Military Forces in the Cultural Revolution

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The analytical approaches so far devoted to the contemporary People's Liberation Army (PLA) have been of three general types. First, biographical studies which explain events in terms of the individual military leaders and their inter-relationships. Second, some students of the PLA have devised analytical models of informal power structures. The behaviour of the PLA in the " Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," has been interpreted by some as determined by personal loyalties, latent regionalism, and cliques formed around common service in military units prior to 1949. Others have viewed the PLA as split between " professional " commanders and the political cadres in the armed forces – sometimes dubbed a " Red versus expert " analysis. These categories of studies have one thing in common; they treat PLA institutions as being manipulated by informal and extra-legal forces. The third type of study emphasizes organizational and institutional frameworks. This paper falls into the third category. It asks the question: to what extent were the military institutions the subject or object of developments in the Cultural Revolution? It concludes that the organizational structures of the PLA and the missions assigned them heavily influenced the political behaviour of military leaders in the provinces.

PLA Organization

Two elements of the ground forces played key political roles at different times in the Cultural Revolution – the military regions and the 36 army " corps " (frequently translated as " armies "). The corps are the backbone of the PLA main forces. Each is comprised of three divisions and smaller support units totalling about 45,000 men. Prior to the Cultural Revolution, they were concentrated along the coastal and northeast provinces. Interior areas such as Tsinghai, Kiangsi and Shensi had none of these largest of army tactical units. There were also virtually

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no corps in the entire northwest and Inner Mongolia.[1] The strategic concept behind this geographic imbalance of forces was well summarized by Mao Tse-tung. "This army is powerful because of its separation into two parts, the main forces and the regional forces, with the former available for operations in any region whenever necessary and the latter concentrating on defending their own localities and attacking the enemy there in co-operation with local militia . . ." [2] This "separation into two parts" may be taken rather literally; the corps comprise about one-half of the regular ground forces. The above-mentioned "regional forces" constitute most of the remainder.

The term "regional forces" includes three different types of units – border defence, independent divisions and regiments, and garrisons in the cities and counties. The border-defence troops are not discussed here since they played virtually no role in the Cultural Revolution, remaining at their posts throughout the period. The independent and garrison units are lightly equipped forces, smaller than equivalent echelons in the corps. An independent division might have less than 10,000 men, without tanks and heavy artillery. A division of a corps is in excess of 12,000 men with much heavy equipment and armaments.[3]

The question of who controls the independent and garrison forces is a knotty problem. Seemingly, independent units are commanded by the provincial military districts as are the garrison forces in smaller municipalities. However, when a city is large enough to have its own "military garrison command," the forces are then apparently controlled at the "military region" level.[4] (The regional administration of China's ground

1. The best single source on the disposition of corps prior to 1966 is: *PLA Unit History* (Washington D.C.; Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, no date). This was the official Nationalist China governmental history and location list of the PLA corps, released in 1966. Its accuracy was further attested by the U.S. Army Office of Military History finding it worth the trouble and expense of translation and publication. Secondary Chinese sources, whether Nationalist or Communist, must be used with care since scholarship is often blended with propaganda, but in a study of the contemporary PLA, Taiwan materials are of considerable value. The Chinese Nationalist Government quickly releases many officially collected documents, and in addition frequently translates primary source documents not readily available elsewhere. This study cites such translations and other Chinese Nationalist materials which are based directly on such primary source documents.

2. *Jen-min Jih-pao* (*People's Daily*) (Peking) (*JMJP*), Editorial, 15 September 1967. The original quote is from "On coalition government," a report to the 7th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, 1945. It has been frequently invoked in the present era to defend Mao's military principles.

3. Cheng Mien-chih, "The organization and equipment of Chinese Communist infantry," *Issues and Studies* (Taipei: Institute of International Relations), Vol. III, No. 10, July 1967. The article, based on captured documents, is authoritative. Independent units equate to "type-C" in Mr Cheng's presentation.

4. A central directive of March 1967 referred to the commander of a provincial military district as commanding "the independent division and independent regiment" (*Current Background*) (Hong Kong: American Consulate General)

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forces in 1966 was divided among 13 military regions which in turn were divided into 23 provincial military districts. Whatever the exact command lines at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the regional forces were clearly regionally controlled.

Many students of contemporary China have the conception that military region commanders are empowered to order about the main force or corps units within their jurisdictions.[5] This is not true. For example, when the Tibet Military Region Commander, Tseng Yung-ya wished to stage a large military parade in Lhasa with "5,000 troops and two artillery regiments," he felt compelled to seek approval from the Central Military Commission (also referred to as the Military Affairs Committee). Upon refusal he telephoned the General Staff Headquarters and asked for a much smaller force of "two battalions and machine-gun troops." Both the General Staff and the Cultural Revolution Group of the PLA again turned him down.[6] In another case, Premier Chou En-lai hauled the chairman of the Shantung Revolutionary Committee over the coals in August 1968. The Chairman, Wang Hsiao-yu, was also the political commissar of the Tsinan Military Region (i.e. Shantung Province). Chou accused Wang of "moving troops arbitrarily."[7] A key charge against the dismissed commander of the Chengtu Military Region, Huang Hsin-t'ing, was that the regional command, "on its own authority, dispatched troops to Ipin to support the Ipin Military Subdistrict."[8]

It is also known that Peking maintains direct communications with army corps, and may thus by-pass the military region headquarters when-

(*CB*), No. 852, 6 May 1968, pp. 109–10). The commanders of the Canton and Wuhan Military Regions were held accountable for the garrisons in their urban namesakes. One of the charges against a dismissed officer of the Wuhan Military Region Command was that: "He concocted the charge that the Wuhan Garrison District did not carry out the orders of the Military Region." (Unidentified Red Guard newspaper, translated in *Chinese Communist Affairs, Facts and Features* (Taipei: Institute of International Relations) (*Facts and Features*), Vol. I, No. 24, 18 September 1968, p. 26. See also, *Hung-ssu T'ung-hsün* (*Red Headquarters Bulletin*) (Canton), No. 45, July 1968, as translated in *Selections from China Mainland Magazines* (Hong Kong: American Consulate General) (*SCMM*) No. 622, August 1968, p. 18. Part of the difficulty in determining command lines over regional forces is caused by an ambiguity in Chinese usage. Many documents refer only to "chün-ch'u" which might mean either military region (ta-chün-ch'u) or provincial military district, (sheng-chün-ch'u).

5. Samuel B. Griffith, *The Chinese People's Liberation Army* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967), p. 218: "Generally regional commanders command all PLA ground, naval, air and public security units assigned to the regions. . . ."

6. *Hung-t'i-chün Chan-pao* (Lhasa), 8 September 1967, as translated in *Communist China Digest* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Joint Publications Research Service) (JPRS), No. 196, 18 March 1968; and JPRS, No. 44,721, pp. 109–12.

7. *Facts and Features*, Vol. II, No. 25, 2 October 1968, p. 15. (Basic source of Red Guard document not identified.)

8. *CB*, No. 852, 6 May 1968, pp. 128–30.

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ever desired.[9] An example of such direct orders to units came in 1968 from Jungan, Kwangsi, where elements of the "22 April" Red Guard organization controlled the town for a few months under a state of siege by hostile factions:

> Because the top capitalist-roaders and chameleons in the Party in Kwangsi falsely reported the situation to deceive the Party Central Committee, the latter sent three armed forces units, 6976, 6984, and the armed force under the Liuchow Military Subdistrict Command to suppress the so-called "Jungan counter-revolutionary riot. . . ." Learning the facts . . . the PLA units . . . knew that this was a trick played by the top capitalist-roaders . . . in Kwangsi. They immediately reported the real situation in Jungan to the Party Central Committee . . .[10]

In another case, units in Shansi were criticized because they had attended a military reception in Peking without informing the political commissar of the Shansi Provincial Military District, nor had they informed the political commissar of the Peking Military Region.[11] (The Shansi District is part of the Peking Region.) Such a case would seem almost impossible had the military region command controlled the units involved.

The military region commander is more the "administrator" of the corps forces in his region than he is their "commander." It is doubtful whether he can move any units without central approval or at least without considerable risk to his career. Orders to units from Peking are normally relayed through him, but the central leadership has other direct means of communication as well. His powers over regional forces are greater. He is probably able to give his own orders to these troops, although Peking apparently approves significant changes in the status of regional units, such as relocations. The autonomy of the military district headquarters is still more circumscribed. Except for a few independent units and small garrisons, they have full authority only over the forces and organizations dealing with militia administration – i.e. the "people's armed departments." On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, even these limited powers were shared with the provincial Party committees.

Students of the PLA are generally agreed that the highest degree of central control is maintained over the naval and air forces. One striking example was provided in March 1969 when 24 persons were stranded on an ice floe of a large lake in Tsinghai Province. The Provincial Revolutionary Committee notified the "proletarian headquarters" in Peking

9. J. Chester Cheng (ed.), *The Politics of the Chinese Red Army* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution on War Revolution and Peace, 1966), pp. 535 and 544. The book consists of translations of the "Bulletin of Activities" published by the Military Affairs Committee in 1960–1 for internal PLA use.

10. *Szu-erh-erh T'ung-hsün* (22 April Bulletin), Liuchow, Kwangsi, No. 6, 29 May 1968, as translated in *Survey of the China Mainland Press* (Hong Kong: American Consulate General) (*SCMP*), No. 4202, 20 June 1968, p. 3.

11. *San-erh-ch'i T'ung-hsün* (27 March Bulletin), Wuhan (?), July 1968, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 4274, 29 August 1968, p. 28.

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and " a notice ordering aircraft to be sent to rescue the men was issued two hours later." [12] Apparently the air force officers within the province did not possess the authority even to dispatch unarmed search aircraft in the case of an emergency.

It should be understood that the military regions definitely do not control the tactical units of the air force and navy. The regional command of the air force is divided into six " air districts " which generally are not coterminous with the military regions. The naval forces are commanded by the three regional fleet headquarters – north, east and south. Representatives of naval and air forces are present in the military region headquarters (except for interior military regions which need not have naval men present), where they seem to perform a liaison function.

Regional Forces in the Cultural Revolution

The provincial military district headquarters have been a key organizational link between the civil and military bureaucracies. It had long been national policy to knit together the military districts and the provincial Party committees. The most obvious and consistent manifestation of that policy was the appointment of senior provincial Party secretaries as concurrent " first political commissars " of the military districts. Central directives in 1961 were ordering the districts and sub-districts to " act like staff members and assistants for Party committees." [13] In 1966, Hsiao Hua (then director of the PLA General Political Department), stated: " The system of dual leadership by the military command and the local Party committees, under the unified guidance of the Party Central Committee, must be enforced." [14]

This was more than exhortation; dual Party-army leadership in the military districts was a reality prior to the Cultural Revolution. As explained earlier, the districts are not primarily troop commands. The most important single mission of the military districts has been, under Lin Piao's aegis, the organization and training of the militia. In its production and peace-keeping roles, the militia was most often utilized by provincial or local Party committees. Orders to militia frequently came directly to the people's armed departments (i.e. the militia command organs) from the Party committees without being routed through the military district or subdistrict.[15] For the militia to be organizationally sound and useful to the economy and society of China's provinces, close

12. NCNA, Hsining, Tsinghai, 7 March 1969, printed in *SCMP*, No. 4375, 13 March 1969, p. 15.

13. J. Chester Cheng, *Politics of the Chinese Red Army*, pp. 374–5.

14. As quoted in John Gittings, " Army-Party relations in the light of the Cultural Revolution," in John Wilson Lewis (ed.), *Party Leadership and Revolutionary Power in China* (Cambridge, 1970), p. 388.

15. J. Chester Cheng, *Politics of the Chinese Red Army*, pp. 374–5.

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co-ordination between the military districts and Party committees was a necessity.

A second major responsibility of the districts has been conscription and demobilization for the PLA. A department of the military district handles resettlement and obtains jobs for discharged soldiers. This too required the full co-operation and assistance of local Party leaders. PLA public security forces controlled at the district level were also called upon to serve the needs of the civilian Party committees. For these reasons, the commanders and political commissars of the military districts found themselves in jobs which have been as much political as military.

Like political appointments everywhere, job security was scant. Following the 1959 dismissal of P'eng Teh-huai and the appointment of Lin Piao as Minister of Defence, many of the military districts experienced leadership changes. Most of the new appointments were likely to have been part of Lin's efforts to consolidate his leadership. In 1964, a new round of replacements and transfers saw nine new political commissars and five new commanders appear in the provincial military districts.[16] Under Lin Piao's leadership, there was no attempt to de-politicize the military district commands. On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, 18 out of the 23 military districts had senior Party secretaries concurrently serving as district political commissars. Eleven of the 13 military regions also had that arrangement.

Despite the earlier upheavals in command, the initial stages of the Cultural Revolution (November 1965–December 1966) did not greatly affect the military districts. It was business as usual, except for yet another in a long line of internal rectification campaigns. After the christening of the Red Guards in August 1966, the military districts and garrisons were required to send out numerous cadres from their political departments and unit Party committees to serve as propagandists and chaperons to the unruly teenagers. The units of army corps also dispatched some political officers to make contact with local Red Guard organizations.[17] This sort of activity was not a novelty to the PLA and did not seem to create serious problems.[18] The pace picked up markedly on 31 December 1966 when the PLA was ordered to give "short term military and political training" to Red Guards in schools throughout China.[19] Such training was categorized as a form of "militia work" and

16. Ralph Powell, "Continuity and change in the PLA," *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. LII, No. 2, February 1968, p. 24.

17. Lung Wei-tung, "Wholeheartedly supporting the revolutionaries . . .", *JMJP*, 10 April 1967, p. 1.

18. J. Chester Cheng, *Politics of the Chinese Red Army*, p. 565. Liaison stations were being established in 1961 among military regions, subordinate units and civil organizations such as colleges, factories and railway bureaux.

19. *Ching-kang-shan* (*Ching Kang Mountains*) (Peking), Nos. 9–10, 11 January 1967, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 3913, 6 April 1967, p. 19.

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thus was also assigned to the military districts.[20] The sheer size of such a task must have occasioned much burning of midnight oil. Still, the job was within the established missions of the military districts and did not threaten the status quo of the provincial military commands.

The situation was altered radically on 21 January 1967. On that date a central directive ordered the PLA to " support the revolutionary left." [21] The purpose of that vague phrase became clear the next day when the *People's Daily* issued a nation-wide call for the Red Guards to " seize power " from the Party committees in the provinces and cities of China.[22] While the 21 January order was issued to all armed forces, the military regions, districts and garrisons were in fact charged with the main responsibility of supporting the " revolutionary rebels." Except for a relatively few political cadres from the Party committees and political departments of main force units who were already involved in Red Guard liaison work, the army corps did not become involved at that time. (In the outpouring of " how-to-do-it " articles in newspapers and other media during March–April 1967, *all* examples of military work with mass organizations were written by military district officials or leaders of garrisons. An exception might have been the 54th Corps in Szechwan. There were very few troops there for a population of over seventy million. The one resident corps may have had to play the role of a garrison unit. Later Red Guard criticism made it appear thus.) In contrast the military districts were heavily committed as indicated in a Kweichow broadcast of July 1967: " In the past half-year, the military district has transferred some 5,000 cadres and fighters from offices and units and organized them into a special force for ' three-support and two-military work.' . . . They have also organized 30,000 participants in Mao Tse-tung thought propaganda teams." [23]

In addition to restricting the political involvement of the military primarily to the regional forces, the Peking leadership also made the Party machinery within the PLA the locus of activity. Party committees of military districts and regions made the decisions regarding relations with Red Guard groups [24] and the military leaders of the revolutionary

20. *JMJP*, 2 January 1967, p. 1, reprinting a 1 January editorial of the *Liberation Army Daily*.

21. *JMJP*, 13 April 1967, p. 1: " On January 21st and 23rd, Chairman Mao, the Party Central, and the Central Military Commission issued the great call for the PLA to support the revolutionary left." The 23 January date cited by most western studies of the PLA in the Cultural Revolution was when the order was publicized.

22. *JMJP*, 22 January 1967, p. 1.

23. Radio Kweiyang, 18 July 1967, as translated in FBIS, 20 July 1967, p. ddd 24. The " three-supports " are PLA assistance to industry, agriculture and the revolutionary left. The " two-militaries " are military control and military training in schools.

24. *JMJP*, 12 April 1967, p. 1, and *Kuang-ming Jih-pao* (Peking), 25 March 1967, p. 1, provide two examples of such activities by military district Party committees.

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committees formed early in 1967 were all political commissars. Civilian chairmen of the new committees were quickly appointed to political commissar posts, both at the military district (garrison in the case of Shanghai) and military region levels. Table 1 illustrates this pattern.

Why were the regional forces of the PLA ordered to enter the political arena in January while the army corps and regional/district commanders largely kept out of the important new political posts in the provinces? Military presence was needed because the revolutionary left was too weak to seize power from the Party leaders in most areas. A frequently seen slogan during this period was "win over the majority." In the terms of this paper, the Red Guard organizations were ordered to overthrow the weakened Party structures in the provinces. In fact, armed forces intervention was required to administer the coup-de-grâce. One probable reason for not involving the backbone units and the regional commanding officers was a desire to preserve intact China's strategic defences. Also there was no need of massive military power against the unarmed Party committees. Token forces sufficed to impose military control within the government offices. Finally there is evidence that the PLA leadership had been reluctant to approve military involvement in the Cultural Revolution.[25] After the involvement was forced, such leaders would have sought to minimize the extent of the commitment.

The military districts and garrison forces had a dual role relative to the power seizures. First they were to protect the vital services, public buildings, transport and communications against disruption. This was done expeditiously throughout China in the form of "military control committees" which also served as interim governments at local and provincial levels. Maintaining order came naturally to the regional forces; that had been their primary mission since 1949. It was the second responsibility that caused the trouble. The military districts and garrisons were ordered to support the left and to defend this minority against attacks from conservative mass organizations masquerading as genuine "revolutionary rebels." To this end, garrison and district headquarters were given a life and death power over mass organizations.[26] This is not the place for a

25. On 12 April 1967, Madam Mao addressed the Central Military Commission in her role as a leader of the PLA Cultural Revolution Group. She stressed one theme repeatedly in her talk: PLA intervention was a necessity without which the Cultural Revolution would fail. Clearly she was trying to convince her audience. The speech was first released in *Chung-kung Yen-chiu* (*Studies in Chinese Communism*) (Taiwan: Institute of International Relations, June 1970), pp. 114–30. An English translation is in *Translations On Communist China*, No. 115, 8 September 1970, JPRS, No. 44,680, pp. 4–9.

26. The directive ordering the PLA into the Cultural Revolution stipulated: "Counter revolutionaries and counter revolutionary organizations which oppose the proletarian revolutionary leftists must be firmly suppressed." (*CB*, 852, 6 May 1968, p. 49.) The literary newspaper of the PLA published a story about the Harbin Garrison which intervened to protect the left from the assault of a much larger group, the "Glorious Restoration Army." The paper noted approvingly that the troop commander demanded the dissolution of the "rightist" organiza-

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disquisition on Red Guard factions. What matters here is that the military districts and garrisons were not organizationally or politically suited for the job of supporting the left and eradicating all influence of the former provincial and municipal Party committees. Indeed, except for what became the "model provinces" of Heilungkiang, Shantung, Kweichow and Shansi, the regional forces failed in their efforts to implement the order of 21 January. The new revolutionary committee form of government did not appear, and many of the power seizures were not recognized by the Peking leadership as they suspected conservative forces of putting up a sham performance. Conservative mass organizations were not "won over" to the left, more often they were supported by the garrisons and districts.[27]

From the standpoint of the "proletarian headquarters" in Peking, the regional military institutions had performed miserably during the months of February and March 1967. Why had they so behaved? Partly it was a national leadership failure. At a Central Committee "work conference," (perhaps that of September 1965 at which the Cultural Revolution was announced), Mao Tse-tung criticized "nominal political commissars" of the PLA – meaning the Party secretaries who, through their concurrent commissariat positions, kept one foot in the regional forces.[28] However, no action was taken during 1966 to effectively disengage the regional PLA structure from the Party machinery in the provinces. Quite likely the requirement to do this was not foreseen and the Maoist leadership was probably then too weak to have taken effective measures in any case. They may have believed that the extensive personnel changes already made in the military districts had ensured the loyalty of the leadership there.

By the end of 1966, it was clear that leaders of provincial Party committees were targets of the Cultural Revolution. Yet on 31 December 1966, when the PLA was ordered to give "short term military and political training" in the schools, the directive stipulated that provincial and city Party committees be represented on the special "militia training committees" of the military districts and regions which were to supervise the PLA work in the schools.[29] The Maoist leadership apparently failed to realize until mid-January 1967 that the PLA would have to be used as an independent source of political power in the Cultural Revolution!

tion "on the spot," and arrested its leaders. *Chieh-fang-chün Wen-i* (*PLA Literature and Art*) (Peking), No. 2, 1967, as translated in *Communist China Digest*, No. 189, 7 September 1967, JPRS, No. 42,503, pp. 160–2.

27. Jürgen Domes, "The role of the military in the formation of Revolutionary Committees, 1967–8," *The China Quarterly*, No. 44, October–December 1970. Professor Domes provides a province-by-province survey of military reactions to the January 21st order.

28. *Ta-p'i T'ung-hsün* (*Mass Criticism and Repudiation Bulletin*) (Peking), 5 October 1967, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 4125, 26 February 1968, p. 5.

29. *Ching-kang-shan* (*Ching-kang Mountains*), 11 January 1967, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 3913, 4 April 1967, p. 21.

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Quite apart from leadership myopia in the early stages of the Cultural Revolution, the 1960–6 programme to tie the military districts and Party committees together had been a distinct success. In evidence, the leaders of the district commands best speak for themselves.

At that time [when Red Guard attacks on the Party began] we were in a very difficult position and in a complex frame of mind. . . . The small handful of power holders in the provincial committee . . . restricted us with the so-called club of "discipline." They ruled that "differences are to exist internally; unity is to be obeyed; opinions are to be reserved." Many times they asked us to have "uniform calibre" with them. What should we do under these circumstances? [30] (Liang Chi-ch'ing, deputy political commissar, Kiangsu Military District.)

When . . . the people of Heilungkiang rose to rebel . . . the first thing [the provincial Party "capitalist-roaders"] did was to attempt to seize control of the army. In the name of the provincial Party committee, they asked us to consider the so-called question of protecting the "safety of the Party committee. . . ." The handful . . . in the Party, when surrounded ring upon ring by the masses, begged us of the provincial military district to give them shelter.[31] (Wang Chia-tao, commander, Heilungkiang Military District.)

The [bad Party leaders] said . . . that the provincial military district was not a part of the national defence army, and that its task was mainly concerned with the localities, and its principal leadership was the provincial Party committee.[32] (Lung Wei-tung, a "responsible person" of the Heilungkiang Military District.)

Clearly the civilian Party leaders did not lack the bonds with which to tie, and levers with which to move the military district headquarters.

The regional forces were as distant from the revolutionary rebels as they were close to the local Party apparatus. In the words of one district commander:

Some comrades of the PLA complain: "The revolutionary masses pay no heed to what you say"; "Those of the left also make mistakes"; "The revolutionary masses are not pure"; "The organizations of various factions have both merits and demerits"; "The royalists are concerned with production, but the rebels are not"; "I do not understand the situation." [33] (Li Ts'ai-han, commander, Kweichow Military District.)

No wonder so few military districts and garrisons supported the left wholeheartedly. The surprising thing is that in four provinces (that is, the "model provinces" of Heilungkiang, Shansi, Kweichow and

30. *JMJP*, 4 April 1967.

31. *Kuang-ming Jih-pao*, 25 March 1967, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 3912, 5 April 1967, p. 19.

32. Harbin Radio, 6 October 1967, quoted at greater length in Gittings "Army-Party relations in the light of the Cultural Revolution."

33. *Hung-ch'i* (*Red Flag*), No. 6, 1967. Subquotations are the subheads of Li's article.

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Shantung mentioned above), the military did tear themselves away from their local Party ties in early 1967.

Under the weight of military control, the momentum of the Cultural Revolution slowed to a near halt in February and March 1967. To counter this, Peking adopted two tactics. First the authority of the military district and garrison commands was weakened. On 6 April, a central directive removed much of the civil authority of the regional commands. Mass arrests were forbidden. The districts could no longer, on their own authority, declare specific mass organizations to be illegal.[34] The Maoist leadership also gave vent to its wrath. The following areas experienced the removal, suspension or transfer of commanders in the spring of 1967: Chengtu, Peking, Sinkiang, Lanchow, and Inner Mongolia Military Regions; Liaoning, Kirin, Honan, Shansi, Kiangsu and Chekiang Provincial Military Districts.

The Political Involvement of the Main Forces

Peking's other tactic was to call in the army corps, sending them to trouble spots and using these main force units as a source of power and authority under central control; not subject to the commands of the districts and garrisons. With few exceptions, leaders of the main force units were not assigned important political positions in the provinces at that time.[35] The effort to minimize the PLA entanglement in the Cultural Revolution was still making a rear-guard stand. The corps were, and remain today, China's defensive bulwark. Tying their leaders to provincial jobs would be contrary to common sense as well as contrary to Mao's own strategic concepts. The main forces were to remain the centrally controlled fist and not become part of provincial politics. That latter role had been reserved for the regional forces. Despite obvious qualms in Peking, military regions and districts still carried the major politico-military responsibilities in the spring of 1967.

The Peking leadership was greatly alarmed at the developments of the Cultural Revolution during January–March 1967. A glance at the appendix listing movements of main force units (pp. 472–4) is ample testimony

34. *CB*, No. 852, 6 May 1968, p. 115.

35. This point was made by Professor Richard Thornton in a discussion of the use of main forces in the Cultural Revolution. Some confirmation may be found in the career of Ch'eng Shih-ch'ing, the Political Commissar of the 27th Corps at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. He was transferred to Kiangsi from Shantung along with a division of his unit in the spring of 1967. His regional post in Kiangsi until August 1967 was "Deputy-Commander of the Ichun Military Sub-district, Kiangsi Military District." (*Sankei* (Tokyo), 15 August 1967, as translated in FBIS, 15 August 1967, p. ccc 15). Compared to the importance of Ch'eng's unit position, the regional post assigned to him was inconsequential.

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to that fact. Virtually all of the relocations depicted occurred between late March and June of 1967.[36] More troops were moved in that brief period than at any time since the Korean War. A minimum of 11 corps either moved their headquarters or dispatched subordinate divisions to outside provinces. Over 20 of the 36 corps were involved at one time or another as "central support to the left units." From the discussion above concerning the limited authority of military regions over main force units, it can be assumed that all unit moves were ordered by Peking, including relocations within a single province or military region.

On what basis were individual corps chosen for this role? The field army origins of the units provided no correlation.[37] What is apparent from the appendix is the selection of units from areas of lowest external threat, e.g. the North Korean border. No units were moved from the Fukien front nor from the Sino-Soviet border. Kiangsi for example was virtually devoid of troops in early 1967. When forces were required there, reserve divisions from one corps in Shantung and one in Kwangtung were dispatched. The much closer and larger Fukien front forces remained undisturbed and played little role in the Cultural Revolution. The Foochow Military Region and its independent and garrison forces in Fukien Province were quite active, but the strategic defences were left alone. Peking's political control over its main forces and its military regions was strong enough for it to select its corps on the basis of military expediency.

In one respect the appendix is misleading, since it suggests huge military units moving into concentrated areas. This was not the method adopted. When a unit arrived, it was broken into its sub-units, often merely of company or platoon size, in order to cover the greatest possible territory and maintain "extensive liaison with the masses." For example,

36. One possible exception is the 38th Corps which may have moved to Peking in early 1967 or, as some observers on Taiwan believe, as early as July 1966. (*Issues and Studies*, Vol. VI, No. 12, September 1970, p. 25.) A few relocations occurred in August.

37. Of the units relocated, two are descended from the 2nd Field Army, three from the 3rd, six from the 4th, and one from the north China units of Nieh Jung-chen. Had some sort of balance of power among the field armies still have been operative in 1967, Nieh's units should have been much better represented. In fact such a balance of power did not exist. The 1st Field Army of Ho Lung and P'eng Teh-huai has been represented by only one corps for 17 years. Its performance during the Cultural Revolution was exemplary. Units from areas presumably controlled by one faction moved into provinces supposedly under the control of a rival faction. Several of the corps leaders who performed well for Mao and Lin were from different "factions." For example, 12th Corps Commander Li Teh-sheng did so well in Anhui that he was later promoted to Director of the General Political Department. Yet he is a "professional" soldier of "the Liu Po-ch'eng faction" which was supposedly opposed to Maoist military doctrine. There are similar examples of excellent behaviour for units of the Ch'en I and Nieh Jung-chen "factions." Conversely, probably the worst behaved corps during the Cultural Revolution was the 54th – a "Lin Piao unit."

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a company assigned to " support the left " was cited for its efforts in side-line production " despite the fact that the company relocated 14 times in 1968." [38] A provincial radio station, reviewing the exploits of one of the more illustrious corps during the course of the Cultural Revolution, stated in 1969 that the 47th Corps had had men in " 15 provinces and cities as far north as Shantung." [39] The Corps was normally stationed on the Hunan-Kwangtung border in south China. Its headquarters were relocated once in 1967 and subordinate divisions were sent to Canton and Kwangsi. That small sub-units and/or liaison cadres ranged as far as 600 miles in other directions is striking testimony to the high degree of decentralization imposed upon units in order to meet the extensive needs for military presence. Independent units served side-by-side with their newly arrived " big brothers." Local responsibilities were apparently shared equally between main force and regional units.[40] There was a geographic division of labour, each unit being allocated a particular area where it was responsible for military control and " support the left " work.

Events of July 1967 dramatically changed the picture yet again. An independent division of the Wuhan Garrison Command aided in the kidnapping of two members of the Central Committee Cultural Revolution Group. The mass organization which kidnapped the men on 19 July enjoyed the support of the Wuhan Garrison. Peking proved to have ample muscle to break this " mutiny," as it has been flamboyantly called. At least one division (Unit 8199) of the 15th Corps, stationed just outside the urban complex, was quickly ordered into the tri-city area. The East Sea Fleet dispatched warships up the Yangtze. (Had Mao become a practitioner of gunboat diplomacy?) Locally stationed air force units gave additional assistance. Mao's envoys were safe by 22 July and leaders

38. NCNA, Peking, 11 February 1969, in *SCMP*, No. 4361, 20 February 1969, p. 15.

39. Radio Honan, 1 January 1969, as reported in *China News Analysis* (Hong Kong), No. 751, 4 April 1969, p. 4.

40. For example, a central directive issued on 6 June 1967 ordered certain constraints on mass organizations, *e.g.*, they were not allowed to arrest persons or to search private homes. Point Six of the directive provided for enforcement and its wording was revealing regarding shared responsibilities between regional and main forces: " All garrison forces and PLA forces dispatched from [*sic*] Peking shall take responsibility for the implementation of the above points. Garrison forces and dispatched PLA forces shall have the right to arrest, detain and punish the leaders . . . in an offence." (*Yomiuri* (Tokyo), 8 June 1967, in FBIS, 8 June 1967, pp. ccc 2–3.) This was perhaps the first acknowledgment that main force units were being used for control purposes in the Cultural Revolution. No contradiction is implied between the shared responsibilities discussed here and the earlier point that main forces and their leaders were not given important provincial and regional political posts. Responsibility for military control and " support the left " work in a given geographic area was a long step from assuming major political positions in the provinces. That long step was soon to be taken.

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of the independent division along with the implicated commander of the military region were safely secured in Peking no later than 26 July.[41]

This was the stone that broke the camel's back. Wuhan was the worst case in an accumulation of poor political reliability among regional forces. Independent units or garrison forces had been involved in the great majority of provincial crises during 1967. Mao had expressed his displeasure that spring as follows: "Towards the end of May, I wrote a few words to Comrade Lin Piao and the Premier Chou En-lai pointing out that the antagonism between the Kiangsi Military District and the masses deserved study. I did not draw a conclusion: I referred to Kiangsi, Hunan, Hupeh and Honan."[42] Since the regional forces had been carrying virtually the entire PLA "support to the left" responsibilities, a poor track record might have been expected. After the Wuhan incident, Peking decided to exert stricter central control at the expense of the regional forces. The PLA was further centralized by having the main force units partially supplant the political roles of the regional forces.

In the weeks following the Wuhan incident, army corps were ordered to seize control of several military districts and run them directly. Taken over in early August were three of the four districts "referred to" by Mao in his May missive to Lin – *i.e.*, Kiangsi, Hunan and Honan.[43] Four other provinces "reorganized" by main force units were Anhui, Chekiang, Kirin and Sinkiang.[44] Districts which possibly received such treatment, but for which the evidence is not conclusive, are Shensi, Kiangsu, Ninghsia and Liaoning. The units and military leaders involved in this unprecedented development are listed in the tables (pp. 469–71) along with relevant source citations.

In other provinces, leaders of main force units were added to established revolutionary committees or "preparatory groups" for revolutionary committees. Examples are:

41. For a detailed account of the Wuhan incident, see Thomas Robinson's article in *The China Quarterly*, No. 47, July–September 1971.

42. *Cheng-fa Hung-ch'i* (*Politics and Law Red Flag*) (Canton), Nos. 3 and 4, 17 October 1967, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 4070, 30 November 1967, p. 6.

43. Hupeh, the fourth district, was in late July put under the joint leadership of the political commissar of an air force unit, Liu Feng, and the new commander of the Wuhan Military Region, Tseng Szu-yu. Thus Hupeh too had a "main force" presence in the Military District Command as of August 1967.

44. The Sinkiang case was exceptional in that the 9th Air Army Commander, Li Chüan-ch'un, did not assume a formal military administrative post in Urumchi, but he did receive his orders direct from Peking and was made a vice-chairman of the Sinkiang Revolutionary Committee when it was finally formed in September 1968. There seems little doubt that Li's Unit 7335 was politically in command of the area. For example, the Civil Aviation General Administration Bureau instructed its subordinates in Sinkiang: "As far as supporting the left is concerned, you should follow Unit 7335." Commander Li received orders directly from the Air Force Chief of Staff and at one time was ordered to "handle well the relations with the Sinkiang Military Region Command . . . paying attention to the methods of handling." *CB*, No. 855, 17 June 1968, pp. 14 and 16. See also *SCMP*, No. 4127, 28 February 1968, pp. 13–14.

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Chang Wu, political commissar of Unit 3026, added to the Heilungkiang Revolutionary Committee, August 1967.

Chang Ying-hui, commander of the 63rd Corps, added to the Hopeh Preparatory Group, August(?) 1967.

Chiao Hung-kuang, political commissar of an unidentified air force unit, added to the Kwangsi Preparatory Group. He was made a vice-chairman when the Committee was formed in August 1968.

Pu Chan-ya, political commissar of Unit 6840, added as vice-chairman to the Kwangtung Revolutionary Committee in November 1968.

Chou Hsueh-ch'en and Ma Ching-ch'iao, respectively political commissar and commander of Infantry Division 7611, added to the Kweichow Revolutionary Committee in July 1967 and May 1968.

Kao Ko, commander of an unidentified division, added to the Liaoning Revolutionary Committee in May 1968.

Hsiao Ssu-ming, commander of an unidentified corps, added to the Tientsin Revolutionary Committee December 1967. (Hsiao's unit may have been the 66th Corps.)

Main force units were also involved in takeovers of administrative areas smaller than provinces. For example, Chang Feng and Chao Shao-kung, the commander and political commissar of the 39th Corps, were ordered in August 1967 to assume control of Anshan City, Liaoning, and its vital iron and steel works.[45] Elsewhere, Fang Ming, political commissar of air force Unit 7250, took over the Wuhan Garrison following the kidnapping incident. His unit was converted into the garrison force.[46] Li Shui-ch'ing and Ch'en Chi-te, the commander and political commissar of the 67th Corps took over the Tsingtao Garrison by October 1967 and were both added to the Shantung Provincial Revolutionary Committee. These examples suffice to show the sweeping trend of politicizing main force leaders who had previously served in narrowly military functions.

Those provinces which avoided the " reorganizations " of August 1967 may still have had their military district commands weakened. In Kwangtung for example, the leaders of the military district survived the month of August politically intact. They may, however, have been rather devoid of authority during that period. When a Red Guard organization attempted to report to the military district command a rather serious shooting incident of 20 August in Canton, the telephone at the district

45. *Tokyo Shimbun*, 22 August 1967, as translated in FBIS, 22 August 1967, pp. ccc 2–3. See also FBIS, 23 August, p. ccc 2.

46. " The Central Committee and its Cultural Revolution Group, the State Council, and the Central Military Commission have decided to form a Wuhan Garrison Headquarters out of the 7250 Unit of the Wuhan Air District." *Ko-t'i T'ung-hsün* (*Correspondence From All Parts of the Country*) (Dairen), No. 4, 13 September 1967 as translated in *SCMP*, No. 4081, 15 December 1967, p. 9.

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headquarters rang for more than an hour before it was answered. The tardy telephone answerer then informed the Red Guard leaders that "the military district is closed on Sundays." [47] Perhaps the revolutionary rebels would have done better had they called the headquarters of the 139th Division, 47th Corps, which had entered the city a few weeks earlier.

The use of centrally-controlled units to supplant the administrative roles of regional forces was Mao Tse-tung's final trump card in his efforts to keep developing the Cultural Revolution. First the Party had stymied the revolution from below in 1966. The first half of 1967 had revealed that the regional forces were also inclined to preserve what they could of the status quo. The main forces of the PLA were and remain the ultimate base of national political power in China. August 1967 committed them for the first time since the early 1950s to an overt political role. The game would be lost unless these units were able to further the task of political reconstruction, shepherding along the mass organizations and approved Party cadres. The Cultural Revolution might have to cease short of a full political victory. That was generally what happened. The main force units were not connected to the old political machinery, but they were nearly as ill-suited for dealing successfully with factionalism and power struggles in the provinces as were the regional forces.

One of the first developments that signalled difficulties for the main forces in their new political positions came from those provinces which had not been reorganized in August 1967. In many of these military districts, factionalism flared between the regional and main forces. Major cases included the opposition of the 55th Corps against the Kwaingsi Military District political commissar, Wei Kuo-ch'ing; the 38th Corps' difficulties with the Peking Military Region Command; the opposition of the 69th Corps to the Shansi Military District political commissar, Liu K'o-ping; the 18th Corps' factional differences with the 11th Independent Division in Tibet and the friction between the Haik'ou Garrison and Independent Regiment of the Hainan Military District on the one hand and naval (?) Unit 4411 and air force (?) Unit 7001 on the other.[48]

47. *Kwangchow Hung-szu* and *Wuhan Hsien-hua Kung* (Canton Edition), combined issue, 21 August 1967, as translated in *Communist China Digest*, No. 191, 31 October 1967, JPRS, No. 43,204, p. 75.

48. The Kwangsi troubles also pitted the 141st Division, 47th Army, against the District command. See "Speeches of Central Leaders on Kwangsi, 25 July 1968," a pamphlet produced by "Kung-ko-hui" of Canton, 3 August 1968, translated in Chien Yu-shen, *China's Fading Revolution* (Hong Kong: Centre of Contemporary Chinese Studies, 1969), Documentation appendix, pp. 330–2. See also *SCMP*, No. 4241, 19 August 1968, p. 4. On the problems between the Peking Military Region and the 38th Corps, see *SCMP*, No. 4227, 29 July 1968, p. 6. The Shansi documents are in *Communist China, 1968* (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1969), p. 208. On the Tibet issues, see *San-ssu Chan-ch'i*, No. 2, June 1968, as translated in Chien Yu-shen, pp. 332–4. The Hainan information is in *SCMP*, No. 4233, 7 August 1968, p. 10 and 4388, 2 April 1969, p. 5.

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Intra-PLA struggles usually took the form of supporting rival mass organizations. These were "proxy battles," not armed clashes among military units. Sometimes the contenders did attack each other directly; as the political commissar of the Chengtu Military Region, Chang Kuo-hua, complained in Peking: "Some of the army units in the Chengtu Military Region have been involved in overthrowing Liu Chieh-t'ing Deputy Political Commissar of the Region . . . They are now trying to topple me."[49] In both the "proxy" and direct disputes between regional and main forces, the stakes involved were high – political power in the provinces.

What caused the widespread phenomenon of dissidence between main force and regional units? Partly bad feeling which was built into the situation: the army corps were to correct mistakes made by provincial forces. If a military district had supported Red Guard group X, and had fallen under a political cloud, the centrally dispatched units would naturally support group Y. Partly too the ill feelings of locals against uninvited outsiders who were threatening or usurping their jobs. The psychology of "the haves versus the have-nots" also probably contributed to the rancour. Independent units have always been the step-children of the PLA, carrying out dull and tedious labour projects, and receiving no priority in resource allocation. The officers of such units have been in dead-end careers. Few, if any, of the top echelon military leaders are from independent units. Last, but not least, by the summer of 1967, regional and main forces were rivals in filling the political power vacuum in the provinces.

Whatever the manifold causes, military factionalism placed Peking in a quandary. National policy vacillated following the Wuhan kidnapping. It may be that the takeover of a number of districts by army corps and air force units was meant as a prelude to a thorough "housecleaning" of the regional forces. Lin Piao warned his military region commanders in August 1967 not to do anything without central approval, upon pain of dismissal.[50] A short-lived programme of arming Red Guard factions was begun at that time. On 22 July the Central Committee Cultural Revolution Group issued the slogan "drag out the handful in the army." The campaign was directed against regional forces rather than the army corps. There were instances of military cadres being seized and turned over to mass organizations where they were roughly handled.[51] On 9 August, Lin had ordered that the Red Guards might "teach" the "cadres of military regions, military districts and People's Armed

49. Unidentified Red Guard tabloid as translated in *SCMP*, No. 4181, 20 May 1968, p. 8.

50. *Chu-ying Tung-fang-hung* (Canton), 13 September 1967, as translated in *Communist China Digest*, No. 192, 29 November 1967, JPRS, No. 43,449, pp. 49–50.

51. See for example, *Translations on Communist China*, No. 5, 1 April 1968, JPRS, No. 44,878, p. 64.

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Departments who have made mistakes." [52] The physical assaults on individual PLA leaders apparently stemmed from that general directive. On 10 August, Lin again addressed military leaders with these words:

> Our [PLA] cadre policy from now on should be that whoever opposes Chairman Mao will be discharged. Whoever does not give prominence to politics will be discharged. It does not matter how much ability he may have. . . . At present our PLA position is very high and the cadres should manifest no more disorder [presumably referring to the Wuhan Incident]. It would be a great humiliation if opposition to Chairman Mao should again crop up among army cadres.[53]

Pressures on the regional forces mounted swiftly. In Canton, for example, detailed plans were made by Party leaders of the Central South Bureau to discredit the Canton Military Region Command.[54] By late August the political situation in the provinces was truly explosive.

Peking wisely changed its military policies abruptly at the end of August. Madam Mao's now famous speech of 5 September 1967 ordered the revolutionaries to stop " stealing " arms and revealed that the PLA was authorized to retaliate if attacked. Instead of a campaign discrediting the regional PLA leadership, Peking had decided to heal the wounds within the military. Mao succinctly summed up the policy reversal as follows:

> The handful of persons within the Party taking the capitalist road should not be lumped together with the group of people taking the capitalist road in the military. We should mention only the handful in the Party and strive to make the military a success. . . . If there are problems in the military, they can be handled province by province.[55]

The new policy quickly reduced the level of disorder and defused the destructive forces which had been placed under the provincial and regional military structures.

Study classes for PLA cadres from regions, districts and independent units were begun in Peking during the early autumn of 1967. In September, Mao had discussed the problems of such troops. He revealed that an independent unit from Inner Mongolia had abruptly terminated a meeting with Chou En-lai by smashing the furniture. However, Mao

52. *Chu-ying Tung-fang-hung*, 13 September 1967, n. 50.

53. *Ch'ing-li Chieh-chi Tui-wu* (*Purification of Class Ranks*), compiled by the Paoshan, Yunnan Revolutionary Committee Political Work Group, January 1969, in *Translations on Communist China*, No. 140, JPRS, No. 52,658, 18 May 1971, pp. 15–16.

54. Extensive materials on the August 1967 machinations against the Canton Military Region are in *SCMP*, Nos. 4264, 24 September 1968; 4265, 25 September 1968; 4272, 4 October 1968 and 4273, 8 October 1968.

55. " Mao's latest instructions – September 1967." Varying versions are translated in *Facts and Features*, Vol. I, No. 1, 1 November 1967, p. 19; *Communist China Digest*, No. 193, 8 January 1968, JPRS, No. 43,903, pp. 44–5, and Chien Yu-shen, *China's Fading Revolution*, documentation appendix, p. 276.

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sanguinely added, " . . . an independent division can change for the better after some training." [56] The " study " sessions were expanded during the winter to include main forces and central military organizations as well. Such training was often lengthy as revealed by Fang Ming, the director of the 60th Corps Political Department who had spent four months in Peking.[57] Such durations were not entirely devoted to Mao's thoughts. Lo Jung, political commissar of the 55th Corps, returned to Kwangsi in March 1968 after attending a " Central Committee study meeting for cadres at and above the corps level." He was full of gossip regarding national level politics and described the " study meeting " as " a course of study and work and acceptance of assignments. The Party Central Committee has clearly instructed that the armed forces units must generally receive the power of local Party, government, financial and cultural organizations." [58] By the time this programme ended in mid-1968, hundreds of thousands of PLA personnel had trekked to Peking for such " acceptance of assignments " and for resolution of internal issues.

More important than the classroom work, an effort was made to attack the roots of military factionalism. In September 1967, the PLA was ordered to disengage from support for mass organizations. The new slogan was " support the left, but no particular faction." [59] Military leaders were to be spared the responsibility of determining the political colouration of mass organizations for the first time since 21 January 1967. If fully implemented, such a disengagement would have meant an end to the PLA proxy battles in the provinces. (This is not to imply that intra-PLA strife served as the sole cause for the directive; it was also meant to ameliorate factional struggles in general.) However, the factionalism among the mass organizations and within the army was too deep and the earlier battle lines too well drawn to allow for even-handed military treatment of the Red Guards. The policies begun in September did subdue the level of disorder, but difficulties among military forces persisted.

In May 1968, another central directive was issued which revealed the failure of the autumn and winter programmes in healing the military rifts. The core of the directive reads: " It is utterly wrong to spread feelings of dissatisfaction with fraternal army units . . . Party committees within the PLA at all levels and all PLA commanders must . . . foster unity between army units from outside regions and local armed

56. *Cheng-fa Hung-ch'i* (*Politics and Law Red Flag*) (Canton), No. 23, 5 April 1968, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 4169, 8 May 1968, p. 1.

57. *SCMP*, No. 4165, 26 April 1968, p. 4.

58. *Hung-ch'i P'ing-lun* and *Kang-pa-i*, Canton(?), Joint Issue, February 1968, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 4133, 7 March 1968, p. 4.

59. *Chu-ying Tung-fang-hung* (Canton), 1 October 1967, as translated in *Communist China Digest*, No. 194, 5 February 1968, JPRS, No. 44,241, p. 122.

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forces." [60] In a follow-up directive, the Peking Military Region Party Committee expanded on the above quoted directive, and thereby provided an insight on the favoured political position of the main force units: " Party committees at various levels [in the PLA] and the whole body of commanders and fighters must resolutely . . . promote unity between army units assigned from outside areas and local army units, and between cadres who come from outside areas and local areas . . . Where problems occur, the local units and cadres must take the initiative to bear the responsibility, and to examine their defects and mistakes . . ." [61] These exhortations in the spring worked no better than those of the previous autumn.

The new year brought new problems. Incidents of factional conflict among main force units developed. Perhaps the first such outbreak was in November–December 1967 between the 13th and 14th Corps in Yunnan Province.[62] The 63rd Corps and the 69th in Shansi argued over support to the military district in the spring of 1968.[63] In Hopeh, the 38th and 63rd Corps experienced conflict over support to rival Red Guard groups.[64] In Kwangsi, there were similar divisions between air force units and the 55th Corps (Unit 6955).[65] Such cases were not commonplace, nor were they bloody. Whether any armed clashes occurred among military units is moot. If such intra-PLA firing incidents did take place, they were not of sufficient magnitude to warrant mention in the Red Guard press. The primary mode of main forces factionalism was the same as that between regional and main forces – proxy battles among contending mass organizations.

Lin Piao was still sufficiently alarmed to take a personal role in the meetings regarding the Shansi case – an action unusual for Lin who generally remained in Olympian aloofness from political struggles in the provinces.[66] Lin " came on stage " immediately after the Wuhan incident, during the purge of the Chief of General Staff, Yang Ch'eng-wu, and for

60. *San-ssu T'ung-hsün* (Canton), 20 July 1968, quoting a Central Military Commission directive of 13 May 1968, as translated in Chien Yu-shen, *China's Fading Revolution*, p. 200.

61. *Kang-pa-i* (*Steel August First*) (Wuhan), No. 1, June 1968, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 4218, 16 July 1968, p. 8.

62. *Facts and Features*, Vol. I, No. 21, 7 August 1968, p. 3.

63. *Pei-hang Hung-ch'i* (*Peking Aviation Institute Red Flag*), No. 47, n.d., translated in *Facts and Features*, Vol. I, No. 26, October 1968, pp. 19–23, see also *San-erh-shih-ch'i T'ung-hsün*, July 1968, as translated in *SCMM*, No. 641, 20 January 1969, pp. 25–30.

64. *Shou-tu Hung-wei-ping* (*Capital Red Guards*) (Peking), 12 September 1968, as cited in Chien Yu-shen, *China's Fading Revolution*, p. 203. See also *SCMP*, Nos. 4213, 9 July 1968, pp. 1–3 and 4247, 29 August 1968, pp. 3–7.

65. *Hsi-chiang Nu-t'ao* (*Angry Waves of the West River*) (Wuchou), No. 2, August 1968, translated in *SCMP*, No. 4241, 19 August 1968, p. 4.

66. Lin Piao's " 9 April 1968 Directive," in *Pei-hang Hung-ch'i*, No. 47, English translations are in *Facts and Features*, Vol. I, No. 26, 16 October 1968, and *SCMP*, No. 4236, 10 August 1968, pp. 8–11.

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factional conflict among main force units. In other cases, he generally met privately with individual PLA leaders or worked through the Central Military Commission. The ubiquitous Chou En-lai also made pronouncements which may be interpreted as directed towards difficulties with main forces. In May 1968, when meeting with a Szechuan delegation, Chou stated, "Unifying the army counts for much," and "Don't let army men take part in the struggles." [67] The next month, when dealing with the Wuhan Region, Chou stated: "The difficulties in the army must be solved first." [68] Also in 1968, Peking chose to reveal publicly the existence of joint service "liaison committees" at military region and district levels whose function it was to resolve differences among military units supporting rival mass organizations.[69] The committees had been formed by early 1967 but not publicly acknowledged until 1968. The publicity suddenly accorded them indicated a need to emphasize their roles and to provide good examples to be applied in troubled areas.

The Peking leadership had to be deeply concerned about conflict among main forces, even though it was much less widespread than were the difficulties with regional forces. After August 1967, Mao had committed all of his political resources to the Cultural Revolution. The main force units were his final and highest trump card. He was counting on them to keep the other institutions "on the rails" or to supplant those which "no longer met the needs of the revolution." [70] Should these units have become deeply embroiled in the local struggles over political power and thus lost their usefulness as referees, peace-keepers and mediators, then Mao would have lost control. He had no remaining source of power and authority to which he could turn.

The first months of 1968 had made it apparent that internal PLA issues could not be resolved so long as the military was deeply involved in "support the left" work. The time-table for the Cultural Revolution was then speeded up. A deadline of May 1968 was established, by which time all provincial revolutionary committees were to have been formed. Chou En-lai and the Cultural Revolution Group of the Central Committee worked even harder than before holding meetings among provincial factions in Peking. Unfortunately, the "solutions" agreed upon often crumbled once the delegations returned to their home provinces. The May deadline was not met. June brought a hard-line approach. Central directives to Shensi and to Kwangsi the following month were widely publicized. They called for a strictly enforced return of social order. The

67. Unidentified Red Guard pamphlet, translated in *SCMP*, No. 4181, 20 May 1968, pp. 5–6.

68. See *SCMM*, No. 622, 6 August 1968, p. 14.

69. NCNA, Peking, 7 January 1968, as reported in *SCMP*, No. 4101, 17 January 1968, p. 14. See also *Wen-hui Pao* (Shanghai), 30 June 1968, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 4231, 2 August 1968, p. 13, and *SCMP*, Nos. 4211, 5 July 1968, p. 2 and 4091, 3 January 1968, p. 5.

70. *JMJP*, 19 October 1967, p. 1, quoting Mao Tse-tung.

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dramatic meeting between Peking Red Guard leaders and Mao Tse-tung in the pre-dawn hours of 28 July 1968 was the final act bringing down the curtain on the Red Guard movement. The military was ordered to impose revolutionary committees on the remaining provinces. This was accomplished within a five-week period. The major *casus belli* of military factionalism was thereby removed. The contending mass organizations were virtually eliminated and the decisions as to who would hold power in the provinces were made. Increased concern about the continued viability of the PLA as a centrally controlled political instrument was probably one cause of the rapid dénouement of the Cultural Revolution. (Other causes, of at least equal importance, were the Soviet threat as perceived in both troop build-ups along the northern border and the Czech crisis, and leadership anger at the inability of the mass organizations to work together in political reconstruction.)

Military factionalism was also largely responsible for a dramatic new policy announced by Wen Yü-ch'eng, deputy chief of General Staff, in April 1968:

> Chairman Mao has instructed that miltary cadres must be transferred to other posts and the armed forces units must also be dispatched to other places.[71]

Prior to the Cultural Revolution, units were relocated only for military emergencies. At about the same time, Lin was quoted as having said: "It is a good way to rotate troops for construction, production and training."[72] In 1969–70, such unit rotations began. While the total number of relocations is as yet unknown, it is clear that units which had been deeply embroiled in political difficulties were among the first to be moved. For example, the 54th Corps traded places with the 13th Corps, the former moving to Yunnan, the latter to Szechuan.[73] The commander of the 38th Corps moved to Chengtu, Szechuan – probably with his unit.[74] The commander of the 40th Corps, long in Kwangtung, is now in charge of the Kwangsi Military District.[75] More generally in mid-1969, refugees and travellers in Hong Kong reported extensive troop movements in Kwangtung, Yunnan and Szechuan Provinces.[76]

The Peking leadership had been very reluctant to involve its main forces in the politics of the Cultural Revolution. Upon first opportunity, they again began to segregate these units from such complications, returning them to military duties in new areas. The established policy of leaving such units in place for many years was reversed. Too many local

71. *Kang-pa-i T'ung-hsün* (*Steel August First Bulletin*), No. 1, as translated in *SCMP*, No. 4218, 16 July 1968, p. 8.

72. Unidentified Red Guard document, translated in *Facts and Features*, Vol. I, No. 26, p. 21.

73. *Tokyo Shimbun*, 6 February 1970, as translated in FBIS, 9 February, p. B 2.

74. *Issues and Studies*, Vol. VI, No. 11, August 1970, p. 12.

75. *Ibid.* p. 11.

76. *Sing-tao Jih-pao* (Hong Kong), 30 July 1969, p. 4.

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ties and political connections might develop – as in the case of the 54th Corps in Szechuan during the first phases of the Cultural Revolution. Many of the unit leaders of the main forces were promoted into political jobs in the provinces, helping to revamp the regional forces leadership. The troop units have been largely withdrawn from the political arena. Should the Peking leadership require them for some major political crisis in the future, they will be available. The immense latent political power of these centrally controlled units is such that the national leadership need have little fear of strong regional challenges from the new elite of military officers in the seats of provincial power. Whoever controls the Central Military Commission controls the main force units. Whoever controls the main force units ultimately controls China.

Conclusion

How does this institutional presentation bear on other scholarly interpretations of PLA behaviour? There was certainly a "Red versus expert" conflict during the latter half of 1966 and the first part of 1967. The "Reds" were constantly pressing for more PLA involvement in the Cultural Revolution, while the "experts" sought to minimize the military commitment. This interpretation, then, has the value of explaining PLA behaviour during the first half of the Cultural Revolution. After the main forces had entered the political arena, the issue became a dead letter and later developments did not lend themselves to the Red versus expert approach. Moreover, the army-Party system was not necessarily "Red" and the military specialists were not necessarily "expert." It was the General Political Department which first tried to curb military commitment in the Cultural Revolution,[77] and it was "professional" main force units which best obeyed Peking's political orders in the provinces. Thus the usefulness of that analytical approach is lessened by its inability to identify which elements of the PLA can be expected to act like "Reds" and which others as "experts."

The "field army" analysis hypothesizes four or five cliques of PLA leaders derived from shared experience in the old field armies and the

77. The first major PLA political victim of the Cultural Revolution was Liang Pi-yeh, deputy-director of the General Political Department who fell in February 1966. Lin Piao later recalled what had happened in these words: "When I raised the point of giving prominence to politics, Liang Pi-yeh had a few things to say. He indicated that an emphasis on politics meant a falling behind in military preparations. This is in error. Military preparations and politics are not to be brought up together like that." (*Ch'ing-li Chieh-chi Tui-wu*, in *Translations on Communist China*, No. 140, 18 March 1971, pp. 15–16).

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1930s precursors of those units. The cliques are seen as each controlling a certain number of main force army corps in a delicate balance of power. Each clique is described as dominating the particular geographic area in which its units are stationed. The hypothesis seemed reasonable prior to 1967 because, until that time, most units had not relocated since the Korean War. Units and officers with shared career experiences did tend to group together in the areas which they had occupied at the end of the civil war.

The alleged parcelling of China into four or five areas, each dominated by units and officers from the same field army clique, was proven invalid by the movements of corps with different field army backgrounds into regions supposedly controlled by other cliques. Those corp movements revealed far greater central control than the theory allowed. Units selected for relocation were chosen on a military basis. The forces in strategic areas were kept intact while the army corps chosen for political roles were relocated from the areas of lowest external threat. The field army history of the units was apparently irrelevant. The theory also presupposed that the military region headquarters commanded all units in their jurisdictions. Unfortunately, that misconception remains widespread.

While the field army theory as a whole should be discarded, some of its parts are salvageable. In particular, military leaders have tended to favour their former subordinates as protegés. The clearest example of such favouritism came in Lin Piao's March 1968 excoriation of the dismissed acting Chief of Staff, Yang Ch'eng-wu: "Yang Ch'eng-wu's chief mistake was that he advocated the 'mountain stronghold' mentality, sectarianism, the 'small group' mentality, individualism and factionalism . . . *Yang believed only in himself and his tiny group of men with whom he has close ties.* . . . He used only that group of men and took the attitude of eliminating others. . . ." [78] Lin's speech was laden with unintended ironic humour. During the Cultural Revolution Lin had appointed many of his own former subordinates to high positions in Peking. Indeed, the large majority of choice PLA appointments in the capital went to men associated with Lin's old 4th Field Army.

That cliques exist in the PLA is as expected. The analysis of shared career experiences does provide a useful way of interpreting their nature and estimating which PLA officers might be politically allied with particular military leaders. Yet on the whole, the failures of the field army hypothesis stand as testimony to the continuing need for institutional studies. Before constructing elaborate models of extra-legal or informal power structures, the established institutional system must be thoroughly understood.

78. *Tung-fang-hung Tien-hsün* (*East is Red Telegram*) (Canton), No. 3, July 1968, as translated in *Communist China 1968*, the yearbook of the Union Research Institute, Hong Kong, p. 215. Emphasis added.

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Table 1

Concurrence of Political Commissars and Revolutionary Committee Chairmen, January–March 1967

Revolutionary Committee	*Date founded*	*Chairman*	*Previous regional position*	*Concurrent positions following establishment of Revolutionary Committee*
Heilungkiang	31 January 1967	P'an Fu-sheng	1st party secretary, Heilungkiang Province.	1st political commissar, Shen-yang Military Region, and Heilungkiang Military District.
Kweichow	13 February 1967	Li Ts'ai-han	Deputy political commissar, Kweichow Military District.	1st political commissar, Kweichow Military District; deputy political commissar, Kunming Military Region.
Shanghai	5 February 1967	Chang Ch'un-ch'iao	(2nd?) secretary, Shanghai Municipal Party Committee.	1st political commissar, Nanking Military Region and Shanghai Garrison Command.
Shansi	18 March 1967	Liu Ko-p'ing	Vice-governor, Shansi.	1st political commissar, Shansi Military District; deputy political commissar, Peking Military Region.
Shantung	3 February 1967	Wang Hsiao-yü	Vice-mayor, Tsingtao Municipality.	1st political commissar, Tsinan Military Region and Shantung Military District.

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Table 2

Military Districts Reorganized by Main Force Units

Province	*Units*	*Unit Leaders and Provincial Positions Assumed*	*Source*
Anhui	12th Corps (Unit 6408)	Li Teh-sheng, commander 12th Corps. Commander, Anhui Military District since August 1967. Became chairman, Anhui Revolutionary Committee when formed in April 1968. 12th Corps political commissar Chang Wen-i became political commissar of the military district in August 1967. Other 12th Corps leaders on the Revolutionary Committee are: Vice-chairmen Liao Ch'eng-mei and Sung P'ei-chang.	*SCMP*, No. 4099, 15 January 1968, p. 16 *SCMP*, No. 4069, 29 November 1967, p. 6
Chekiang	20th Corps (Unit 6409) 5th Air Army (Unit 7350)	Nan P'ing, political commissar of 20th Corps, became political commissar of Chekiang Military District, August 1967 and chairman of the Revolutionary Committee when formed in March 1968. Hsiung Ying-t'ang, commander of the 20th Corps, took command of the military district in August 1967, and was appointed a vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Committee in March 1968. Ch'en Li-yün, political commissar of the Fifth Air Army became a deputy political commissar of the district and later a vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Committee when formed.	*SCMM*, No. 622, 6 August 1968, p. 6 FBIS, 15 August 1967, pp. ccc 18–19 *Issues and Studies*, Vol. VII, No. 6, March 1971, pp. 34–5
Honan	1st Corps (Unit 8172) 15th Corps	Wang Hsin, political commissar of 15th Corps became 2nd political commissar, Honan Military District, August 1967. Made vice-chairman, Honan Revolutionary Committee when formed in January 1968. Yang Li-yung, political commissar, 1st Army Corps, made vice-chairman of Revolutionary Committee, January 1968, also political commissar of Kaifeng Military Sub-district, August 1967.	*CB*, No. 863, 1 October 1968, p. 31 *SCMP*, No. 4083, 19 December 1967, p. 4

Table 2—*continued.*

Province	*Units*	*Unit Leaders and Provincial Positions Assumed*	*Source*
Hunan	47th Corps (Unit 6900)	Li Yüan, commander 47th Corps became commander Hunan Military District, August 1967 and chairman, Hunan Revolutionary Committee, April 1968. Other leaders of the 47th Corps appointed to the Revolutionary Committee are Deputy-Commanders Cheng Po and Liu Shan-fu – both vice-chairmen, Deputy Political Commissars, Li Chen-chün and Chang Li-hsien. Also a " responsible person " of the 47th, Lin Chien-pin.	*SCMP*, No. 4080, 14 December 1967, p. 8
Kiangsi	Unit 6011 (A division of the 27th Corps) Unit 6810 (A division of the 41st Corps)	Ch'eng Shih-ch'ing, political commissar 27th Army Corps, which had dispatched the 6011 Unit from Shantung became political commissar of the Kiangsi Military District in August 1967 and chairman of the Kiangsi Revolutionary Committee when formed in January 1968. Yang Tung-liang, commander of Unit 6810 of the 41st Corps dispatched from Kwangtung, became commander, Kiangsi Military District in August 1967 and vice-chairman, Kiangsi Revolutionary Committee, January 1968. Yü Hou-te, political commissar of Unit 6810 was appointed vice-chairman of the Committee. Chen Ch'ang-feng, division-commander, Unit 6011 was also appointed to the Revolutionary Committee.	*SCMP*, No. 4388, 2 April 1969, p. 4 *SCMP*, No. 4081, 15 December 1967, p. 11 *Issues and Studies*, Vol. IV, No. 7, April 1968, p. 22
Kirin	192nd Division (Unit 7311?)	Ho Yu-fa, division-commander, took charge of Kirin Military District in August(?) 1967 and became vice-chairman of the Kirin Revolutionary Committee when it was formed in March 1968. Ho's division was probably transferred from Liaoning in August 1967.	*SCMP*, No. 4137, 13 March 1968, p. 13. *Facts and Features*, Vol. II, No. 3, 27 November 1968
Sinkiang	9th Air Army of the Lanchow Air District (Unit 7335)	Li Ch'uan-chün, commander of Unit 7335 was made vice-chairman of the Sinkiang Revolutionary Committee upon its formation in September 1968.	See n. 44

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Table 3

Military Districts Possibly Reorganized by Main Force Units

Province	*Units*	*Unit Leaders and Provincial Positions Assumed*	*Source*
Kiangsu	27th Corps	No commander or political commissar noted for this district after October 1966. 27th Corps active in North Kiangsu.	*SCMP*, No. 4236, 12 August 1968, p. 10
Liaoning	Units unidentified	Former commander Ho Ch'ing-chi dropped from sight, late summer of 1967 when main force units were taking over military districts elsewhere. Chinese Nationalist sources identified Li Ya-t'ien as the new commander of the district and commander of an unidentified unit.	*Facts and Features*, Vol. II, No. 3, 27 November 1968
Ninghsia-Hui Autonomous Region	Unit 8037	Hsu Hung-hsueh, a "responsible person of Unit 8037" was made a vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Committee there when it was formed in January 1968. No commander was noted for this district from late 1966–9.	FBIS, 23 August 1967, p. ddd 19. *Facts and Features*, Vol. II, No. 6, 8 January 1969, p. 30
Shensi	21st Corps (Unit 8133)	Hu Wei, commander of 21st Corps, made vice-chairman, Shensi Revolutionary Committee, May 1968. He had brought his unit from Shansi in March–April 1967. The former commander of the district was dismissed in late July 1967; the new commander was appointed only in December 1967 – Huang Ching-yao from the Heilungkiang District. Hu Wei was probably the key military man in the province during this hiatus.	FBIS, 15 August 1967, pp. ccc 18–19

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Appendix:
Relocation of PLA Main Force Units, 1967

The 1965 locations of corps as listed in the *PLA Unit History* were accepted as correct unless otherwise stipulated. A survey of Red Guard, official and foreign journalistic reporting and Chinese radio broadcasts was carried out seeking indications of unit relocations during the Cultural Revolution. Evidence sufficient for inclusion in these notes consisted of direct mention of a unit move in Red Guard press, or known military leaders appearing in new locations while still identified in their unit roles. Corroboration was sought in semi-official Chinese Nationalist sources such as those of the Institute of International Relations (*Issues and Studies* and *Chinese Communist Affairs, Facts and Features*). The latter materials were useful because the Chinese Nationalist Government often quickly released "officially collected" documents and information. Such references were not, however, accepted as decisive. Some of the unit movements reported in Taiwan publications did not take place, or more often, lacked corroborative evidence. On the other hand, no genuine unit movements were discovered which had not been reported in Chinese Nationalist publications. Finally, there was my own previous knowledge of the subject. From 1965–70 I was employed by the U.S. Departments of Defence and State analyzing the role of the PLA in the Cultural Revolution.

12th Corps: (Unit 6408) Transferred to Anhui from Chekiang/Anhui border area, *Facts and Features*, Vol. II, No. 3, 27 November 1968, p. 17; *Issues and Studies*, Vol. II, No. 2, November 1970, p. 79. *PLA Unit History* placed the 12th Corps headquarters in Wuhan in 1964. It possibly moved to Anhui from there. Madam Mao made reference to its "return" to Anhui, see *SCMP*, No. 4069, 29 November 1967, p. 6. The 34th Division mentioned therein is subordinate to the 12th Corps. See also *SCMP*, No. 4099, 15 January 1968, p. 16.

15th Corps: A subordinate paratroop division No. 8199 moved from Hsiao Kan, just outside Wuhan, into the municipal area during the kidnapping incident there in July 1967. *SCMP* No. 4048, 26 October 1967, p. 13. See also, Thomas Robinson, "The Wuhan Incident," *The China Quarterly*, No. 47, July–September 1971, pp. 424–8. Robinson also cites Unit No. 8190 as moved into the city at that time as part of the airborne troops. Possibly No. 8190 was also part of the 15th, which may be the parent unit for the PLA airborne forces.

20th Corps: (Unit 6409) Moved from Nanking into Chekiang Province in May (?) 1967. *Facts and Features*, Vol. II, No. 3, 27 November 1968, p. 16; FBIS, 15 August 1967, pp. ccc 18–19.

21st Corps: (Unit 8133) Moved from Shansi to Shensi with one subordinate division No. 4628 going on to Hu-ho-hao-t'e, Inner Mongolia (referenced by Inner Mongolia Radio, 29 August 1967). Probably arrived in April with the dismissal of Ulanfu. *Facts and Features*, Vol. I, No. 24,

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18 September 1968, p. 7; *Issues and Studies*, Vol. IV, No. 7, April 1968, p. 21. This corps did not move at a later date to Yunnan as reported elsewhere in Chinese Nationalist publications.

27th Corps: Dispatched the 6011 Division from Shantung to Kiangsi, possibly in May 1967. FBIS, 15 August, p. ccc 15, and 16 August, p. ddd 32. *SCMP*, No. 4081, 15 December 1967, p. 11.

38th Corps: (Unit 4800) Transferred from the Korean border area of Kirin to Peking and later to Paoting, Hopeh. Dates are uncertain, but the initial move to Peking was no later than March 1967. *SCMP*, No. 4227, 27 July 1968, p. 8; No. 4115, 9 February 1968, p. 19; *Issues and Studies*, Vol. VI, No. 12, September 1970, p. 25.

41st Corps: Sent the 6810 Division to Kiangsi, May (?) 1967 and in August dispatched a second division from the corps headquarters area in eastern Kwangtung to Canton City. The latter was reported by travellers to Hong Kong and others who had read posters welcoming the 41st to Canton; in *Sing-yao-yat Pao*, Hong Kong, 15 August 1967. For the move to Kiangsi, see the 27th Corps above.

42nd Corps: One division acted as a garrison unit in Canton City during the late spring and early summer of 1967. It was displaced in August by divisions of the 47th and 41st Corps. No information as to location after that date. *SCMP*, No. 4264, 24 September 1968, p. 7.

47th Corps: (Unit 6900) Moved from Kwangtung to Hunan in August 1967. Its 139th Division joined a division of the 41st Corps in occupying Canton, August 1967. The 141st Division of the 47th was sent to Kwangsi in June (?). The 140th Division remained in Hunan at the new Corps headquarters location – Changsha. Jürgen Domes did a neat piece of detective work in identifying all three divisions and their locations in " Generals and Red Guards," Part Two, *Asia Quarterly*, Brussels, No. 2, 1971, p. 129. See also, *Facts and Features*, Vol. I, No. 24, 18 September 1968, p. 7; *Issues and Studies*, Vol. VII, No. 2, November 1970, p. 84; also No. 6, March 1971, p. 99. Relevant Red Guard materials are in *SCMP*, No. 4264, 24 September 1968, p. 7; 4097, 11 January, 1968, p. 9; 4101, 22 January 1968, p. 10; 4070, 30 November 1967, p. 11; 4175, 10 May 1968, p. 6; and 4237, 13 August 1968, p. 15.

50th Corps: Moved from the North Korean border area to Chengtu, Szechuan, May 1967. *SCMP*, No. 4181, 20 May 1968, pp. 1–9.

54th Corps: Transferred headquarters from Chengtu to Chungking, Szechuan upon arrival of the 50th Corps, *ibid.*

55th Corps: (Unit 6955) Dispatched from Kwangtung to Kwangsi, June (?) 1967. Elements of the 55th were also mentioned in south-west Kwangtung, October 1967. *SCMP*, No. 4104, 22 January 1968, p. 10; 4119, 15 February 1968, p. 8; and 4202, 20 June 1968, p. 8. One regiment was dispatched to guard rail lines in the Canton area; *SCMP*, No. 4080, 14 December, 1967, p. 8. The presence of the 55th units in south-west Kwangtung makes that location the likely headquarters of the Corps prior to Cultural Revolution re-deployments.

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64th Corps: Dispatched its 192nd Division from Liaoning to Changchun, Kirin Province by August 1967. *Facts and Features*, Vol. II, No. 3, 27 November 1968, p. 13.
69th Corps: Moved from Paoting, Hopeh to Shansi, March 1967. *Facts and Features*, Vol. I, No. 26, 16 October 1968, pp. 21–3. *Communist China Yearbook*, 1968 (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute), p. 208.

Other Army Corps Active During the Cultural Revolution

1st Corps: The major " central support the left " unit in Honan.
13th and 14th Corps in Yunnan: Factional struggles between these main force units in the winter of 1967–8.
18th Corps in Tibet: Its 52nd Division was seemingly delegated to support the left in Lhasa.
39th Corps: Administered the Anshan Iron and Steel Works in Liaoning Province, from August 1967.
63rd Corps: Hopeh-Shansi border area; was placed in charge of major coal fields there.
66th Corps: Provided troops in Tientsin, spring 1967.
67th Corps: Took over the Tsingtao Garrison, Shantung Province, August 1967.
Other Corps, *e.g.*, the 16th, 24th, 26th, 30th, 31st, 46th, 48th, 60th and 68th remained largely outside the political affairs of the Cultural Revolution, even though some were in strife-torn provinces. The 46th Corps in Kwangsi, for example, seemed charged with protecting China's southern border with North Vietnam during the period of heavy U.S. bombing there. It took no part in the Kwangsi factional struggles.

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