

# *The Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia*

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A SIGNIFICANT aspect of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has been to reveal the least stable areas of China geographically and politically. One of these is Inner Mongolia. Also, the events of the upheaval—in direct contradiction to the Maoist dictum that “the Party must always control the gun, the gun must never be allowed to control the Party”—have caused a breakdown in Party and Government authority and a shift to military control in many parts of China: administrative organs at provincial, municipal and local levels have been replaced by People’s Liberation Army (PLA) directed “Revolutionary Committees.” In most areas of China, the political upheaval can be ascribed to a power struggle between the Party, Red Guards and other semi-organised groups.<sup>1</sup> However, the Cultural Revolution in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region takes on added significance in that “local nationalism” among the Mongol national minority played an important role in the conflict between the established political structure and the efforts of the Maoists to “seize power.”

## *Local nationalism in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region*

Chinese sensitivity to trouble from their northern frontier extends into prehistoric times and has been accentuated by such traumatic experiences as the Mongol and Manchu conquests. Traditionally, Inner Mongolia has been the transition zone between the Mongol nomads of the north and the Chinese farmers of the south. During periods of Mongol power, Chinese were unable to settle in the border region, but, after 1900, large numbers began to colonise areas previously restricted to herdsmen. This colonisation was enhanced by the development of railroads and promoted by Chinese warlords. One result of this Chinese encroachment was attacks on the Chinese by so-called “Mongol bandits” who had been dispossessed. Another effect was the development of political consciousness among the Mongols. A new Mongol leadership arose, typified by Prince Demchukdonggrub (Te Wang), the

<sup>1</sup> For a useful analysis of what has happened in China during the Cultural Revolution see Chalmers Johnson, “China: The Cultural Revolution in Structural Perspective,” *Asian Survey* VIII: No. 1 (January, 1968).

most important nationalist of modern Inner Mongolia, who drew together dissident Mongol elements in an attempt to achieve self-determination for Inner Mongolia. In the 1930s when the Chinese Nationalist Government sought to exercise the same control in Inner Mongolia as its predecessors, the Mongol nationalists resisted domination by playing off the Chinese against the Japanese.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the problem of Mongol resistance to Chinese incursions in Inner Mongolia and the subsequent development of Mongol nationalism has confronted all modern Chinese governments.

When the Chinese Communists first moved into Inner Mongolia after the war, it required a period of two years and a good deal of political manoeuvring to subvert the various movements for autonomy which had been organised by Mongols.<sup>3</sup> Ulanfu (also known by his Chinese name, Yuntse) was the tool used by the Chinese Communists to achieve this objective. He had been born in the Tumet Banner of Suiyan Province in Inner Mongolia, an area heavily penetrated by Chinese colonisation and was a typical sinicised Mongol, neither speaking nor reading Mongolian. He joined the Communist Youth Movement in 1925, graduated from the Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow, worked in the underground in Inner Mongolia for a time and then joined the Chinese Communists in Yen-an in 1939.<sup>4</sup> His power in Inner Mongolia was not based on indigenous popularity, but on the support of the People's Liberation Army which moved him in from Yen-an following the Japanese collapse. His power was institutionalised through his triple positions as head of the Party, the Army and the Government in Inner Mongolia.

Chinese Communist policy in Inner Mongolia after the establishment of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region in 1947 had a dual nature. The Communists hoped to raise Mongol political consciousness by promoting Mongol education in the Mongolian language (this was soon reversed), developing Mongol culture, eradicating disease which had decimated the Mongol population, and by recruiting Mongols for Communist Party membership and for service as cadres. Concurrently, they

<sup>2</sup> See Robert A. Rupen, *Mongols of the Twentieth Century*, ("Indiana University Publications: Uralic and Altaic Series," Vol. 17: Part 1; The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1964), pp. 226–227; 259–260; Owen Lattimore, *Nationalism and Revolution in Mongolia*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1955, pp. 28–29.

<sup>3</sup> *Wei Nei-Meng-ku tzu-chih ch'u kai-k'ung* (Survey of the Communist Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region), Taipei: Intelligence Bureau, Defense Department, Republic of China, 1961, pp. 57–58. A combined Soviet-Outer Mongolian force occupied Inner Mongolia at the close of the war and there was some discussion of a federation of Outer Mongolia and Inner Mongolia. The plan was supported by many Inner Mongol nationalists but was doomed to failure by the rapid rise of the Chinese Communists.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Hyer, "Ulanfu, Leader of Inner Mongolia," (unpublished manuscript, Brigham Young University, 1963), p. 4 and *passim*.

promoted the further colonisation of Mongol pasture lands by Chinese farmers, and implemented such programmes as land reform, collectivisation, and communisation, which had a subtle sinicising side effect among the Mongol herdsmen.

In nearly all cases, the implementation of Chinese Communist programmes in Inner Mongolia in the areas occupied by the Mongols were resisted and lagged behind their implementation in Chinese areas. During the period of collectivisation which was conducted in the pastoral areas roughly between 1954 and 1956, the Mongols reacted by slaughtering their animals. The pastoral areas were two years behind the agricultural areas in selecting delegates to attend the Inner Mongolian People's Congress. The Chinese Communists hoped that by moving more slowly in the areas occupied by the Mongols, they might be able to avoid strong resistance and even gain a certain amount of support. Between 1947 and 1957, a soft line policy of "No Struggle" was followed (using the slogan *pu-tou pu-fen, pu-hua chieh-chi mu-kung mu-chu-liang-li*)<sup>5</sup> and the Communists urged cadres to avoid "great-Han chauvinism" (*Ta-han chu-i*) condemning those Chinese cadres who allegedly showed attitudes of superiority.<sup>6</sup> Ulanfu himself declared in December 1951:

As a result of the extremely savage and cruel oppression of national minorities by pan-Hanism historically, the national minorities [in this case, the Mongols] tend to regard the big nationality with suspicion and to cherish narrow nationalism. . . . As most veteran cadres are Han Chinese . . . they tend to look down upon or distrust Mongol cadres. . . . We must educate the Han Chinese . . . to respect the equal right and opinion of national minorities and to eliminate the tendency toward the superior outlook of a big nationality.<sup>7</sup>

Statements such as this were later to provide the Red Guard with ammunition for attacks against Ulanfu as a local nationalist.

Concurrently with the Great Leap Forward movement of 1958, the Chinese Communists abandoned the "No Struggle" policy toward minorities in favour of a more direct policy of assimilation, often referred to as the policy of "fusion." "Local nationalism" replaced "great-Han chauvinism" as the target for condemnation. Chinese was to be taught to the national minorities in all grades of primary school<sup>8</sup> and delegations of national minorities to important conferences were ordered

<sup>5</sup> *Nei Meng-ku kai-k'uang* (see note 3), p. 115.

<sup>6</sup> Chang Chih-i, *A Discussion of the National Question in the Chinese Revolution and of Actual Nationalities Policy*, translated from the original draft by George Moseley and published as *The Party and the National Question in China*, Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1966, p. 141.

<sup>7</sup> "The Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (1949-1952)" in *People's Daily*, 20 January 1952, translated in *Current Background*, No. 190, 22 July 1952, pp. 26-32.

<sup>8</sup> *Nei Meng-ku kai-k'uang*, pp. 260-261.

to speak Chinese rather than use their native tongues.<sup>9</sup> One important impact on Inner Mongolia of the new policy was the discontinuance of the training of Mongol cadres; presumably, the positions which were to be given to these cadres were given to Chinese.<sup>10</sup>

Even more upsetting to the Mongols than the vicissitudes of Chinese policy, was the increasing rate of Chinese incursions into the pastoral areas. The population ratio of Chinese to Mongols which was approximately 4 to 1 in 1947, increased to 9 to 1 by 1960 and has now reached an estimated 12 to 1.<sup>11</sup> The Mongols identify the Chinese Communist administration with Chinese agricultural interests and it has been reported that some Mongols have demanded the creation of an Inner Mongol Communist Party, since they do not feel that the Chinese Communist Party properly deals with Mongol problems.<sup>12</sup> Despite the presence of Mongol leaders such as Ulanfu in the administration, the Mongols view the political structure of Inner Mongolia as being a tool of sinification. The result of these policies and feelings has been to aggravate an already strong Mongol nationalism. As will be shown later, during the Cultural Revolution this nationalism became more actively manifest.

### *Local nationalism and the political élites of Inner Mongolia*

Political organisation in Inner Mongolia, as in other areas of China, was arranged in such a way that the Chinese Communist Party, at least prior to the Cultural Revolution, was in command.<sup>13</sup> As long as the central leadership in Peking was united and strong, the leaders of Inner Mongolia could do little more than implement directives: their role in decision-making and policy formulation was very small. However, after the failure of the Great Leap, the apparent unity of the Chinese Communist leadership gradually deteriorated.<sup>14</sup> The inner party conflict

<sup>9</sup> Henry G. Schwartz, "Communist Language Policies for China's Ethnic Minorities: The First Decade," *The China Quarterly*, No. 12 (October-December, 1962), pp. 170-182.

<sup>10</sup> Yuan Chia-ho, "Chung-kung k'ung-chih-hsia te wei Nei Meng-ku tzu-chih ch'u" (The Chinese Communist controlled Inner Mongolian autonomous region), *Fei-ch'ing yen-chiu* (*Studies on Chinese Communism*, 1:11 November, 1967), p. 96. The *Fei-ch'ing yen-chiu* emanates from the Intelligence Bureau of the Nationalist Defence Department in Taiwan. Despite the use of pejorative titles much of the information it contains is factual and without apparent bias.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* p. 77.

<sup>12</sup> Stanley Ghosh, *Embers in Cathay* New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1961, p. 137.

<sup>13</sup> Methods by which the Regional Autonomous Areas are controlled by the Chinese Communists are discussed by Harold C. Hinton "The National Minorities in China," *Far Eastern Economic Review* XIX:12 (22 September 1955), pp. 369-370.

<sup>14</sup> For a resumé of issues confronting the Chinese Communist political élites see Lee Farnsworth and Russell Horiuchi, "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and Political Crisis in China" *Utah Academy of Arts Letters and Sciences Proceedings* XLIV: 1 (1967), pp. 53-54.

which developed over a period of time evidently gave regional leaders greater flexibility in policy determination. As early as 1960, a change in policy in Inner Mongolia was becoming evident.

The solidarity of the Chinese Communist leaders was being disrupted in Peking and at the same time a change was occurring among the Mongol Communist leaders in Inner Mongolia. Ulanfu even learned to speak Mongolian and was able to communicate with his own people while he and his Mongol associates were, by 1960, becoming more dissatisfied with many of the policies emanating from Peking. Along with the failure of the Great Leap, the detested policy of "fusion" was relaxed in about 1962 in favour of a more pragmatic approach which suggested that in order to become good Communists, the Mongols did not necessarily have to first become good Chinese.<sup>15</sup> It was against this background of a relaxation of strict policy control by the Peking leaders and growing Mongol resentment over past policies that Ulanfu and his associates began their move toward a greater degree of autonomy. This later proved the basis for their downfall.

One of the most notable areas in which policy was reversed in the 1960s was agriculture. During the Great Leap the predominance of agriculture in Inner Mongolia had been stressed and many lands unsuitable for cultivation were opened to Chinese farmers without sufficient planning for irrigation or conservation. Mongols were discontented because they were pushed from their grazing lands and the Chinese were discontent because many of their crops failed. There were clashes between Mongol herdsmen and Chinese farmers. In 1962, Ulanfu instructed Wang To, a member of the Inner Mongolian People's Committee and a Secretary of the Party Committee, to remedy the situation. Wang, a Mongol, ordered a halt to the colonisation of grazing lands by the Chinese, initiated a programme to allow the failing agricultural areas to revert to grazing lands and severely regulated water usage. However, these measures were insufficient and the unrest continued.<sup>16</sup>

In January 1963, Ulanfu called a special conference to discuss the "nationalities question" resulting from the conflict between Mongol herdsmen and Chinese farmers.<sup>17</sup> In a speech before the conference, Ulanfu stated that in order to strengthen the unity of the nationalities and to increase the production of both agricultural and livestock sectors of the economy, conditions among the nationalities must be improved. He insisted that genuine autonomy be implemented in the local national minority areas in order that special local problems could be given proper

<sup>15</sup> An account of the shift in minority policy may be seen in George Moseley, "China's Fresh Approach to the National Minority Question," *The China Quarterly*, No. 24 (October-December 1965), pp. 15-27.

<sup>16</sup> Yuan, p. 90.

<sup>17</sup> Radio Inner Mongolia, 30 January 1963.

consideration. He concluded by directing that agriculture should only be predominant in areas that had long been agricultural, and that in the semi-agricultural or semi-pastoral areas and in the herding areas, live-stock production should be primary. These policy changes directly conflicted with earlier instructions from Peking.

Between 1963 and 1966 there were other policy changes which would later bring Ulanfu under the condemnation of the Maoists. Among the Mongols, however, the temporary restrictions placed on Chinese encroachments resulted in a new wave of popularity for the Mongol members of Inner Mongolia's administrative hierarchy. Refugee Mongols point out that Ulanfu began to take on many of the elements of nationalism: subsequent events seem to bear out this judgment.

### *Events of the Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia*

It is clear from the information available that by the autumn of 1965, Ulanfu and his supporters were already potential targets. They had made basic changes in Party plans as a matter of necessity due to local conditions in Mongolia and the pressures of Mongol nationalism. But where some of Ulanfu's colleagues in other places were attacked for a lack of pragmatism and for bureaucratic inertia, Ulanfu's sin was said to be that of being too free in adapting Party directives to special Mongol situations, although a similar attitude was urged upon cadres in non-minority areas.

On 18 April 1966, the North China Party Bureau issued a statement saying that the political consciousness of the cadres in Inner Mongolia was very low; in many instances even lower than that of the masses. Furthermore, the cadres had not correctly applied the thought of Mao Tse-tung in "revitalising" their "revolutionary working spirit." For these reasons, the Party Bureau directed that the Cultural Revolution be implemented in Inner Mongolia and that a movement to study the thought of Mao Tse-tung be promoted.<sup>18</sup>

No doubt Ulanfu and his associates were not anxious to get involved in another campaign. They apparently had become convinced that the thought of Mao Tse-tung had little to offer as far as the concrete problems of Inner Mongolia were concerned. Wang I-lun, the Chinese vice-chairman of the Autonomous Region supported Ulanfu and together they formed a core of resistance to the Cultural Revolution movement.

However Ulanfu, Wang I-lun, Wang To and others, realised that they could not totally disregard Party directives. They could see that CCP leaders such as P'eng Chen were being purged, and their behaviour

<sup>18</sup> Radio Inner Mongolia, 18 April 1966.



indicates that they concluded something must be done to safeguard their own positions. They decided to stage a mild Cultural Revolution and thus buy time in which to strengthen their position. On 17 May 1966, the *Inner Mongolia Daily* published an editorial calling for "the people of all nationalities in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region to rise together and actively participate in the Great Socialist Cultural Revolution."<sup>19</sup>

On 4 June Wang I-lun presided over a conference of cadres, officials, and members of the university in Huhehot and called on the delegates to "stand at the forefront of the Cultural Revolution and bring it to a new high tide."<sup>20</sup> The conference passed a resolution expressing support for the decision of the CCP Central Committee to reorganise the Party Committees of the Peking municipality and Peking University. This façade gave Ulanfu and his associates an opportunity to purge some of the pro-Maoists. In August, Li Chih, First Secretary of the Huhehot Municipal Party Committee, a Chinese and a Maoist, was accused of "destroying the unity of the nationalities," and of "opposing the Party, Socialism, and the Thought of Mao Tse-tung." Li was replaced by Batubagin, a Mongol, who was given the responsibility of reorganising the Huhehot Party Committee. Attacks were directed against other pro-Maoists, nearly all of whom were Chinese.<sup>21</sup>

By mid-August, immediately after the conclusion of the 11th Plenum of the CCP Central Committee, Peking Red Guards were moving into Inner Mongolia. Ulanfu and his associates hoped to play along with them—give them a moment of glory, calm them down, and then gradually ease them out of Inner Mongolia. However, there were still a number of pro-Maoists on the Inner Mongolian Party Committee who saw the presence of the Red Guard as a means of retaining their own power and resisting Ulanfu. One of these, Kao Chin-ming, gave a speech on 22 August urging the Red Guards to engage in "revolutionary activities to destroy the Four-Olds in Huhehot," and urged local cadres not to oppose them. At this signal the Red Guards engaged in several days of demonstrations and rioting in Huhehot.<sup>22</sup>

The confusion caused by the Red Guards enabled the pro-Maoists to begin attacking Ulanfu indirectly by attacking some of his supporters. A number of Ulanfu supporters were denounced for such crimes as "opposing the theories of Mao Tse-tung on the nationalities question," "abandoning the class struggle in favour of a policy of mutual harmony

<sup>19</sup> *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 17 May 1966.

<sup>20</sup> Yuan, p. 92.

<sup>21</sup> Lu Wen-hsin, "Nei-meng tung-luan wen-t'i te yen-hsi" (An Analysis of the Disturbances in Inner Mongolia), *Fei-ch'ing Yen-chiu* 1:7 (July 1967), p. 68.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

for the different nationalities," and "attacking Mao Tse-tung's policies on autonomy for the minority nationality areas."<sup>23</sup>

Gradually, the denunciations took on a nationalistic bent. Chinese Maoists accused Mongol Party figures of turning the Four Cleans Movement into a struggle against "great-Hanism."<sup>24</sup> They were also accused of having stated that the Han were oppressors of the Mongols and of advocating that the Mongols should unite together and seize true autonomy. Chang Ju-kan, an important Mongol official was condemned for having said that "the Chinese oppress the Mongols; they give us new rice bowls and then tell us to go beg for rice." The acting Mayor of Huhehot, Ch'en Ping-su, was accused of having ordered Chinese cadres to learn Mongolian and of telling them that "not learning Mongolian is a question of being revolutionary or not revolutionary."<sup>25</sup>

Ulanfu first came under personal attack on 8 September 1966 when wall posters in Peking accused him of seeking to restore capitalism, establish an independent domain and abandon the class struggle.<sup>26</sup> Ulanfu and his associates responded on 24 September by publishing an order in the *Inner Mongolia Daily* to suspend the Cultural Revolution. Using the approaching harvest as an excuse, the order instructed Red Guards to go to the rural areas and assist in the harvest.<sup>27</sup> During the autumn stalemate, which coincided with a similar situation in most of China, both sides sought to consolidate and expand their respective positions. The Peking Red Guards established a liaison group in Huhehot and began recruiting local youths to form Red Guard units. They sought to penetrate schools, factories, the bureaucracy and other organisations to establish their own "revolutionary organisations." On the other side, Wang I-lun and Wang To began to organise rival "revolutionary organisations" composed of workers, peasants, teachers and PLA veterans, many of whom had been settled in Inner Mongolia.

The Red Guard attack on the Party machine throughout China was resumed and reached a climax around December 1966 and January 1967. Encouraged by the "January revolution" elsewhere, the "revolutionary organisations" of the Red Guards in Inner Mongolia also attempted to seize power. By mid-January they had seized many government buildings in Huhehot, the telegraph office, railway station, Radio Inner Mongolia, and the *Inner Mongolia Daily* presses. Liu

<sup>23</sup> Radio Inner Mongolia, 25 August 1966.

<sup>24</sup> This movement, sometimes referred to as the Socialist Education Movement is more completely discussed in Richard Baum and Frederick C. Teiwes, "Liu Shao-ch'i and the Cadre Question," *Asian Survey* VIII:4 (April 1968), pp. 323-345.

<sup>25</sup> Yuan, pp. 93-94.

<sup>26</sup> *New York Times*, 10 September 1966.

<sup>27</sup> *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 24 September 1966.



Ch'ang, vice-Commander of the Inner Mongolian Military Garrison Political Department and an Ulanfu supporter, ordered troops stationed in Huhehot to surround the headquarters of the Red Guard organisations. The troops beat up a number of Red Guards and demanded that the remainder surrender. A number of clashes between troops and Red Guards occurred between 25 and 27 January.<sup>28</sup>

On 5 February, the Red Guards held a rally protesting against the presence of the troops. Liu Ch'ang ordered the troops to fire into the demonstration and several students were killed. This incident caused such a rumpus that, by the next day, Huhehot had fallen into a state of near anarchy. Liu then ordered PLA troops stationed on the border with the Mongolian People's Republic to converge on Huhehot and establish order. These troops arrested more than 100 Red Guard leaders and reoccupied all of the facilities previously seized by them. They then arrested Red Guard agitators from Peking, smashed their propaganda equipment, and put a halt to their activities.<sup>29</sup>

The Peking Maoists were extremely concerned with the deterioration of their position in Inner Mongolia and Chou En-lai sent an urgent communiqué requesting both sides to send a delegation to Peking to settle the dispute. Initially, Ulanfu rejected Chou's request; later, however, a delegation representing Ulanfu's point of view went to Peking as did a pro-Maoist delegation. On 16 February, both delegations met with Chou in Peking and agreed on a truce which included the cessation of fighting, rioting, demonstrating, arresting, publishing inflammatory materials, or engaging in provocative activities of any kind.<sup>30</sup> However, this agreement did not solve the underlying problems and small-scale clashes continued.

By 1 March, Ulanfu and his supporters had concluded that the brief interlude achieved by Chou's intervention was little more than an attempt by the Maoists to gain time and strengthen their position *vis-à-vis* Ulanfu's "revolutionary organisations". Ulanfu again directed troops to surround the Red Guard headquarters and to re-arrest many who had just been released two weeks before following the truce arranged by Chou En-lai. The "revolutionary organisations" of Ulanfu and his supporters then planned to stage a coup on 18 April and seize total power in the Leagues and Banners in order to establish an Inner Mongolian Revolutionary Committee.<sup>31</sup>

The Peking Maoists could see the crisis presented by the deterioration of their control in Inner Mongolia and they concluded that the only

<sup>28</sup> Lu, p. 70.

<sup>29</sup> Yuan, pp. 94-95.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

solution was direct intervention by military force. The Military Affairs Committee of the Central Committee ordered Teng Hai-ch'ing, Deputy Commander of the Peking Military Garrison, to take command of the PLA 21st Army stationed in Shensi and to occupy key areas in Inner Mongolia. Teng's army arrived in Huhehot in early April and had taken control of the capital by 7 April. Other Army units also moved into Inner Mongolia to consolidate the position of the Maoists. Martial law was declared and a curfew put into effect. On 13 April a directive from the CCP Central Committee entitled "Decision on the Correct Handling of Questions in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region" was promulgated.<sup>32</sup> Its five major points included: (i) the dismissal of Ulanfu from all positions, including commander of the Inner Mongolian Military Region and First Secretary of the Party; (ii) the reorganisation of the Inner Mongolian Military Garrison; (iii) the appointment of Lin Hsien-ch'uan as commander of the Military Garrison; Teng Hai-ch'ing as Chairman of the preparatory committee for the establishment of a Revolutionary Committee; and Wu T'ao as Political Commissar of the Military Region; (iv) the initiation of a struggle movement against Ulanfu, Wang I-lun, Wang To, and their associates; and (v) the rehabilitation of Maoists, such as Li Chih, who had been purged by the anti-Maoists. An order issued by the new Military Garrison and approved by the CCP Central Committee Military Affairs Committee ordered troops in Inner Mongolia not to participate in "revolutionary exchanges" but to remain in their units, maintain stringent discipline and to support the new leadership.<sup>33</sup>

Although the PLA took power and replaced regional and district Party committees during February in most other areas, this event was delayed until April in Inner Mongolia. Still it was several months before Teng could consolidate his position. Clashes between Army troops and Ulanfu supporters erupted sporadically, the largest incidents occurring on 25 April and 10 May. As late as 19 June, Radio Inner Mongolia acknowledged that the supporters of Ulanfu had sabotaged the "three-way alliance" and forestalled a "great revolutionary unity" between the military forces and the pro-Maoists. After several months of bloody clashes, top Mongol leadership was purged but resistance continued. The central political theme throughout China during the spring and summer was factional fighting and Inner Mongolia it seems was no exception.

According to Taiwan sources, Cheng Wei-shan, acting commander of the Peking military district, reported to a high level conference on 9 August that Inner Mongolian cadres were following a well-planned

<sup>32</sup> Lu, p. 70-71.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* See also, *Current Background* No. 852, 6 May, 1968, pp. 118-119; 132-134.

scheme to corrupt troops stationed in Inner Mongolia by means of the "fair sex." Cheng said that troops had received many letters and that over seventy men had been influenced through contact with women. This alarm was echoed by K'ang Sheng who blamed Ulanfu for the plot.

In August, an active campaign was launched against Ulanfu which extended into September, a contrast to calming down of "revolutionary" activity elsewhere in China. An editorial in the *Inner Mongolia Daily* on 29 August, entitled "Overthrow Ulanfu," accused him of such crimes as "being the agent of China's Khrushchev [Liu Shao-ch'i] in Inner Mongolia," "trying to establish an independent kingdom," "opposing the Thought of Mao Tse-tung on minority nationalities questions, opposing the class struggle, and instead seeking to harmonize relations between the minorities, seeking to revert to 'nomad economics' and to achieve peaceful transition." He was also accused of ignoring directives by the North China Party Bureau.<sup>34</sup>

In November 1967, a late date compared to most other areas, the Inner Mongolian Revolutionary Committee was formally inaugurated with Teng Hai-ch'ing as Chairman. As elsewhere it was a mere façade behind which the military made the decisions. The absence of both Mongols and political figures with previous experience on the Committee was very conspicuous. The only Mongol member of the Revolutionary Committee who had previously been important in Inner Mongolian administration was Wang Tsai-t'ien, former vice-Chairman of the Inner Mongolian People's Committee.<sup>35</sup>

However, the strength of Ulanfu could not be rooted out merely by propaganda directed against him. Revolutionary Committees were also formed at lower levels in the Leagues, Banners and Municipalities of Inner Mongolia and Ulanfu supporters were weeded out.

Li Hua-chiang, new Deputy Commander of the Inner Mongolian Military Region reported that agents from the Soviet Union, Taiwan and even Japan were active in Inner Mongolia. Although this accusation is most likely an exaggeration, the Chinese took the possibility seriously enough that on 7 December Inner Mongolian radio stations alerted garrison troops to safeguard the Soviet frontier. Also, it would be surprising if there were not continuing contact between the Mongolian People's Republic and its agents in Inner Mongolia as there had been during the 1930s and 1940s. While it is highly improbable, it is not impossible that there is some truth in the report of a private New Delhi source, recently returned from Ulan Bator, that an Inner Mongolian government in exile exists in the Mongolian People's Republic. There were clashes on the border in December 1965 and again in April 1966,

<sup>34</sup> Lu, p. 70.

<sup>35</sup> Yuan, p. 97.

and it is rumoured that more incidents occurred during the peak of the Cultural Revolution.

In January 1968 groups supporting Ulanfu launched attacks against the Central Government forces and Chinese broadcasts of 21 January 1968 monitored in Taipei implied that there had been bloody clashes particularly in Huhehot. The broadcasts named Tai Shih-hou formerly Deputy Mayor of Huhehot as the person directing the attacks against the new Revolutionary Committee, claiming that he was under the instructions of Ulanfu and that TNT, rifles and steel tubes for making guns were found in his house when it was searched.

A broadcast from Huhehot on 23 January 1968 reported:

After a struggle of several days, notable victories have been scored and several serious political cases involving the agents of Ulanfu, such as Wang I-lun, Wang To, and Ch'en Pi-li were brought to light. Bad elements sabotaging the proletarian Cultural Revolution and socialist construction either openly or behind the scenes were exposed, while a handful of bad leaders who had wormed their way into the revolutionary ranks were purged. This dealt a telling blow to the special agents of the United States, Japan, the Chiang gang, and Soviet and Mongolian revisionism, all ghosts and monsters of society, landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, and rightists who have not been reformed, and the handful of ruffians, bandits, blackmailers, swindlers, and speculators disturbing the market. Ammunition, blueprints for manufacturing guns, radio stations, material collected and plans hatched by Ulanfu's remnant clique for attacking the new red power, badges, seals, name lists of the counter-revolutionary organization, incriminating funds, and goods obtained through illegal profiteering and speculation were also seized.<sup>36</sup>

Reports of attempts to topple the Revolutionary Committee in Inner Mongolia continued into February although on 30 January the *New York Times* quoted a dispatch from a French news agency saying that Ulanfu himself had been captured in the fighting. Official news media in Inner Mongolia have not confirmed this report but confidential Mongol sources report that Ulanfu is imprisoned in Peking and that his earlier predecessor, Prince Te, head of the Inner Mongolian government during Japan's occupation, is also again under house arrest there. According to the Hong Kong *Sing Tao Jih Pao* some of the anti-Mao forces involved in this fighting, called "unending civil war" by Peking itself, styled themselves as "Genghis Khan Combat Squads" organised to support Ulanfu; a name reflecting Mongol nationalism.

At the same time as the new Revolutionary Committee attacked Ulanfu and his supporters, it also engaged in an enormous propaganda campaign to identify with all of the nationalities in Inner Mongolia.

<sup>36</sup> Radio Inner Mongolia, 23 January 1968; *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, 24 January 1968.

Inner Mongolian newspapers carried stories of the great welcome the troops of the PLA received from Mongol peasants. One account, for example, pointed out the gratitude of Mongol herdsmen to the troops of the PLA for teaching them to sing "The East is Red" in Chinese.<sup>37</sup> Another account claimed that Mongol peasants carved "Long Live Chairman Mao" on their pumpkins,<sup>38</sup> and yet another told of a blind Mongol herdsman who required all visitors prior to entering his tent to render a quotation from Chairman Mao so that he might ascertain whether or not they were true friends.<sup>39</sup> These, and many other examples, reveal that the new Revolutionary Committee is very concerned with its image. An unprecedented effort was made to glorify the PLA and to exhort the masses to learn from them. In almost every important Peking press release dealing with the Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia since April 1967, the PLA has been placed in the forefront. Nevertheless, it is evident from accounts such as the one previously quoted, that there is a well of opposition to the new Revolutionary Committee.

Early in March, a "large-scale clean-up campaign" called by the Revolutionary Committee was launched against the followers of Ulanfu. Radio Inner Mongolia announced a rally in Huhhot on 10 March, attended by some 15,000 "revolutionaries" and PLA troops. Throughout China "Party building" has been billed as the major task for 1968 but, as elsewhere, there is the knotty problem of reconciling new "rebels" and "old cadres" and of getting local support for Teng Hai-ch'ing and the new establishment appointed by Peking. The fact that this was not going too smoothly is confirmed by Inner Mongolian radio broadcasts monitored in Tokyo and Taipei denouncing attempts to undermine the Revolutionary Committee.<sup>40</sup>

### *Conclusions*

The events of the Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia indicate that both local nationalism and fragmentation within the Party were causes of the revolutionary change in the administrative system. Local nationalism can be seen in the attempts of Ulanfu and his Mongol associates to identify increasingly with their own people by reversing policies which favoured Chinese agriculture, in their resistance to the assimilating influence of these policies, and in trying to become more

<sup>37</sup> NCNA, 3 November 1967.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Charles Newhauser, "The Impact of the Cultural Revolution on the Chinese Communist Party Machine," *Asian Survey*, VIII: 6 (June 1968), p. 483, No. 46.

closely associated with the Mongols of the Mongolian People's Republic.<sup>41</sup>

Ulanfu no doubt realised not only that the preservation of the Mongol nationality depended greatly on the policies he followed, but also that his own status depended upon continued strength of the Mongols. If the "Mongol Problem" was solved, that is, if the Mongols were assimilated, the *raison d'être* of Ulanfu and other such leaders would cease to exist, and they would most likely be replaced by Chinese.

The element of Party disruption can be seen in the willingness of some Chinese, notably Wang I-lun, to support Ulanfu in the anti-Mao sentiment which existed not only in the countryside but also in the cities which are largely populated by Chinese and in the support given by PLA troops stationed in Inner Mongolia to the Ulanfu group, even though most of these soldiers were Chinese. The Chinese element of Ulanfu's support cannot be called local nationalism, but instead demonstrates that there were those within the Party who were apparently willing to support Ulanfu because of disagreement with Peking's Cultural Revolution policies.

The charges made against Ulanfu and his associates also reflect both the element of Mongol nationalism and party disruption. On the one hand, they are accused of "forcing Chinese cadres to learn Mongolian," "advocating that the Chinese are oppressors of the Mongols" and "demanding that the Mongols and other minority nationalities be given genuine autonomy." On the other hand, they are accused of "being the agents of China's Khrushchev in Inner Mongolia," "opposing the movement to study the thought of Mao Tse-tung" and "ignoring the directives of, and not submitting their decisions for approval to, the North China Party Bureau." Of course, accusations cannot always be taken at face value in China, particularly during a period of emotional turmoil on the scale of the Cultural Revolution; however, these accusations reflect the persistence of a Mongol desire for self-determination as well as a deep schism and factionalism within the Chinese Communist Party.

The significance of the Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia goes far beyond the mere transfer of power from one organ to another. In fact, it reveals the failure of the Chinese Communists adequately to deal with a problem that has plagued the Chinese for centuries. Despite

<sup>41</sup> Over the years, the number of Mongol refugees from Inner Mongolia trickling into the Mongolian People's Republic has gradually increased. During the Cultural Revolution, Peking-Ulan Bator relations deteriorated rapidly, particularly after the purge of Ulanfu. Teng Hai-ch'ing mustered a demonstration of more than 150,000 students in Huhehot to protest against "fascist atrocities" committed by Ulan Bator revisionists against China in June 1967 (see Lu, pp. 71-72). Note also that the Chinese have claimed that the capture of Ulanfu agents dealt a "telling blow to Mongolian Revisionism . . ." (see p. 13 above).



Communist propaganda boasts about the successful integration of minorities into the system, the events in Inner Mongolia have made it dramatically clear that the Mongols and other minorities have not truly been brought into the "Great Family of Nationalities." The composition of the new Revolutionary Committee (which includes only one significant sinicised Mongol) reflects Chinese mistrust of other nationalities as much as it reflects the mistrust of the Maoists for those who disagree with them. Even though there is little hope for autonomy for the Mongol minority of Inner Mongolia, since they are vastly outnumbered by Chinese, they are still Mongols, they still have leaders who tend to be inclined toward local nationalism, and they still present very serious problems for Chinese leaders. These problems become especially critical when it is remembered that the Mongol minority dwells in the borderland between China, the Soviet Union, and Outer Mongolia. The Inner Mongolian political centre, Huhehot, is, however, only about 250 miles from Peking, and this geographical fact explains why Ulanfu and his supporters were unable to maintain a degree of autonomy equal to that of other anti-Peking leaders in more distant places such as Sinkiang and Tibet. An added critical factor is that one of China's two nuclear centres, Paotou, is near Huhehot on the strategic railroad linking Peking with the western regions and the "revisionists" might very well manipulate the Inner Mongol's dislike for the Chinese Communists and make political capital by embarrassing the Chinese in this strategic area.<sup>42</sup>

Whatever the course of the Cultural Revolution, the problem of Chinese-minority relations will continue to harass Chinese governments until the Chinese are willing to come face to face with the demands of the minorities and either integrate them into society or grant them true autonomy.

<sup>42</sup> There is some speculation that some of the materials used by the Ulanfu insurgents might have come from across the border. This speculation cannot yet be supported by concrete evidence.