975-76 attacks launched by the Gang on the novel *Water Margin* were aimed at Deng for his "capitulationist" stand toward the USSR stemming from this incident. Throughout the fall of 1976, Hua and his allies in their speeches continued to advocate a dual adversary position toward both superpowers, while at the same time articles out of the Foreign Ministry, which was sympathetic to Deng, discussed how the main interests of the USSR lay in Europe and how it feared involvement on two fronts. For example, see Ilse Leitenberger, Vienna *Die Presse*, pp. 1-2, *FBIS*, "Foreign Ministry Source Views PRC Policy," November 17, 1976.

40. Throughout the talks, the Chinese official press never ceased their virulent attacks against the Soviet Union, while Li Xiannian's verbal attacks at banquets on December 8 and 21 led Soviet bloc ambassadors to walk out of his addresses. Whatever ground the South and its colleagues in the Foreign Ministry had gained by forcing an

agreement on border talks with the USSR was rapidly undermined. Li Xiannian's continued public criticism of Soviet imperialism, the further breakdown of Sino-Vietnamese relations, and press releases out of Heilongjiang and other northern provinces on the past casualties and atrocities in Chinese-Soviet border clashes all destroyed hopes for successful Sino-Soviet talks, and these talks were suspended in February 1977.

41. Jiao Guanhua was Deng's first target, ostensibly because of his speech of October 5, 1976 in the UN (see Beijing NCNA in English, 1543 GMT, October 5, 1976, *FBIS*, October 6, 1976, p. A1) where he attempted to include in his speech terms that Jiang Qing had inserted and Hua had to have removed. Jiao's wife Chang Hanchih was very close to Jiang Qing as well. For a report on Jiao's interrogation by the Foreign Ministry Party Committee, see Shen Chih column "Views from Mainland," Hong Kong *Ming Pao* in Chinese, January 21, 1977, p. 11, *FBIS*, January 26, 1977, p. E1. Jiao may also have been purged for his "sins of association" with a close associate, I Chao-chu, who had been first to attack Zhou Enlai in the Cultural Revolution (Hong Kong *Chen Pao* or Hong Kong AFP in English, 1445 GMT, December 8, 1976). Jiao was probably also viewed as too quick to join in the denunciation of Deng after Tiananmen.

42. The Tiananmen incident occurred at the time of the Spring Festival in 1976. At this time Deng was purged for a second time from party office, at the instigation of the Gang of Four and almost certainly with the cooperation of the Secret Police Left as well. Hua, probably as a compromise candidate, was officially elevated to Premier and "First Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party" with Mao's approval.

43. David Bonavia, "Tuning Up for the NPC," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 1, 1979, p. 27. The report originated from Canton.

44. In his speech at the Second Dazhai Conference, Hua called for election of Revolutionary Committees in the coming year at People's Congresses held throughout the country. These congresses, in fact, did not meet until very late in 1977, after Deng had been rehabilitated and was in a position to place his colleagues in many positions of power. This delay in holding the congresses occurred despite Hua's indications of urgency.

45. Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev, for example, all rose to power through the use of their Party offices—particularly the Party Secretary General's office. Deng also held the office of Party Secretary General before being purged, but he did not hold it during his most recent rise to power, although his protégé Hu Yaobang did.

46. Quotation from the *Jiangxi Daily* cited by David Bonavia "Tuning Up for the NPC."

47. Chu Liang-chen, Revolutionary Committee Chairman of Shanghai's Machine Tools Factory #3, as reported by Georges Biannic, Hong Kong AFP in English, 1132 GMT, November 11, 1976, *FBIS*, November 12, 1976, p. E3.

48. *Jiangxi Daily*, Editorial, Nanjing Jiangxi Provincial Service in Mandarin, 1100 GMT, November 14, 1976, *FBIS*, November 17, 1976, pp. G9-12.

49. The case of Li Desheng in the Shenyang Military Region was an interesting example. Here the newly appointed political commissar assumed much of Li's power and began placing his men in positions of power, while Li was forced into an "advisor" role and then pressured to retire.

50. Lists of purged provincial party first secretaries appear in "Hua Kuo-feng's Political Fate," *Issues and Studies*, XVII:2, February 1981, p. 4. and Parris Chang, "Chinese Politics."



51. Hua's speech at the Second Dazhai Conference could be construed as calling for expansion of democratic rights. The posters that appeared in Beijing on the first anniversary of Zhou Enlai's death in conjunction with demands for Deng's return and attacks on Wu De and Chen Xilian were making similar demands for "extension of 'democratic rights' and certain 'freedoms' for the population." (Hong Kong AFP in English, 0330 GMT, January 14, 1977, *FBIS*, January 14, 1977, p. E1, "Posters Call for more 'Democratic Rights'"). In fact, the week-long protests on the anniversary of Zhou's death calling for Deng's return could be called the first exercise in the fledgling democracy campaign—long before it had officially begun.

52. An example of this kind of attack would be the use of the "big character posters" to demand justice in the judicial murder of a party activist named Zhang Zhixin in 1975. If one looked into the case, Chen Xilian, Commander of the Beijing Military Region and close Hua ally, was indirectly involved and hence in part responsible.

53. This technique was very popular even before the Democracy Movement made it more prevalent. The leak discussed earlier that outlined the secret agreement between Hua, Chen Xilian, and Wang Dongxing was one example. Leaks claiming Deng's imminent reinstatement appeared regularly, before he returned, as a means of pressuring Hua.

54. The expansion of Wang Dongxing's power is a good example. While originally Mao's bodyguard, Wang used his position as director of the General Office of the CCP to assume many important functions of the Party Secretariat after it was closed in the summer of 1966. He also used his military security personnel to take over much of the public security organs throughout China after they were attacked during the Cultural Revolution. For a discussion of Wang's rise, see Parris H. Chang, "The Rise of Wang Tung-hsing: Head of China's Security Apparatus," *China Quarterly* No. 73, March 1978, pp. 122-137.

55. The opposition first became apparent to the outside world through repeated "leaks" out of Hong Kong that claimed Li Xiannian was to be appointed Premier (Hong Kong AFP in English, 0536 GMT, October 21, 1976, *FBIS*, October 21, 1976 p. E1 and *FBIS*, November 1, 1976, p. E7). A new spate of this type of rumor reappeared in 1977, particularly in conjunction with demonstrations in January on the first anniversary of Zhou Enlai's death. At this time, posters in Beijing demanded Deng be given the Premiership while rumors out of Hong Kong claimed Deng would get the Premiership (Hong Kong AFP in English, 0255 GMT, January 13, 1977, *FBIS*, January 13, 1977.) Once the administration denied this rumor, Hong Kong reiterated that Li had been offered the job (Hong Kong AFP in English, 0540 GMT, January 13, 1977, *FBIS*, January 13, 1977, p. E1). Still later reports even claimed that Ji Dengkui would shortly assume the position.

56. During 1977 a document was leaked out of Canton while simultaneously appearing on wall posters there as well. It was purportedly and very probably written by Wei Guoqing and Xu Shiyao as a letter to Beijing. They wrote "Comrade Hua Guofeng assumed the posts of Party Chairman and Chairman of the Military Council without a convening of the National People's Congress, without even a convening of a plenary meeting of the Party Central Committee. That was only an expedient." They were making a devastating attack on Hua's failure to observe party legality.