

THE KWANGTUNG PEASANT MOVEMENT

1922-1928

by

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B.A., Oberlin College, 1968

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

HISTORY

We accept this thesis as conforming to the

required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

May, 1972

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ABSTRACT

The peasant movement that swept China in the mid 1920's originated in Kwangtung Province in 1922 when P'eng P'ai organized peasant unions in Haifeng hsien. The unions spread into neighboring hsien, but not until 1924, following the reorganization of the Kuomintang and its alliance with the Chinese Communist Party and the subsequent creation of the Peasant Bureau and Peasant Institute, did the peasant movement spread throughout the province. The peasant unions grew rapidly and by June 1927 they had enrolled perhaps 700,000 members. The very explosiveness of the movement's development and the increasingly violent tactics used by peasant organizers to mobilize the peasants aggravated a growing rift between factions within the Kuomintang. This rift led to the collapse of the United Front of the KMT and CCP and destroyed the peasant movement. Beginning in June 1926 counter-revolutionary forces attacked the unions. Peasant forces that survived these first onslaughts were crushed by regular Kuomintang troops in 1927 and 1928.

This thesis is an examination of the peasant movement in Kwangtung from 1922 to 1928, and it seeks to explain why the movement ended in failure. To answer this question various characteristics of seven regions within the province are discussed, providing the material for an analysis (that appears in Chapter III) of why some regions organized peasant unions more successfully than others. The second chapter traces where and when unions developed and how strong they became. The third and concluding chapter of the thesis compares and contrasts the material

presented in the preceding chapters, and it concludes that not only the breakdown of the United Front doomed the Kwangtung peasant movement to failure, but that the strength of the local, traditional society determined how successful the unions would be.

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INTRODUCTION

The revolution that swept China in the mid-1920's was a culmination to nearly one hundred years of economic and social change and political and intellectual turmoil. The revolution in the 1920's also contributed new ideas of nationalism and social change which permeated the country. A major impetus for the dissemination of these new ideas was generated by mass organizations. These organizations mobilized millions of workers and peasants in the span of a few years. The explosive growth of mass organizations would fundamentally change China.

In the countryside rural unrest was transformed into revolution, with peasant unions the instrument of this change. Volatile, the growth in their memberships spectacular, the peasant unions developed first in Kwangtung. From there they spread into central China, and then to nearly every corner of the nation. The peasant unions eventually were suppressed, but their impact on rural China and the young Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was of critical significance to future developments in the Chinese countryside. For these reasons a study of the peasant movement during the 1920's not only furthers our understanding of the period in question, but also helps explain rural China in the 1930's and 1940's.

Kwangtung Province was the birthplace of the peasant movement and the revolutionary base for its spread throughout China. It is

extremely important as such, and this paper will attempt to trace the Kwangtung peasant movement from its inception in 1922 until its suppression in 1928. It will also attempt to describe the environment in which the peasant movement developed and the effects that environment had on the movement.

The peasant movement in rural China developed amid a complex diversity of overlapping economic, political and social institutions. This complexity was furthered by the disintegration and transformation of local and higher level institutions in 19th and 20th century China.

From the late Ch'ing dynasty well into the twentieth century a process of institutional breakdown transformed the Chinese countryside. Traditionally the authority of the central government penetrated from the national capital, through several layers of intermediate bureaucracy, to the lowest central administrative unit, the hsien. Hsien, or counties, frequently varied greatly in geographic size, density of population, and economic prosperity. They were officially governed from the county seat by an imperial appointee, or hsien magistrate. Because it was not uncommon for a hsien to have a population of 250,000 people, it was virtually impossible for the magistrate to directly control the region under his jurisdiction. Thus, direct control through the central government's administrative organs at the local level was tenuous. To maintain order, collect taxes, and carry out directives transmitted down through the central bureaucracy to the hsien level, the hsien magistrate was forced to cooperate with the local gentry. This dependence of the hsien official on the local elite tended to

generate an unofficial level of government below the hsien. At this unofficial sub-hsien level the local gentry administered rural China.

Despite his dependence upon the local rural elite, the hsien magistrate did wield a great deal of power. As the appointed official of the central government he controlled the local police, presided over judicial cases, and was in charge of tax collection. In short, he owed his position of authority and his allegiance to the central government, even though this relationship was tempered by his reliance upon the local elite.

Although the local gentry shared with the hsien magistrate similar aspirations, values, and the same Confucian source of ideological legitimacy, they owed their social and economic positions to sets of very different relationships. As has been stated above, the hsien magistrate was a part of the national bureaucracy and though he depended upon the cooperation of the local elite he could also check their demands on the peasants. The local gentry, on the other hand, relied upon maintaining a balance between the central government at the hsien level and the local rural population. They cultivated friendly relations with the hsien magistrate to enhance their own power, and therefore helped to collect taxes and carry out government projects. There were however limits to this cooperation. At some point the local gentry opposed the penetration of the central government into the sub-hsien level because that intrusion undermined their position and threatened to replace them in the local community. They also resisted the encroachment of the central government because too much pressure on the rural

population could cause heterodox elements in the society like secret societies to rebel and threaten the destruction of the orthodox order which legitimized the local gentry's position in the society.

It can therefore be seen that the local gentry played an ambivalent role in relationship to the rural peasant population. They derived their financial position in large measure by exploiting the peasants, and when cooperating with the hsien administration they again squeezed the local populace. On the other hand, they acted as a buffer between the central government and the people, quite frequently moderating the demands made on the peasants. In this manner they undermined the appeal of heterodox organizations which might otherwise have gained the widespread support of the local peasantry. The Confucian ideology, although providing legitimacy to the local elite, also served through its stress on the benevolence of superiors to subordinates to restrain them in their relationships with the peasants. In this manner the economic demands the rural elite made upon the peasant population were limited by their interaction with the central government and the peasants, and by the values of Confucianism.

This delicate balance was disrupted with the decline of the Ch'ing dynasty as the government in Peking became less capable of governing. Due to internal rebellion and growing corruption and inefficiency, power tended to gravitate downwards away from Peking to the regional level. Despite the violence and disruption of the times, the shift of power downwards did not result in chaos. Rather, as the central government proved incapable of suppressing heterodox groups such as the Taipings

and the job of defeating such groups was delegated to the local gentry, power devolved to the local level and concentrated in pre-existing social and political organizations which were in the hands of the local gentry. Thus, the process of the central government's decay and the growing autonomy of local areas was mirrored in the rise to power of local elites.

The development of local power was also accompanied by a change in the nature of the rural elite itself. An increasing number of the local elite derived their status solely through land ownership, and a diminishing number gained their local status through the Confucian examination system. This tendency became dominant with the abolition of the examination system in the last years of the Ch'ing dynasty.

At the same time, the rise in power of local elites was directly related to the growth of local militarization. Local unrest and disorder generated a need for security, and the local elite responded by forming, training, and equipping local self-defense forces. As an area developed its own self-defense force, it also asserted control over sources of revenue to pay for the maintenance of these troops. The need for an economic base often caused these military units to develop parallel to local marketing areas. Although other factors, such as influential personages or powerful clans, did influence the locality where self-defense units were organized, the need for a minimum source of revenue led to the growth of ch'u level self-defense units. The ch'u, a sub-hsien level administrative unit adopted in the Republican era, often coincided with Skinner's intermediate marketing area and also seems to

have met the basic financial requirements for local militarization.

Below the ch'u level was the hsiang level. It coincided with Skinner's standard marketing area and generally proved incapable of supporting local militarization on a large enough scale to be self-sufficient. Thus, by the first decade of the Republican period the ch'u elite, although dependent to some degree on the hsien administration, had gained a great deal of fiscal and military autonomy.¹

The growth of local self-defense forces both created a demand for revenue with which to maintain such forces, and also established the power which enabled the local elite to extract funds from the populace. As taxes became more oppressive a larger local force was needed to maintain order, and the creation of a larger and better equipped force in turn generated the demand for more revenue. This vicious circle led to the extraction of more and more revenue at the local level from those who were least able to defend themselves and who were the most oppressed, as the local power holders were able to shift the burden of increased expenditures onto them.

As such conditions became increasingly prevalent the peasants' position deteriorated, particularly after the 1911 Revolution. Confucian normative restraints no longer moderated peasant-landlord relations but were replaced by coercive measures. Over-population, natural catastrophes, dislocation due to economic change, the rise of warlordism, and clan warfare all threatened the peasant.

In the early 1920's the newly formed Chinese Community Party began to recognize the revolutionary potential of the Chinese peasant.

As the CCP began to infiltrate the rural areas they found however that despite the peasant's often bitter condition, the local setting was by no means hospitable to their efforts. The peasant may very well have grown disillusioned with his position and with the local elite, particularly as the elite's Confucian legitimacy eroded, but the revolutionary possibilities of local areas were often obscured by the concentration of economic, military, and political power in the hands of that same local elite. The situation was further confused by the existence of secret societies and agnatic clan groupings. These groups were organized vertically and not along class lines, as they drew their membership from all strata of the society. Because loyalty was to the group, mobilization along class lines proved difficult. These groups also did not always organize a hierarchy parallel to the political and market town hierarchy. Rather, they often developed an organization that overlapped the hsiang-ch'u-hsien hierarchy, perhaps by organizing horizontally from ch'u to ch'u. This made the local society even more difficult for the CCP to penetrate.

Despite such difficulties, in the mid 1920's the CCP was able to organize millions of peasants into peasant unions. The first peasant unions were formed in Kwangtung and from there swept into central China, notably Human and Hupei. From central China they spread throughout the nation. The counter-revolution that began in mid-1926 suppressed the peasant unions. In a little over one year the First United Front of the Kuomintang (KMT) and Chinese Community Party (CCP) collapsed, and with it the Chinese Communist policy of developing mass political organizations under the protective cover of the KMT armed forces.

Despite the collapse of the United Front, Chinese Communist organizational and information gathering techniques for the rural area had been developed, and the Chinese Communists had become increasingly sophisticated in the implementation of these techniques and in the mobilization of the peasants. A study of the peasant unions in the 1920's therefore not only aids our understanding of the First United Front and the initial Chinese Communist experience in the countryside, but it also brings into focus many aspects of rural China that the Communists would have to deal with in the 1930's and 1940's.

Kwangtung, the birthplace of the peasant movement, was a province of great diversity. Differences between various areas of the province were significant, and caused both the number of peasants organized and the techniques employed to mobilize them to vary from region to region. For these reasons, in the first chapter of this paper the province will be divided into seven regions. Then certain aspects of each region's economic, social, and political characteristics will be discussed. This discussion is also undertaken to illuminate the environment in which the peasant movement developed, and to provide a background that will help explain certain patterns in the peasant movement's growth. Such items as tenancy and rent have long been cited as means by which to predict or explain rural unrest in China. These factors and others will be examined, some of which, like the influence of Christian missionaries, may seem irrelevant to the peasant movement but sometimes became vital issues in the organization of peasant unions. The selection of social, economic, and political factors to be included

in this discussion was made after consideration of the literature dealing with environmental effects on Communist organization in rural China. Readers interested in a discussion of which factors need to be considered are directed to Roy Hofheinz Jr's. article in Chinese Community Politics in Action, edited by A. Doak Barnett.²

In the second chapter a survey of where unions were organized, the phases in development they underwent, how strong they became, and how and when they were suppressed will be chronologically presented. In determining how strong the peasant movement became in a specific region, particular attention will be paid to the number of union members, the number of peasant union militia members, the length of time the union was active in the region, and the union's position of power in relationship to other interest groups in the region. A four stage chronology for the Kwangtung peasant movement has been adapted from Chinese Communist sources for use in this chapter.³ It is: (1) from the outset of the movement in 1922 to the Kuomintang reorganization of 1924; (2) from the 1924 reorganization until the completion of the Second Eastern Expedition and the Southern Expedition in late 1925; (3) from the conclusion of the Second Eastern Expedition and the Southern Expedition until the Second Provincial Peasant Congress of May 1, 1926; and (4) from the beginning of counter-revolutionary suppression of the peasant unions in mid 1926 to the final suppression of the Hailufeng Soviet in 1928.

The third and final chapter will present conclusions drawn from the material presented in the first two chapters, and by contrasting

regional differences will attempt to answer such questions as why some areas were more successfully organized than others, what factors aided or hampered the development of unions, and why the peasant movement in Kwangtung ultimately ended in defeat.

It has previously been stated that the sub-hsien ch'u level frequently fulfilled the basic financial requirements for local militarization. The peasant movement itself attempted to arm its own contingents and wrest control from the existing ch'u level defense forces. These facts imply the need for a ch'u level study of the rural areas in question. At this time, however, it is not possible to undertake such a study because of limitations in both time and available source materials. Therefore, a more general survey will concentrate on the seven regions mentioned above, and will also on occasion discuss various aspects of particular hsien within the seven regions.

CHAPTER I

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL BACKGROUND

Kwangtung province is half the size of France, with a surface area that was estimated in the 1920's to encompass 486,000,000 mou (there are approximately 6.6 mou in an acre).¹ Only 34,000,000 of these mou, however, were under cultivation during this period, comprising a mere 7% of the province.² In spite of the limited surface area that was being cultivated, the province's population was in the vicinity of 40,000,000.³ Roughly speaking, this means that there was less than one mou of tilled land per person in Kwangtung. The province was, however, one of the richest in China, producing rice, fruits, sugar cane, tobacco, tea, and one seventh of the world's silk.⁴

Despite the province's agricultural wealth, each year Kwangtung imported more than she exported, and most of the imports were rice, sugar, and flour. Although statistics are of doubtful accuracy for twentieth century China in general and must be used with care, available statistics indicate that Kwangtung province faced serious problems in the 1920's. The number of peasants who owned their own land probably diminished by 4% between 1911 and 1933, and the number of peasants who were solely tenants increased by perhaps 6% over the same time-span.⁵ One estimate states that 55% of the peasants were tenants and paid 60% to 70% of their crop's value in rent.⁶

The situation in Kwangtung was further aggravated by the depredations of warlord troops and by the political instability of the area. Following the collapse of the Ch'ing dynasty, military campaigns and power struggles between factions within the province constantly tormented the populace, and the intervention of warlords from Kwangsi and Yunnan was a further detriment to local peace and order. In addition Sun Yat-sen and the Kuomintang planned to use the province as a base from which to unify all China. This brought Sun into conflict with men like Ch'en Chiung-ming, who did not have such ambitious aims, and sought only to rule Kwangtung. By 1920 opium and gambling were promoted and taxed as sources of revenue by the Kwangsi warlords then in control of Kwangtung. Banditry was rampant, and the various hsien had become satrapies as the local forces had taken over the provincial functions of tax collection and organization of local self-defense units.⁷

Kwangtung's long and extensive relationship with foreign countries also influenced the province during these years. Besides Hong Kong, Macao, and the French holding on Kuangchou Bay situated on the east coast of the Leichou peninsula, seven of the thirty-nine Chinese treaty ports were located in Kwangtung.⁸ Foreign missionaries, foreign goods, and Chinese emigration from these ports, all had their impact on the province's society.

Beyond this broad sketch of the situation in Kwangtung as a whole, we need to take a closer view of the various regions in the province, in order to contrast their similarities and differences and to create a fuller picture of Kwangtung. Toward these ends, the province

has been divided into seven basic regions. The regional breakdown used in this paper follows the Kuomintang Peasant Bureau's regional organization of the province in 1926, which loosely corresponds to the Ch'ing dynasty administrative "circuits" for the province.⁹ The seven regions are: (1) the Ch'iungyai Region, or the thirteen counties that comprised Hainan Island; (2) the Nanlu Region, an area of fifteen counties that included the Leichou Peninsula and bordered on what is today Viet Nam; (3) the Hsichiang, or West River Region, comprised of fourteen counties in the vicinity of the West River and the Kwangsi border; (4) the Pei-chiang or North River Region, an area of eleven counties north of Canton that bordered on Hunan and Kiangsi; (5) the Chunglu Region, consisting of sixteen counties that surrounded Canton and made up the Canton delta and the municipality of Canton itself; (6) the Huichou Region, eight counties located to the east of Canton and running in a north-south line from the Kiangsi border to the coast; and (7) the Ch'ao-meい-Hailufeng Region, consisting of the seventeen most easterly counties of Kwangtung that bordered on Kiangsi in the north, Fukien in the north and east, the Huichou Region in the west, and the ocean to the south. For a list of the counties, or hsien, in each region, and to locate their physical position, refer to Table I and Map I in Appendix I.

Each region will be viewed in turn, and various social, economic, and political aspects discussed. Information permitting such factors as gentry, min t'uan or local self-defense forces, clans, emigration, linguistic groups, secret societies, population density, Christian missionaries and converts, banditry, taxation, crops, tenancy, and transportation will be discussed.

THE CH'IUNGYAI REGION OR HAINAN ISLAND

The port of Haik'ou on Hainan Island's north coast is 265 miles by sea from Canton and fifteen miles from the Leichou Peninsula. The island is roughly 150 miles long and ninety miles wide. Its north, east, and southeast coastal area is a plain, while the interior of the island, especially in the south, is very mountainous.¹⁰ During the 1920's a small peasant movement developed on the island, survived through the 1930's and became a militant anti-Japanese force after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937.

Hainan Island in the 1920's was a backwater, its only communication with Canton by sea. Over half of the island's surface area was inhabited by aboriginal peoples who comprised one third of the region's population. Many of these people, the Loi and Miao, lived in the rugged interior of the island. They paid only token taxes to the Chinese, and faded back into the mountains when attacked. They were not hostile, but neither were they particularly hospitable to strangers. Most of them were illiterate, but still were able to speak Cantonese as well as the local Hainan dialect. Their form of leadership was that of a village headman. Well armed, the men hunted while the women cultivated rice, sweet potatoes, corn, and tobacco on land which they burned over each year. When the soil was exhausted they cleared and burned a new area. The coastal Loi, however, intermingled with the Chinese and accepted Chinese customs and dress.¹¹

On the coastal plain, Hakka, Cantonese, and Fukienese speaking people had settled, as well as the "tame" Loi. The Hakka were the

latest to arrive, migrating from the reserve created for them in T'aishan hsien. The reserve, a relocation centre, was set up following the 1856-1867 period of bloody warfare between the Hakka and Cantonese. It proved to be too small, however, and many Hakka were forced to emigrate, some to Hainan.¹²

The coastal area of Hainan was agriculturally rich, with fertile soil and a hot and humid climate. Two irrigated crops of rice were raised each year in the Ch'itungshan area in the north and in the Yai hsien area of the south. Sugar cane also grew well on this coastal strip. Linkao and Tan hsien were the chief sugar cane areas in the northwest, and Yai hsien, Lingshui, and Wanning the chief areas in the southeast. By 1927 there were a dozen sugar factories on the island, as well as a silk industry, limited because of prevalent disease among the silkworms.¹³

The northern portion of the island had soil of volcanic origin, supporting mainly dry crops such as cane, millet, beans, and upland rice. Excellent paddy rice was grown along the rivers. The Tingan River, which flows through Tingan hsien and empties into the sea at Haik'ou, was extensively cultivated in this fashion. The hillsides above the river bottom were used for orchards, pastures, and fuel. Once logged clean the lower areas of the countryside were kept burned off. Only the higher and more mountainous areas to the south were still forested in the 1920's and were then being extensively logged by natives under Hakka and Cantonese managers. A number of large agricultural companies had started up in this northern area of the island, but most of them

went bankrupt. One company, located in Tan hsien, however, had 20,000 rubber trees and 300,000 coffee trees. This company was owned by Cantonese and hired Cantonese labor exclusively.¹⁴

Transportation was generally quite primitive. When streams became unnavigable the shoulder pole and a cart drawn by two oxen were used. A carrier could manage between 140 to 200 pounds a load, and a cart carried between 500 and 1,000 pounds in a load. Grain and wood were the goods most frequently transported over these roads, which were merely dirt tracks with two ruts worn into the soil. In heavy rain they quickly became impassable.¹⁵

In Wench'ang hsien, Hainan's eastern-most county, the land was less volcanic in origin and more sandy. The topography was flat and rolling, and the area had been well cut over by fuel gatherers. Few trees were left. In this sandy area sweet potatoes, taro, peanuts, and millet were the chief crops. Only along those streams where there was enough water was paddy rice grown. There was a constant flux of Chinese moving from Wench'ang to Malaya and Singapore, and sometimes returning. Close ties were kept between Wench'ang and Southeast Asia. For the island as a whole, between 1921 and 1931, nearly 20,000 of its people emigrated to British Malaya. This brought the total number of Hainanese in Malaya to nearly 100,000.¹⁶

The southern portion of the island had a much smaller coastal strip, and outside of this plain the area was quite wild. In Yai hsien, beyond the cane and rice growing area, the Loi and Miao occupied most of the hsien and lived in the fashion described above.¹⁷

For the coastal strip in general, the amount of land held by clans and the incidence of tenancy were lower than any other region in Kwangtung. Clan land was perhaps as little as 5% of the cultivated land in Tan hsien, 10% in Lingshui, 15% in Ch'iungshan, Ch'iungtung, and Ch'engmai, and probably no more than 20% in Wench'ang, Tingan, and Lohui. This is much below other areas in Kwangtung where clan holdings sometimes exceeded 75% of the land being tilled. Tenancy was correspondently low, and in most areas on Hainan perhaps between 70% to 100% of the peasants owned the land they tilled. Since dense population and high rates of tenancy are frequently coincidental it is no surprise to note that Hainan's population density was probably the lowest in Kwangtung.¹⁸

The inhabitants of Hainan Island, however, were not financially well-off in the early 1920's, despite the favorable conditions just cited. Years of struggle against the Kwangsi militarists had impoverished the local populace. There was much petty piracy, farmers and fishermen preying on small disabled vessels. Banditry was similarly widespread. Several years of bad weather caused poor crops, and increased the economic distress in the area.¹⁹

The effect of Christian missionaries on the island's populace was rather minimal. Although American Presbyterians had been in Haik'ou since the 1880's, they were few in number, and only in 1921 did they graduate the first class of sixteen boys from the Hainan Christian Middle School.²⁰

THE NANLU REGION

The Nanlu Region is the southernmost region of mainland Kwangtung. The peasant movement had a late start there, getting underway only in 1926. However, a number of peasant unions were organized.

In the west, Nanlu bordered on what is today Viet Nam, and to the north on Kwangsi Province. On the south, all but three of the hsien bordered on the South China Sea. Nanlu region therefore had an extensive coastline. It was mountainous along the Kwangsi border, but on the Leichou Peninsula and along the coast was a fertile plain, its soil derived from weathered volcanic rock. Although predominantly agricultural, Nanlu region still had some unoccupied arable plain on the Leichou Peninsula. Rice, sugar cane, silk, pineapples, sweet potatoes, peanuts, tobacco, tea, hogs and other livestock were raised. With such an extensive coastline, there were also fishing and salt industries. Generally, however, the region grew two crops of rice each year, and produced and exported more rice than it consumed.²¹

Communications in the Nanlu region were poor. There were few roads suitable for motor vehicle travel, and in most cases those had been constructed as late as 1924. Most overland transportation was by foot, with goods borne by shoulder pole, and was hampered by the high incidence of banditry. Although the coastline was long, ports were generally poor and only could accommodate shallow hulled junks. Modern steamships put in only at Kuangchou Bay, the French concession on the Leichou Peninsula, and at Peihai (Pakhoi in Cantonese), a treaty port on the coast of Hop'u hsien. Peihai was far from being a bustling port.

Mail carried there from Canton by steamer sometimes did not arrive for weeks.²² Nevertheless, western goods from Peihai and Kuangchou Bay, goods like petroleum oil and cotton cloth, had penetrated to even the more remote areas of Nanlu. These too were the ports from which a good many Nanlu residents emigrated overseas.

The inhabitants of the region were predominantly Cantonese, but included Hainanese, Hakka, and aboriginal peoples. Probably more than 95% of this population engaged in agriculture. Depending upon the hsien, from 40% to 60% of the peasants were said to be tenants, and 10% to 15% landless agricultural laborers. It is estimated that between 20% and 40% owned and farmed their own land. It also appears that the average plot, whether cultivated by tenant or by owner, was perhaps only two mou per family.²³

There were many small landlords, possibly as much as 6% to 8% of the rural population. Their political power was minimal, however, when compared to the large landlords. Large landlords often commanded rents of thousands of tan (a tan weighs about 133 lbs.)²⁴ of grain each year and could accumulate hundreds of thousands of yuan (a yuan was worth approximately \$1.50 Mexican in the 1920's).²⁵ They exercised power in the countryside through the local min t'uan, or self defense forces, and their power was pervasive. Although conditions between these large landlords and their tenants were not as harsh as the tenant-landlord relations in the Hsichiang Region, they were nevertheless quite severe compared to all other regions of Kwangtung. Tenants often paid rents as high as 60% of the annual crop, although a rent of 50%

was the most common. Before being allowed to till the land the tenant had to pay a deposit on the land, sometimes as much as 50% of the first year's projected rent. At the same time rents were paid, if the rent was deficient even by a few ounces, the landlord could beat the tenant with a bamboo rod. After this, if the tenant could not fulfill the rent the landlord could have him arrested by the local police and take the land back from the tenant. If a deposit had previously been submitted, it would be confiscated by the landlord.²⁶

Years of warfare and political instability had created an environment in which banditry flourished. Many of the bandits were well organized and positioned themselves along provincial and county boundaries where they were less susceptible to attack by government forces that were organized along provincial and hsien lines. The bandits operated in groups as large as several thousand men, and followed exceptionally ruthless and savage tactics. Tens of thousands of peasants were reported to have been murdered outright or to have starved to death as a result of bandit depredations. Peasants had their crops rooted up and were forced to grow opium. In Haik'ang hsien over one quarter of the villages in the hsien were burned down by bandits, and trade had naturally declined drastically as a result of these conditions. As the bandits were often involved in the very lucrative business of importing opium from Yunnan, they further strengthened their position by buying modern arms from western sources, and because the bandits were a powerful force in the area, the local landlords and the local governmental officials often sought their cooperation rather than attempt to crush them.²⁷

In theory, the min t'uan had been created and were maintained to suppress such bandits and to uphold public peace and order. In fact, however, they were often in league with the bandits and served as a force which was used by the landlords to ensure the collection of land rents. The min t'uan were organized parallel to the local civil administration. That is, there was a hsien min t'uan magistrate with a staff and office and contingent of troops in the county seat. Below the hsien level, in each ch'u, there was a min t'uan office with its magistrate, staff, and troops. Usually there were twenty to fifty of these troops in each ch'u, but in some areas where each hsiang had its own min t'uan the number of such troops was much higher.

To pay for the support of the min t'uan, many miscellaneous taxes had been created. By the 1920's these taxes were indeed numerous. An average hsien could have a head tax on cattle, a slaughter tax on hogs, taxes on salt and sugar, and a tax on each item sold in the local markets. The most important of all these taxes, however, was a levy on the cultivation of between 2% and 6% on each tan of grain harvested. These taxes were collected at the ch'u level by the landlord-controlled min t'uan. Frequently such taxes were in excess of the amount needed to maintain the min t'uan and simply went to further enrich the local elite.

Besides the miscellaneous taxes, which the peasants resented bitterly, the price of goods rose drastically after the fall of the Ch'ing and well into the 1920's. Between 1915 and 1925 the prices of goods, ranging from food, clothing, and salt to plough oxen and fertilizer, at least doubled and frequently quadrupled. At the same

time income tended to remain static. The destitute condition of the peasants was revealed by the large number of them who sold themselves overseas as laborers, and by the high percentage of men over thirty who were not married and could not afford to get married.

In general the amount of clan land was lower in the Nanlu Region than in other areas of the province. This indicates that the power of clans was less pervasive in the region, although there were clan feuds, in particular over control of the opium traffic. Some of these clans were powerful. The Lin family of Wuch'uan hsien, for instance, was particularly powerful and arrogant. They derived much of their status from the fact that one of their members had finished number one in the palace examination during the last years of the Ch'ing.²⁸

Christian missionaries had penetrated the Nanlu Region, principally near Peihai and Kuangchou Bay. In Peihai, Protestant missionaries had compounds and Christian schools. In the area of Kuangchou Bay French priests had converted several thousand families both within the concession and in neighboring hsien.²⁹

THE HSICHIANG REGION OR WEST RIVER REGION

The Hsichiang Region was located to the west of Canton, straddled the West River, and extended to and bordered on Kwangsi Province in the west. Nominally under the control of the Canton Government since 1923, peasant unions were organized in the region as early as 1924 and some of the unions of greatest numerical strength developed here.

Most of the land in the region's fourteen counties was hilly and agriculturally poor. Pine forest, bamboo, and tea grew in the higher sections, and rice and yams were raised in the lower areas. Only in the low-lying land along the river, which was subject to annual floods, was the soil rich. On this land rice, mandarin oranges, tobacco, mulberry seedlings, mulberry leaves, and silk were raised. The West River and the North River probably produced 90% of the province's tobacco, and Haoshan hsien in the Hsichiang was one of the largest producers of tobacco. In areas where tobacco was grown rice was planted in alternate years, because tobacco rapidly depleted the soil. Nicotine in the soil from the tobacco crop, however, served as an effective pesticide and aided the production of excellent rice crops. Haoshan hsien also produced an estimated 60% of the entire province's mulberry seedlings, but mulberry plantations were also found along the West River all the way to Kwangsi. The chief mulberry leaf markets were located in Kaoyao and Yunan hsien. Ssuhui hsien was famous for mixed orchards of mulberry trees and mandarin oranges. These orchards were almost solely leased by landlords to tenants, as were the other mulberry plantations along the river.³⁰

In summary, the Hsichiang Region was economically divided. Along the river it was agriculturally rich, while back of the river in the hilly interior, agriculture was marginal and the economy depressed.

The quality of communications and transportation in the region also depended upon the West River. The river was navigable all year

round for boats with a six foot draft, and all along its course from Wuchow in Kwangsi to Canton the traffic was heavy. In the areas remote from the river there were no modern roads and transportation was difficult as goods were moved by shoulder pole over foot paths. The advantages in transportation and soil fertility that proximity to the West River afforded, were not without their negative counterparts. Each year the river flooded, and in the floods of 1915 and 1924 had washed out the dikes causing great loss in life, crops, and housing.³¹

The West River was a predominantly Cantonese speaking area, but there were also a number of Hakka people scattered throughout the various hsien. Much of the bitter fighting between Cantonese and Hakka that took place in Kwangtung between 1850 and 1867 was centered in the Hsichiang counties of Ssuhui, Kaoyao, Kaoming, En-p'ing, Haoshan, and K'aip'ing.³² Due to the region's strategic location the people in it also suffered greatly as warlord armies traversed the area and battled in it. Piracy on the river and banditry in the hinterland, particularly along the Kwangsi border, furthered local instability.³³

To maintain order the local elite had created their own armies or had created min t'uan. For the most part, however, they used these local self-defense forces to assure rent collection from their tenants. Attempts to reduce rents between 1898 and 1900 in Kwangning hsien, for instance, had ended in victory for the local elite. In 1905 the local elite fought a bitter campaign to suppress the Triads, who were the most powerful secret society in the region. This battle was largely successful in destroying peasant leadership. Thus, by 1920 the local elite had cemented its political and military position.³⁴

Partially as a result of the monopolization of power by the local elite, and partially due to the overpopulation of the area, tenant-landlord relations were probably the harshest in all Kwangtung. Rents were usually 60% of what was determined to be the average yield of the particular plot of land, and contracts were of the so called "ironclad" variety. This meant that no matter what natural calamity struck a tenant's crop the full rent had to be paid. No arrears or delays were allowed or else the ubiquitous contractual deposit would be seized and the land taken away from the tenant. If the contractual deposit did not cover the amount of rent still owed, the landlord could confiscate the tenant's seed grain, his year's supply of food, and his farm implements. At the time of rent payment, the tenant carried his dried grain to the landlord's home and there it was measured by the landlord. The landlord's tou, or wooden measuring unit, was reported to be anywhere from 5% to 40% oversized.³⁵

Not only were the conditions of tenancy severe, but the number of peasants who had become tenants was also very high. As has been stated previously, probably more than 85% of the mulberry plantations were leased to tenants, and the lowest percentage of tenants in the villages of the region was probably 60% of the total agricultural population. As a result of these conditions, and because the dense population put pressure on the available arable land, a growing number of people from the West River began moving to Canton during the 1920's to work in various industries.³⁶

THE PEICHIANG REGION OR THE NORTH RIVER REGION

The Peichiang Region consisted of eleven hsien north of Canton. Eight of the eleven counties bordered on either Hunan or Kiangsi Province, and the region in total comprised most of the North River's watershed. Located in this strategic area, and in the path of the Northern Expedition of 1926-27, peasant unions were organized in the region, but were mainly established in Ch'uchiang hsien. Most of the region was rugged and hilly, which meant that most of the farming in the area was concentrated in the valley bottoms or was on terraced hillsides. On this land, which could be irrigated by the numerous streams and waterfalls in the area, much of Kwangtung's tobacco was grown. In alternate years rice was grown on the same acreage, while dry crops and orchards were grown in other areas.³⁷

Transportation in most of the area was poor. The North River was not as large as the West River and was less navigable. Although there was a sizeable overland trade with Kiangsi and Hunan, there were no motor vehicle roads in the region, and goods were transported by shoulder pole. The Canton-Hankow Railway, which would have greatly expedited trade and transportation, only reached from Canton as far as the county seat of Ch'uchiang and was not extended any farther during the 1920's. The railroad's efficiency was also damaged by poor maintenance and the frequent military strife that threatened the North River Region as a whole.³⁸

In general, the area was the most remote part of the province, and with the exception of the area through which the railroad passed,

the least effected by commercialization or urbanization. There were still good sized communities of aboriginal people located in the region during the 1920's, who did not trust the Chinese and refused to allow them into their fortified villages. The Chinese residents were Hakka, and as late as 1867, the only non-Hakka Chinese in the eleven counties were government officials or Cantonese merchants who dominated the North River trade throughout the 1920's. The Hakka themselves, the vast majority of the population during the 1920's, lived in clan houses and not in villages. This tends to indicate clan affiliations were a powerful force in the region.³⁹

Banditry was widespread in the region. Many bands that operated in the vicinity had more than 500 men in their organizations. They were well organized and good fighters. Their depredations furthered the economic stagnation along the North River. In 1911 for instance, there had been forty factories in the region that had produced paper by traditional methods. By 1927 only four of these paper factories had not folded due to the extortion of the bandits.⁴⁰

Although information is sketchy, it appears that tenancy was prevalent throughout the area. Perhaps 75% of the peasants were tenants or landless agricultural laborers.⁴¹ Even in bad years the tenant was not allowed to default on even part of his rent. If the tenant did fail in his payments, he would lose the deposit that he had paid to the landlord at the time the land was contracted. In Ch'uchiang hsien this deposit was from 5 to 10 yuan per mou, and in other counties the deposit was as high as 20 yuan per mou. Since even in the agriculturally rich Chunglu Region a landless laborer only earned about 15 yuan

per year, deposits of the above nature can be seen to be quite large in terms of probable farm income. When the tenant paid the landlord he usually delivered the grain to the landlord's home. The landlord measured the grain, and his measuring tou was usually several per cent larger than the standard measure. In general, the tenant had few rights and the landlord was clearly in the dominant position. The landlord could take the land back before the contractual period was up if he claimed he was going to till the land himself. Furthermore, the police were controlled by the landlords and gentry, and if a peasant failed to pay his rent, he could be arrested and held by the police.⁴²

THE CHUNGLU REGION

The Chunglu Region was composed of sixteen hsien and the municipality of Canton itself. This region saw extensive peasant union activities during the 1920's. Although basically coterminous with the Canton delta, the region also includes several counties north of the delta proper. The delta itself had been created from the alluvial deposits of the Pearl, West, North, and East Rivers. It covered an area of approximately 3,100 square miles. The area contained 10,000,000 flat mou, the drainage was poor, and the area depended upon dykes to avoid being flooded during high water periods. The soil ranged from a rich loam to a sandy soil which became the dominant type of soil near the ocean. Agriculturally rich, the delta chiefly produced rice, mulberry leaves, silk, fruit, and vegetables. Most of Kwangtung's silk

industry was situated in a sixty square mile area of the delta. This silk center consisted of part of Chungshan hsien and all of Shunte hsien. Shunte was almost entirely devoted to sericulture, and although the other hsien in the region produced silk, none could approach Shunte's production. Somewhere near 10,000,000 people lived on the delta. It stretched from a little north of Canton south to the sea, and reached from Sanshui hsien in the west, to Tungkuan hsien in the east.⁴³

The local population consisted almost entirely of Cantonese. There were, however, some Hakka and a small group of people, perhaps 100,000, who were distinct from the Cantonese populace. These were the Tanka or "boat people." They lived on boats and earned their living by ferrying goods and people in these same boats. Socially they were the lowest class, considered even beneath the ricksha coolies. They were frequently in debt to Cantonese moneylenders, and most of them lived in abject poverty.⁴⁴

Communications and transportation in the region were the best in the entire province. Three rail lines traversed the area, and the rivers themselves combined with a maze of canals offered extensive water transportation. The influence of Canton and the two colonies of Hong Kong and Macao had also extended to areas outside of communications and transportation. Canton had long been an important trade and administrative area. Traditional industries such as pottery had existed for many years to supply the city's demands. In the 1920's, however, modern industries which had begun to develop under the Ch'ing expanded and new industries were introduced. Along with the development of industry

came the growth of modern trade unions. Trade remained immense, and the impact of industry, trade, and contact with Western nations led to increasing technological innovation throughout the entire area. The use of chemical fertilizers imported from Japan and Germany expanded dramatically during the 1920's, and steam filatures, particularly in Shunte hsien, which increased both in numbers and in output are two excellent examples of this process.

Such widespread economic changes also had their effect on the area's social structure. Women became increasingly involved in all aspects of the economy. Many women chose not to marry, and married women that were employed had much greater economic independence. A powerful women's emancipation movement developed. The social structure of the delta was also altered by the flow of emigrants out of the area. The number of Cantonese in British Malaya increased by perhaps 25% between 1921 and 1931.⁴⁵

Despite modern transportation, urbanization, and specialized export agriculture, the area still remained largely agricultural. In general, most of the land was planted in rice, and most of the area's industry, especially the industry located outside of Canton itself, was directly tied to agriculture.⁴⁶

The land itself was predominantly owned by landlords, and tenancy was higher in the Chunglu Region than anywhere else in Kwangtung. In Chungshan hsien probably 70% to 90% of the peasants were tenants, and such figures were common for Panyu, Hsinhui, T'aishan, Shunte, and Hua hsien. The largest of the land holdings, some larger than 100,000

mou, were held by clans. This clan land was administered by clan temples which contracted the land out. Control of these temples and the land under their administration rested in the hands of local gentry. These gentry were very powerful and had their positions in the temple administration made semi-official through appointments granted by either the hsien or the provincial magistrate.⁴⁷

Although all such clan land was leased, several different methods were employed. In some instances clan members would gather in the ancestral hall and bid for the various parcels of land. The rents arrived at in this fashion seem to have been more equitable than the rents demanded by subcontractors. Subcontractors leased land directly from the clan temples or from private owners and then leased the land to tenants. The subcontractors were often powerful gentry or merchants, and frequently organized into trusts or syndicates. These syndicates often walled in the land they leased, hired min t'uan to protect it, destroyed the boundary markers and quit paying rent to the original owner even though the owner had to continue to pay the land tax. These syndicates also monopolized the sale to cultivators of tools, draft animals, and fertilizer. Their power over the tenant was extensive, as they could deprive him of his livelihood, and the syndicate's political and military power in the local area was also extensive.⁴⁸

Rents varied according to the crop and the productivity and location of the land. Fruit orchards demanded the highest rent at perhaps 60 or 70 yuan per mou. Fruit orchards were so expensive to operate that tenants would not contract them for the entire year.

Rather, when the trees blossomed, they would bid for the orchard. Mulberry orchards required the next highest rent at about 20 to 30 yuan per mou. Land on which rice and vegetables were raised rented for perhaps four or five yuan per mou.⁴⁹

Taxes, however, were not levied in the same manner. Hilly land received the heaviest taxation, with dry fields next, and sha t'ien or sandy fields, which were low-lying areas of the most recent alluvial deposits, were taxed the least. Although the sha t'ien was often the richest soil, it was also the most liable to suffer during the annual floods that struck the region. For this reason it was taxed less than other areas less threatened by flood. The national land tax was completely the landlord's responsibility, and the additional tax on sha t'ien was split between landlord and tenant, the landlord paying 80% and the tenant 20%. The fact that the landlord paid the land tax proved to be of little advantage to the actual farming tenant, because the subcontractor who leased the land from the temples or private owners and rented the land out again absorbed most of the profit.⁵⁰

Although the large clan temples and syndicates wielded a great amount of power, the position of smaller landlords in the area was often quite weak. For instance, because banditry was so extensive in the region as a whole, the smaller landlords often feared to go to the villages to collect their rents.⁵¹

Banditry in the entire Chunglu Region was more extensive than in any other region of Kwangtung. In the delta proper the largest band had about 4,500 men and was reported to have been armed with 1,200

mauser rifles, 350 pistols, 120 muskets, 56 revolvers, and several machine guns. This band also had a factory that produced 5,000 rounds of ammunition per day. There were also twenty-five other bands with 100 to 3,000 men each, and they were armed with modern weapons. North of Canton there were eleven bands with more than 500 men each. Along the coast east of Hong Kong it was reported that there were 50,000 pirates who had extensive spy networks, were armed with modern weapons including machine guns, and attacked large steamers.⁵²

Besides the prevalence of bandits, the general political and economic stability of the region was further threatened by warring militarists. Canton was a rich plum, and warlords from within the province and from neighboring provinces struggled to capture the city and the surrounding area. Excessive miscellaneous taxes imposed by these warlords were a great burden on the local populace.⁵³

In response to the unsettled conditions the local elite established min t'uan and the great wealth at their disposal allowed them to arm the min t'uan with the most modern weapons. Although established in the name of preserving public peace and order, the min t'uan were actually created to protect the elite's landed interests, and they were the most powerful min t'uan in all Kwangtung.⁵⁴

The villages themselves were centered around clan halls, markets, and temples. Secret societies existed, but the clans controlled the public organizations and institutions in the villages. Members of the clan council were the village administrative officers, and mass meetings were held in the clan hall. Disputes within the village that could not

be settled between the two parties were settled by the clan council. Disputes outside the village with neighboring villages were frequent. These conflicts were usually over water rights or trade routes, but they were sometimes over burial grounds. The local self-defense forces raised to fight bandits were used in this inter-village warfare. The local min t'uan also screened people entering the village, and drove "bad members" out of the community.⁵⁵

In the villages popular cult or folk religious temples were used for religious purposes only by the women. Local temples of this kind served mainly to house the local money-lender as there were no banks in the villages. There were, however, pawnshops in the villages. Perhaps more than 80% of the populace borrowed money from these village usurers each year. For a short term loan the rate of interest was often 25% per month if one pledged his house or land. If the borrower had no land to pledge, the rate of interest frequently was raised to 40% to 100% per month. In addition unemployment among agricultural laborers was high and their average annual wage was \$14.40. Most of the people in a village were illiterate, and schools were traditional in both attitude and materials taught. Health conditions were poor, as is revealed by the fact that infant mortality was conservatively estimated at 40%.⁵⁶

The influence of Christianity is hard to determine, but the region had been exposed to Christian missionaries longer than any other part of Kwangtung. There were Christian hospitals and Christian schools in the area, in particular in Canton, that were the center of missionary

efforts. A sizeable Chinese Christian community also existed in the region.

THE HUICHOU REGION

The Huichou Region consisted of eight hsien. Located near Haifeng hsien, the birthplace of the peasant movement, this region early on felt the influence of peasant organization. These counties encompassed the East River's watershed upstream from where the river flowed into the Canton delta. Most of the region was remote and isolated from the commercial centers of Kwangtung with the exception of the area in the vicinity of Huichou city. Communications were poor, and only between Huichou and Canton was there a road fit for the use of motor vehicles. In the rest of the region goods were carried over foot paths by shoulder pole.⁵⁷

Most of the arable land in the region was classified as dry field, and sweet potatoes along with such grains as barley and millet were the chief crops. Where enough water was available wet rice was grown. In the vicinity of Huichou city for instance, two crops of rice were raised each year. There were also a few mulberry plantations near the river in Polo and Huiyang hsien, and a small amount of tobacco was raised along the river. The area's only large money crop, however, was sugar cane, and it was concentrated in the area surrounding Huichou city. When the cane was harvested it was processed in mills located nearby. These mills were primitive crushing and boiling operations that

required only a \$1,000 capital investment to initiate, but by 1931, due to foreign competition, an industry which had once helped make Kwangtung self-sufficient in sugar was severely reduced. Salt was also produced in a number of coastal sites in Huiyang hsien.⁵⁸

The city of Huichou, as indicated by the information above, was the economic center of the region. It was also situated in a position where it dominated overland transportation and communication routes between Canton and eastern Kwangtung all the way to Swatow. It had been of strategic significance since the Sung dynasty, and during the 1920's was the scene of successive military engagements. As an economic and communication center, and a place of military importance, the city had been the capital of a Ch'ing prefecture which had governed a large portion of eastern Kwangtung. This had naturally attracted well-to-do and aspiring gentry, and by the 1920's many landlords and merchants were concentrated in the city.⁵⁹

The people in the Huichou Region were predominantly Hakka. The rural population in Tzuchin, Lienp'ing, Hop'ing, and Lungch'uan hsien had been entirely Hakka in the late nineteenth century. Huiyang hsien in the 1920's was about half Cantonese and half Hakka. Roughly speaking, the area of the hsien located upstream from Huichou city was predominantly Hakka, while the Cantonese lived in the area downstream from the city. There were also heavy concentrations of Hakka across the river from Huiyang in Polo hsien.⁶⁰

Family and clan groupings were very powerful throughout the region. In Lienp'ing hsien people having the family names of Yen and

Hsieh numbered 160,000 people and controlled an area of more than 200 square li. In Huiyang half of all the villages had only one surname per village. Clan-held land often comprised more than half of the arable land in an area. One result of such strong clan groupings, and of the close proximity of Hakka and Cantonese villages in the case of Huiyang, was the development of bitter enmity between villages which at times burst into open warfare.⁶¹

Secret societies, bandits, and smugglers permeated the region, and added to the area's instability. These groups frequently controlled vast sums of money. Salt smuggling is an excellent example of one such lucrative but illegal source of revenue. One shipment of smuggled salt that was seized in Canton during 1922, was valued at over \$2,000,000. The bandits and smugglers that operated in the Huichou Region also appear to have been linked to the local elite, as the min t'uan who were gentry controlled, were also often staffed by ex-bandits.⁶²

The peasants of the region were usually tenants or owned part of the land they farmed and rented the rest. Perhaps 50% of the peasants were tenants, 30% were part owners and part tenants, and 20% owned and farmed their own land. The average holding appears to have been quite small, as low as two mou per family in part of Huiyang hsien. Rents were usually predetermined and paid in kind, but equal division of the crop at harvest time was also a common system. If the tenant did not pay the rent, he could be seized by the local police and his personal property confiscated.⁶³

THE CH'AOMEI-HAILUFENG REGION

The Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region consisted of seventeen hsien in eastern Kwangtung. Birthplace of the peasant movement, the area also saw the development of the most powerful and militant unions in Kwangtung. The region bordered on Kiangsi and Fukien in the north and east, and bordered on the ocean to the south. Most of the area was drained by the Han River and its farming was predominantly dry field agriculture, producing millet, corn, barley, and sweet potatoes. Near the mouth of the Han River in the Swatow-Ch'aochou area the land became a plain, and sugar cane, rice, and mandarin oranges were raised there.⁶⁴

In the Swatow-Ch'aochou area and along the coast, a Fukienese dialect was spoken. Inland, the region was almost entirely Hakka. P'ingyuan, Chiaoling, Tapu, Hsingning, Wuhua, and Mei hsien were solidly Hakka, while hsien like Haifeng and Lufeng had substantial numbers of Hakka living in them.⁶⁵

Communications and transportation for the region as a whole were poor. Although a railway, begun in 1903, ran between Swatow and Ch'aochou, as late as 1922 there were only two miles of road fit for vehicles with four wheels in the entire region. Most river traffic was handled by junks, although there were a few modern tugs. For overland transportation even the wheel barrow was unknown, and goods were transported exclusively by shoulder pole.⁶⁶

The two principal commercial centers of the region, Swatow and Ch'aochou, influenced the whole Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region. Native and foreign industries located in these centers attracted workers from all

over the region, and goods both produced in and imported into the two cities found their way into the hinterland. In 1920 the import-export trade in Swatow reached 60,000,000 Haikuan taels (a Haikuan tael in 1920 was worth about \$1.24 in U.S. currency).⁶⁷ Salt that was produced by evaporation in four coastal locations near the two cities found its way inland, and cloth produced by over 30,000 women workers in these commercial centers was the basis for a prosperous local trade. Foreign imports, however, dramatically reduced this trade during the 1920's. Foreign competition also crippled what had once been a sizeable sugar industry in this area, and by 1931 the area under sugar cane cultivation had diminished to one tenth of the area cultivated in 1911.⁶⁸

The impact of Christian missionaries was first felt in these commercial centers when British Presbyterians arrived in Swatow in 1863. The missionaries became influential in the development of schools, and in particular in educating Chinese girls. Before 1911 two of the four schools in Swatow were run by missionaries. The missionaries did not confine their efforts to Swatow, however, and spread throughout the entire region. Catholic priests entered the area as well. Perhaps over one per cent of the Haifeng and Lufeng residents were Christians by the 1920's, and entire villages of several thousand people had on occasion been converted to Christianity in the Swatow area.⁶⁹

It was also from the port of Swatow that Chinese from the entire Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region emigrated overseas or went to Hong Kong and Canton to work. In 1934 over 4,000,000 Chinese were living overseas. The majority were from the Mei hsien area, Ch'aochou, Swatow, or the

south coast of Fukien. Many emigrants had left the Swatow area because a typhoon and tidal wave struck the area in August 1922 and killed thousands of people and destroyed the crops and homes of thousands more. In a mid-1930's survey of Chinese emigrants overseas, however, only 3.43% of those interviewed claimed to have emigrated due to natural catastrophe. The majority, 70% stated they emigrated due to economic pressures such as unemployment or inability to maintain their families. Many of those who left the region, however, did not go overseas. Many men from Ch'aochou, Swatow, Haifeng, and Lufeng went to Canton to work as ricksha coolies or to Hong Kong to work as coolies on the docks.⁷⁰

Emigration from the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region was a major factor in shaping local conditions. It reduced population pressure on the land, and it brought much-needed revenue into the area. Most Chinese that emigrated were males, and they sent part of the wages they earned overseas back to their families. In turn, their families and communities relied on these remittances for survival. A family that had members overseas derived perhaps 75% to 85% of its monthly income from such remittances. The economic benefits a family derived from overseas remittances, however, led to changes in family structure as well. For instance, a father whose son sent money home would be less likely to censure his son for fear of alienating the son and thus bringing an end to the money sent home. The family structure was further altered by the fact that the son often returned from overseas, married a local woman, and then returned overseas leaving his wife behind. Foreign contact also began to change sexual attitudes and further altered

patriarchal power, particularly in the instances when the younger generation received a western-style education. Nationalism, too, was widespread and strong among emigrant Chinese, and this nationalism along with changes in the status of women began to permeate the entire region.⁷¹

Even as the society underwent this transformation, it remained predominantly agricultural, and due to political instability and an increase in both the number of taxes and in the amount of revenue demanded, the condition of the peasants deteriorated. In Haifeng hsien there were miscellaneous taxes imposed on cattle, hogs, and on produce sold in the markets. The taxes were sizeable, as is illustrated by the fact that in P'uning hsien the cattle tax alone brought in more than 10,000 yuan in revenue per year. Partially as a result of the various miscellaneous taxes the number of landed farmers decreased and the number of tenants increased.⁷²

Tenancy itself was prevalent. In communities that had remained self-sufficient and had not seen a sizeable number of their young men emigrate, about 40% of the peasants were tenants. In communities that had seen emigration, tenancy was perhaps as high as 90% of the peasants. For 50% to 60% of the peasants in a village to have been tenants was probably not an uncommon occurrence.⁷³

The system of tenancy varied from hsien to hsien, and even varied within a given hsien. Most commonly, however, rent was paid in grain, and the season's crop was divided evenly between the landlord and the tenant. This system was dominant in Ch'aoan, Lufeng, and Tapu hsien. In other hsien like P'uning and Chiehyang rent was paid

in grain, but was a predetermined amount that did not vary according to the year's yield. In such cases the grain was measured by the landlord, and his unit of measure was chronically oversized. In Mei hsien and in neighboring hsien, clan land that was established to commemorate a deceased ancestor rented to tenants for as low as 30% of the season's crop, but a rent of 50% of the crop was more common.⁷⁴

The local police and min t'uan were entirely under the control of local landlords, and if a tenant either could not pay his rent or refused to pay it, the landlord could order the tenant's arrest. The tenant would then be forced to pay the police travel and food expenses, and his possessions could be auctioned off and his home sealed so that he could not return. The min t'uan forces that were employed by the landlords and were used to control the peasants were especially numerous in Ch'aoyang, P'uning, and Chiehyang. There were relatively few min t'uan in Haifeng and Lufeng. Besides the min t'uan the landlords were also closely attached to the local officials and the armed forces in the area.⁷⁵

Traditional clan structure still existed throughout the Ch'ao-meい-Hailufeng Region, and the clans were very powerful. Frequently 40% of the arable land in an area was owned by clans. The Mei hsien area was particularly noted for strong clan affiliations, and in P'uning members of the Fang clan were the major landlords in the hsien and dominated the area around the county seat. The various clans were under the control of traditional leadership, and armed conflict between clans was a means of venting the frustrations of tenants. This clan warfare

sometimes took place between Hakka and Cantonese, or between Red Flag and Black Flag secret societies as in Haifeng, or between Red Flag and White Flag secret societies as in Ch'aoan.⁷⁶

In addition to the clan feuds and secret society warfare, banditry also posed a threat to local order. In some instances the local officials cooperated with the bandits, and an extreme case of this was the county magistrate for Nanao Island who actually led the local pirates. Every junk that passed the island was forced to pay a toll. Bandits were also quite numerous in the country upcountry from Swatow, while there were relatively few bandits in Haifeng or Lufeng.⁷⁷

SUMMARY

Kwangtung Province's communications and transportation systems at the outset of the 1920's were primitive. Few roads suitable for motor vehicles had been constructed. Railways served limited areas, even in the Chunglu Region where they were concentrated. As a result most goods had to be transported over footpaths by shoulder pole. Even in the Chunglu Region, which had the best transportation facilities in the province, it took perhaps seven hours to reach Canton by boat from the silk centers of Shunte and Chungshan hsien. Banditry prevailed throughout Kwangtung and further impeded the flow of goods and people.

Between 30,000,000 and 40,000,000 people lived in Kwangtung in 1920, and the majority made their living through agriculture. Population pressure on cultivated land was great, and probably was most

extreme in the Chunglu Region which encompassed the Canton delta. About 10,000,000 people, or one quarter to one third of the province's inhabitants, lived on the delta. The delta, however, was also agriculturally the richest and most productive region in the province. It could support a dense population more readily than agriculturally poorer regions of the province. These poorer regions generally did not have as concentrated a population as the delta. Either their inhabitants had emigrated overseas, as in the case of the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region, or the area had not been extensively settled, as was the case on the Leichou Peninsula in the Nanlu Region and on Hainan Island. Basically, only the Hsichiang Region suffered both extreme population pressure and agricultural land of relatively poor productivity.

The arable land in the province was predominantly owned by landlords and leased to tenants. Landlords were either private individuals or representatives for a "syndicate" or a clan. Tenancy ran as high as 90% in some areas of the delta, and was commonly as high as 60% in other regions of the province. Only on Hainan Island did a majority of the peasants own and farm their own land.

Although tenancy was widespread throughout Kwangtung, the conditions of tenancy varied from region to region and even within the regions. These conditions seem to have been more important in determining the peasants' condition than the actual fact of tenancy itself. Rents were usually paid in kind and commonly were 50% of the year's harvest, except in the Hsichiang Region where the norm was 60%. In the Chunglu Region rents frequently were paid in cash. In general

landlord-tenant relations favored the landlord, and tenants could be beaten and generally abused by their landlords. The Hsichiang Region saw the worst of such abuses, but they were common if not as prevalent in the rest of the province. It seems the Chunglu Region had the most varied conditions for its tenants. In some instances the rents and terms of tenancy appear to have been quite fair to the tenants. But in other instances, as when the tenant leased land from a subcontractor, the tenant could be exploited as cruelly as in any other region of the province.

Perhaps even more significant than the issue of tenancy to the condition of the peasants was the political instability of Kwangtung and its economic implications. Besides the physical destruction caused by competing warlord factions and by the depredations of widespread banditry, there was the plague of "miscellaneous" taxes which were levied on the peasants. These taxes were supposed to pay for the soaring military expenditures and ensure the security of the local area by bolstering the local self-defense forces. Controlled by the local elite, these forces were used both to assure the landlords their rents and as a pretext for gathering even more revenue.

On top of the province's political instability, foreign contact had created further stresses in Kwangtung. The center of population and agricultural wealth, the Chunglu Region, also had had the longest contact with western powers, and was more highly commercialized and technologically advanced than any other region in Kwangtung. Perhaps only the Swatow basin in the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region had been comparably

influenced by foreign contact. These influences were not as pervasive elsewhere, but even so affected even the remotest areas of Kwangtung. The most important influences were overseas emigration, Christian missionaries, importation of western goods, development of women's rights organizations, changes in patriarchal power and in the family system in general, and the development of foreign and native industries within the province. The regions least affected probably were the Peichiang and Hsichiang Regions; most affected, the Chunglu Region and the Swatow area of the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region. In the middle were the more remote areas of the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region, Huichou Region, Hainan Island, and the Nanlu Region.

The amount of wealth in a region also shaped the local social conditions. In the Chunglu Region control of vast sources of revenue generated the most powerful gentry, merchants, clans, and bandits in the entire province. Population density intensified competition for the region's wealth, causing clans in the Chunglu Region to be more cohesive. Yet powerful clans, gentry, and bandits were not limited to regions of great wealth like the Chunglu Region. In regions like Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng the linguistic differences of Hakka and Cantonese flared into open warfare. This armed conflict gave the clans cohesion, and they held significant power in their respective regions. They did not have the wealth of the delta to support their organizations, however, and so were weaker than the clans in the Chunglu Region. In the Hsichiang Region the local gentry had bolstered local min t'uan and become very powerful. The competition of powerful secret society-bandit forces for

the limited wealth of the region gave the local elite cohesion, and they armed themselves to protect their interests.

Thus, powerful clans, gentry, and min t'uan developed because elements in the local communities felt threatened and competed for control of the region's resources. The more wealth an area had the more powerful the local forces would be. The reverse is true as well. For instance, in areas of the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region where bandits were weak, the area economically poor, and competition for resources was markedly less intense than in other regions because population pressure had been relieved by overseas emigration, the local self defense forces were the weakest in all Kwangtung.

Bandits existed everywhere in Kwangtung. They had achieved the greatest power in the Chunglu Region through control of some of the region's great wealth. They were, however, also powerful in the Nanlu and Hsichiang Regions, controlling the opium traffic between Kwangtung and Yunnan. The Peichiang Region also had numerous bandits. Hainan Island and the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region probably had the weakest bandits in the province, although they did persist to some degree in both areas.

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT OF THE KWANTUNG PEASANT MOVEMENT

1922-1928

FROM THE OUTSET OF THE PEASANT MOVEMENT IN 1922 TO THE KUOMINTANG REORGANIZATION OF 1924

In the first months of 1920 Kwangtung was ruled by a clique of Kwangsi and Yunnan warlords. The native population bitterly resented their rule because the warlords levied severe taxes, used only to pay the warlord troops and to enrich the warlords. The province was bled white by the warlords' taxes and levies, and opium and gambling were legal monopolies to be milked for revenue. In addition these same warlords mortgaged such assets as the provincial mint and the provincially owned cement works to foreign interests. These mortgages burdened the province with a debt of \$50,000,000.¹

Ch'en Chiung-ming, a native of Haifeng hsien which is located in the eastern coastal region of Kwangtung, launched an attack in August 1920 against the clique of Kwangsi militarists. Ch'en had been involved in the political intrigues of Kwangtung even prior to the 1911 Revolution. Ch'en had been driven from Kwangtung by rival warlords on several occasions, and in 1920 he was in command of the Kwangtung Army and had developed a power base along Kwangtung's eastern border in southern

Fukien. It was from this base that he launched his August offensive. Encouraged by Sun Yat-sen and the Kuomintang, and aided by local opposition to the Kwangsi troops, Ch'en captured Swatow in August, Huichou in September, and entered Canton in October. In gratitude for the victory Sun appointed Ch'en governor of the province and commander-in-chief of the army. Sun returned to Canton in December.²

Conflict between Ch'en and Sun broke out almost immediately. Sun planned to establish a national government in Canton and to use Kwangtung as a base from which he could launch a drive to unify all China. Ch'en opposed the formation of a national government in Canton, and he argued against any further wars for national unification. Although protecting his own interests, Ch'en was also interested in carrying out limited reforms. He outlawed gambling and opium, and at least some of his opposition to Sun's plans for a northern expedition to unite China was based on the need for economic recovery in Kwangtung. Despite Ch'en's opposition, Sun formed his new government in Canton in May of 1921.³

An open break between Sun and Ch'en did not occur at once, however, because in June forces from Kwangsi invaded Kwangtung. Ch'en counterattacked, and by September all of Kwangsi was under the control of the Canton Government. The expenses of this latest military campaign, however, had increased the economic strain on Kwangtung. Therefore, when Sun announced in October that he planned a northern expedition, Ch'en came out against it and began secretly to collaborate with the northern warlord Wu P'ei-fu. By April of 1922 Sun's northern expedition

still had not got underway because Ch'en refused to send military and economic aid from Canton to Sun in the north. As a result Sun forced Ch'en to resign all his political and military offices. Ch'en retired to Huichou, taking troops, funds, and munitions with him. As soon as Sun launched his campaign and committed his troops to the invasion of Kiangsi, Ch'en occupied the city of Canton. Sun was forced to call off his attack, return, and drive Ch'en from Canton. Sun's troops failed in this attempt, and in August Sun fled to Shanghai. This situation did not last long, because in December of 1922 and January of 1923 several warlords from Kwangsi and Yunnan allied with Sun and drove Ch'en out of Canton. Fighting raged throughout 1923, but by October 1923 the situation had stabilized. Sun and the mercenaries siding with him controlled Canton, the delta, and the West and North Rivers. Ch'en and his supporters controlled Kwangtung east of Huichou, and they had also gained control of Hainan Island and the Nanlu Region. This division of the province between the Canton Government and Ch'en lasted until 1925.⁴

It was in this environment that the peasant movement first developed. The birthplace of the movement was Haifeng hsien, and the peasants were organized in this area by a group of youthful intellectuals who were led by a returned student from Japan named P'eng P'ai.

P'eng P'ai was born October 22, 1896, and came from a wealthy landlord family. Ch'en Chiung-ming encouraged P'eng to study abroad, and he attended Waseda University in Tokyo from September 1918 until his graduation in July 1921. Waseda University during these years

developed socialist groups which were chiefly concerned with agrarian reform and organization. P'eng P'si was deeply influenced by the Japanese attempts at organizing cooperatives and unions among the peasants, and he became a socialist. Like his fellow Chinese students, P'eng was also caught up in the events of May 1919. He was injured in Tokyo on May 7 in a demonstration protesting the rejection of Chinese demands concerning Shantung at the Versailles Peace Conference. After his graduation in 1921 he returned to Haifeng hsien. It was probably while he was in Shanghai on his return journey to Kwangtung that he joined the infant Chinese Community Party.⁵

P'eng P'ai returned to the area of Haifeng in July or August of 1921, and on October 1, 1921 Ch'en Chiung-ming appointed him superintendent of the Haifeng school system. Ch'en had previously established several schools in the city of Haifeng in a mild attempt at social reform which also witnessed the city walls being torn down and the streets widened. P'eng P'ai immediately set out to win the support of the students and young intellectuals of the area. Many of the young people had already been deeply influenced by the May 4 Movement, and with his experience abroad and his up-to-date ideas, P'eng P'ai was able to capture the imagination of many young radicals. He founded the Association for Studying Socialism and at the same time appointed his followers to teaching positions.⁶ His techniques for radicalizing Haifeng student youth were particularly effective, and on May 1, 1922 he organized a May Day parade. As he later wrote:⁷

I assembled all the students and many boys and girls of wealthy families at the town of Haifeng, and organized a

parade on May First. This had never taken place in the history of Haifeng. With no workers and no peasants, the parade marched along the town streets: the students of the First Higher Primary School put up a red flag on which the word "Bolshevization" was written. How primitive!

The upshot of the May First parade was that the local gentry pressed Ch'en to oust P'eng P'ai from his educational post. Ch'en dismissed P'eng, who formally resigned on May 9.

After he resigned his position P'eng P'ai began to hike out to the county's villages in the attempt to organize the peasants. Peasant grievances were many. Haifeng, like most of Kwangtung, had suffered years of warlord depredations, and the peasants' position had deteriorated. Exorbitant miscellaneous taxes reduced many landed peasants to tenancy. Seemingly numberless "officials," Ch'en Chiung-ming's relatives and camp followers, exploited the peasants with impunity in Haifeng. As a result, respect for the social position of landlords and officials declined, and the bitterness and discontent of the peasants deepened. The peasant's frustrations were vented in bitter clan feuds, which obscured the issue of tenant-landlord relations. Because the peasants had not organized in opposition to the landlords, and banditry was less of a problem in Haifeng than in most other counties in Kwangtung, there were fewer police and min t'uan in Haifeng than in any of its neighboring hsien. These were the conditions P'eng P'ai encountered when he first began to organize in the villages.⁸

P'eng P'ai and many of the young radicals he mobilized went into the villages, spoke with the peasants, gave public speeches, and generally through verbal techniques tried to convince the peasants to

form unions. These intellectuals argued that the peasants should organize to improve their own welfare. Unions were slow to develop at first, but soon they began to grow and spread. By September of 1922 a peasant union in Chih shan-yueh village had over five hundred members, and the Haifeng hsien Peasant Union was established January 1, 1923. By the end of 1923 the peasant movement had established itself not only in Haifeng hsien, but had also begun to organize in Lufeng, Wuhua, Huiyang, Huilai, Tzuchin, and P'uning hsien.⁹ All of these hsien were within Ch'en Chiung-ming's area of control. In May of 1923 these hsien formed the Provincial Peasant Union of Kwangtung Province. Records for 1923 state that Haifeng had a peasant union membership of 12,000; Lufeng 7,000; Huiyang 4,000; Tzuchin 3,000; P'uning 500; and Huilai 300. A total of 26,800 members was listed, but since the average family size was estimated at five, it was thought peasant union supporters numbered somewhere around 130,000 people.¹⁰ The total population in the six hsien at this time was perhaps 3,000,000.¹¹

The first aim of the peasant organizers was the creation of a political organization, the union. Then peasant schools were formed, and attempts to improve farming techniques and begin reforestation were initiated. Moreover, instead of taking judicial cases to the magistrate the union arbitrated. Medical mutual aid societies were also organized. Thus political organization and improvement of local conditions augmented each other. At the same time the unions were careful not to anger the landlords by revealing their longer term goal of rent reduction, and slogans proposing rent reduction and the elimination of miscellaneous taxes were used only among union members.

Although the unions were not armed and so not strong enough openly to demand rent reduction, they still were quite powerful. This can be seen by the fact that through persuasion and indoctrination in class analysis they were able to convince the peasants it was in their interest to bring an end to the Red and Black Flag feuds. The unions in Haifeng also wrested control of the markets from the "gentry, local bullies, or temple curates" who controlled them. Marketing fees that amounted to as much as three or four thousand yuan per year were collected in these places. The unions first negotiated with those in control of the market to reduce the fees, and when this failed they boycotted the given market. In this manner they manipulated the markets and eventually seized control of them.¹²

As Eto Shinkichi writes:¹³

Such a remarkable development of the peasant movement must have caused strong feelings of uneasiness among the gentry and local officials. They hesitated, however, to suppress the union because the peasants had been careful to avoid conflicts with landlords, and because there were many students and teachers with high social prestige locally among the leaders of the peasant movement. If such a movement had been organized by the peasants themselves, their landlord would have suppressed it ruthlessly at the very beginning. In addition, the hsien authorities would have instructed the police to arrest the leaders before the movement grew to such a size that the relatively weak police organization could not arrest them. Regardless, however, it would have been difficult to arrest the foreign-educated P'eng P'ai, who was the son of a major landlord. It would also have been difficult to arrest the other teachers and students, most of whom came from the upper or middle classes.

This was the situation in the summer of 1923 when a severe typhoon struck Haifeng hsien. The hsien peasant union, due to the

typhoon's destruction of crops, pressed for a seventy per cent rent reduction for the season. The response of the local landlords and their officials was drastic. They set out to crush the peasant union, and on August 15 attempted to break up a general meeting of the hsien union in Haifeng City. The opposite result was achieved, however, when the union members managed to rout the local police. The local magistrate then called for reinforcements from nearby troops. The following day these troops, the police, and the landlords' min t'uan forces launched a surprise attack on the peasant union headquarters. Twenty-five union leaders were arrested and the union meeting broken up.¹⁴

P'eng P'ai set out to petition Ch'en Chiung-ming to have all the union members released, to have the rent reduction carried out, and to allow the union to reestablish itself. Ch'en was in the region west of Haifeng preparing an attack on Canton. For this reason, and also because of his reformist leanings he did not reject P'eng's petition as soon as he received it. Instead he postponed making a decision and urged that P'eng join his staff. Due to P'eng's apparent closeness to Ch'en the Haifeng officials were intimidated and released all twenty-five unionists. P'eng did not join Ch'en's staff, and so missed the November 1923 campaign in which Ch'en reached the very outskirts of Canton before being driven back upon Huichou by Sun Yat-sen's forces. Thus, at the end of 1923 the peasant union, despite the setback in August, seemed to have achieved a victory in the release of its union leadership. This victory and the early and rapid growth of the peasant movement still left the unions in quite a precarious position. The

unions could survive only as long as Ch'en Chiung-ming did not order their suppression.¹⁵

FROM THE 1924 KUOMINTANG REORGANIZATION UNTIL THE COMPLETION OF THE SECOND EASTERN EXPEDITION AND THE SOUTHERN EXPEDITION IN LATE 1925

In January of 1924 the Kuomintang held its First National Congress in Canton. The party was reorganized and began an alliance with the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party. The KMT also adopted a policy of organizing mass movements to gain support for their revolutionary actions. Commitment to this policy led to their involvement in the peasant movement. In February of 1924 the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang formally established the Peasant Bureau. During its first months the new Peasant Bureau researched the Kwangtung peasants' condition and drafted plans which shaped the structure of the Bureau and the methods by which peasant unions would be organized. To assist the Bureau the Peasant Movement Committee of the Kuomintang was founded in May of 1924. It consisted of both Kuomintang and Communist Party members, and probably was created to serve as a standing committee for the Bureau. In the summer of 1924, however, this committee disappeared with the establishment of the Chinese Communist Party's own separate Peasant Committee. This committee clandestinely took over the functions of the Kuomintang's Peasant Movement Committee.¹⁶ Although the Chinese Communist Peasant Committee consisted of only four members from 1924-1926 it clearly controlled the peasant movement in

Kwangtung. It ran the top of the organization through the Peasant Bureau, and it controlled units from the hsien level through the cell level by special assignees it deputed to the local level. The special assignees, nearly all members of the CCP, were responsible to and reported directly to the Chinese Communist Peasant Committee.¹⁷

Initially, however, little was done by the Peasant Bureau. Only in early September of 1924 was the Bureau's basic structure formally established. A Bureau Chief was to head the department and sign all documents. A Bureau Secretary was to assist the Chief, and to run the Bureau in his absence. The real power rested with the Secretary, because his position had fixed responsibilities that were far-reaching. The Secretary determined the work assignments of the Bureau's staff as well as supervising their work. He planned hsien level peasant union activities, prepared for new hsien unions, drafted all of the Bureau's correspondence, regulations, documents, and pamphlets, determined the Bureau's collection and dispersal of special funds, and prepared its budget. Under the Secretary were a staff of clerks and a separate group of organizers who carried out work in the rural areas, organized new unions, trained new workers in the Peasant Movement Training Institute that was created in June 1924, and carried out the lower level Peasant Bureau work in the field.¹⁸

Prior to the 1924 reorganization of the Kuomintang the peasant union organizers had concerned themselves only with organizing rural reform. After the 1924 reorganization, however, the organizers recognized that it was necessary for the peasants to be able to defend

themselves. They therefore began to create armed peasant self defense forces as well as organizing unions for the purpose of pursuing rural reform. The method by which the peasants were to be unionized was established in a June 1924 document drafted by the Kuomintang Peasant Movement Committee. It stipulated that a provisional hsien union was to be established when fifty people had been organized. Next, when three hsiang unions had been formed a ch'u union could be formed. When three ch'u unions had been formed a permanent hsien union would be created. Finally, once five permanent hsien unions were established a provincial union was to be inaugurated. This method of organization was followed until 1926.¹⁹

Lin Tsu-han, a Communist from Hunan Province, was chosen to be the first Head of the Peasant Bureau, and he selected P'eng P'ai to be the Bureau's Secretary. After petitioning Ch'en Chiung-ming for the release of the twenty-five union leaders, P'eng P'ai returned to Haifeng to reorganize the peasant union. In March 1924, however, Ch'en finally decided to crush the peasant movement because of its links with the Canton Government of his rival Sun Yat-sen. Leaving some of his comrades behind to organize an underground movement, P'eng P'ai fled to Canton where he became Secretary of the Peasant Bureau.²⁰

The Peasant Bureau was dominated by Communist Party members from the very start. The Communists' main problem therefore became one of influencing the Kuomintang and pursuing peasant organization without causing a reaction against their holding office or against the policies they implemented.²¹ In April 1924 Lin Tsu-han resigned

his post to avoid arousing the suspicions of right wing elements of the Kuomintang. He was followed as Bureau Chief by a succession of ineffectuals. P'eng P'ai, however, remained in office and ran the Bureau from his secretarial position. In fact P'eng P'ai had so entrenched himself that when Huang Chu-su, who was head of the Bureau in October 1924, attempted to have P'eng thrown out of office Huang himself was forced to resign.²²

In November of 1924 Lo Ch'i-yuan replaced P'eng P'ai as secretary, perhaps because P'eng had become too prominent as a result of the Huang Chu-su incident.²³ Lo had come from a wealthy landlord family in Huiyang hsien, but he was an ardent Communist, and P'eng had probably selected him as his replacement. In the Peasant Bureau Lo proved to be a thorough organizer, and while he was secretary the personnel of the Bureau increased twenty fold. He remained permanently in Canton so that lower level workers in the field got government support, while men like P'eng P'ai, Juan Hsiao-hsien, and T'an Chih-t'ang were left free to organize peasants throughout the province. Lo remained in office under a number of Bureau Chiefs, some more capable than others, until May 1926 when he was replaced by a non-Communist following the May 15, 1926 Kuomintang reorganization directive. Prior to May 15, however, despite the frequent change of Bureau Chiefs, the Secretary and the personnel of the Bureau remained solidly Communist.²⁴

When the Peasant Bureau was first created it had set out to investigate peasant conditions in the province and to propose a program for the development of peasant unions. The program that was eventually

put forth called for the development of a base for the peasant movement; twenty peasant union leaders to be sent to organize new hsien; the establishment of a Peasant Movement Training Institute, and for the Kuomintang Provincial Peasant Union to be inaugurated. The Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang passed these proposals on June 30, 1924, and the Bureau set to work to carry them out.²⁵

The Peasant Training Institute proved to be one of the most significant of the proposals. Six classes were graduated from the Institute in Kwangtung, and the Bureau put much of its effort into the Institute. Graduates of the Institute were supposed to return to their native hsien and become organizers of the peasant movement there. This was quite often the case as revealed by a cross check of the ch'u peasant union representatives from Huiyang hsien in 1925 and the names of graduates from the first two Peasant Institutes.²⁶ Many of the graduates, however, were kept in Canton to staff the growing Peasant Bureau bureaucracy. From the third Institute onwards, nearly one third of the graduates stayed and worked in Canton after their term at the Institute was completed. Communications between the rural peasant organizations and the Canton central headquarters depended on the Institute graduates, as did the rapid growth of the peasant movement itself in Kuomintang-controlled areas during the 1924-1925 period.²⁷

The Communists in the Peasant Bureau maintained strict control over the selection of both instructors and students in the Institute. From the first class nearly all the students were Communists. Communist Party members were accepted and Kuomintang Party members were rejected.

The questionnaires filled out by applicants asked such questions as what revolutionary struggles the applicant had participated in, what his present occupation was, and what his father's occupation was.²⁸

In its six sessions the Institute graduated about 800 students. The terms varied from two to five months long. The course of study in the Peasant Institute became more tightly organized and more Marxist with each successive class. In general, however, the course of study included military training at Whampoa, instruction in the Three People's Principles of Sun Yat-sen, Kuomintang history, imperialism and China's economic and political condition, but the major emphasis was placed on the Chinese peasantry and its role in the revolution.²⁹

The first session of the Peasant Institute opened July 3, 1924, with P'eng P'ai as its head. Thirty-eight students registered but only thirty-three graduated on August 24 at the close of the term. A list of the names of these graduates is provided in Chung-Kuo Nung-Min, but no further information about the students is recorded in this work.³⁰

The second session of the Peasant Institute was headed by Lo Ch'i-yuan and began August 21 and closed October 30, 1924. All 142 graduating students were from Kwangtung Province. Although information is available for the geographical origins and the occupations of the graduates, there is no breakdown for both region and occupation. Thirty per cent of the graduates were peasants, thirty per cent were students, ten per cent were professional organizers, twenty-two per cent were workers, and eight per cent were women with no listed occupations. The majority of those attending the second session were in their twenties,

and the entire graduating class returned to their native districts.³¹

In a further breakdown of the origin of these students one finds that almost half the total or about seventy, came from the Chunglu Region (refer to Tables III-VII in Appendix I for the geographical origins by region and hsien of Peasant Institute graduates). Nanhai and Shunte hsien had the lion's share of students with nearly twenty graduates a piece. The Chunglu Region was under the control of the KMT's Canton Government at this time, and as can be seen by the above figures the Peasant Bureau put a great deal of effort into this area. The tendency to recruit students for the Peasant Institute from areas that the Canton Government controlled, however, diminished as one session followed the next. Rather, students increasingly were recruited from geographical areas the Canton Government hoped to expand into.³²

The Ch'aomei-Hailufeng and Huichou Regions, the area which Ch'en Chiung-ming controlled and where he had suppressed the Haifeng peasant movement in March of 1924, sent fewer than fifteen students to the second session of the Peasant Institute. Five of these students were from Haifeng hsien, while the remainder were distributed among seven different hsien.

Hainan Island sent about twenty students to the second Institute. Half of them were from Ch'iungshan hsien, the home of Feng Pai-chu, a Communist who was to play a significant role in the mobilization of the island's people in the following years. The remaining students came from five other hsien that eventually organized peasant unions.

The Hsichiang Region, like the Chunglu Region, was nominally within the Kuomintang's area of control. It was represented by thirty students, second only to Chunglu in numbers. Twenty of these students came from Kwangning hsien, while the remainder were spread over five hsien.

The two remaining regions, Nanlu, which was controlled by Ch'en Chiung-ming, and Peichiang, which was not directly under the control of the Canton Government, were very poorly represented at the second session of the Institute. This indicates not only how very weak the peasant movement was in these areas at this time, but it also supports the opinion that recruitment for the second session was related to the territory the Canton Government controlled.

The third Peasant Institute began January 1, 1925 and ended April 3 of the same year. There were 114 graduates, and they were all from Kwangtung. The youngest of them was seventeen while the oldest was thirty-two. Eighty-five of the graduates or about 70% were listed as peasants, only nineteen or approximately 15% were students, there was one small merchant, and the remainder were workers.³³ It is interesting to remember that 30% of the graduates of the second Peasant Institute had been students, and 30% peasants.

Once again Chunglu Region had the greatest number of students with sixty-two, but the emphasis shifted away from Nanhai and Shunte to Tungkuan and Hua hsien which sent half of the region's students.

The Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region sent nearly the same number of students to the third Institute as they had to the previous one, but

the Huichou Region sent fourteen, ten more than to the second Institute. Perhaps this reflects preparations for the First Eastern Expedition which was to establish the Canton Government in the region in February 1925 after it had forced Ch'en to flee to Hong Kong. It also is the beginning of what became the dominant trend in recruiting for the Peasant Institute; that is, the recruitment of peasants from areas the Kuomin-tang hoped to penetrate.

The number of students from Hainan dropped to four from three hsien, and the Nanlu and Peichiang Regions were still neglected. The Hsichiang Region, however, was still second only to Chunglu, but the distribution of the region's twenty-three graduates shifted dramatically away from Kwangning hsien to other hsien in the region.

The fourth session of the Institute began May 1, 1925 and ended on the first of September. There were fifty-one graduates and twenty-five auditors, but not all of these students were from Kwangtung. Although sixty-four out of the seventy-six were from the province, ten were from Hunan and two from Kwangsi.³⁴ This session witnessed the beginning of a growing trend toward training peasant organizers for areas outside of Kwangtung and of deemphasizing the Kwangtung peasant movement in preparation for the Northern Expedition.

The number of students decreased from all of the regions of Kwangtung except the Nanlu and Peichiang Regions. This cannot be construed as indicating that enough personnel had been trained for the respective unions. Even in 1926 there was only one organizer per one thousand peasants already enrolled in unions.³⁵

The Nanlu Region, which increased the number of students it sent over its record for previous sessions, still sent only eight students from three hsien. That there was any increase in numbers, however, indicates that preparations were being made for the Southern Expedition which cleared the region of Ch'en Chiung-ming's troops in late 1925.

The Peichiang Region was the only other area in Kwangtung that increased the number of students it sent to attend the Peasant Institute. All the students from the region, five graduates and eleven auditors, were from the Ch'uchiang area. It is interesting to note that this hsien is also directly on the line of communications between Canton and Hunan Province where the peasant movement was just beginning to develop.

The fifth Peasant Institute ran from the first of October until December 8, 1925. There were 113 graduates: forty-one from Kwangtung, forty-four from Hunan, seven from Shantung, seven from Hupei, six from Kwangsi, four from Kiangsi, two from Anhui, and two from Fukien.³⁶

Chunglu Region sent only eleven students to the fifth session, eleven fewer than had been sent to the previous session, and nearly sixty fewer than had been sent to the second session. The graduates came from nine hsien. The Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region had three graduates from two hsien, Huichou had seven graduates from three hsien, Hsichiang had three graduates from two hsien, and the Peichiang Region had no graduates. Only Hainan Island with seven graduates, six of them from Lohui hsien, and the Nanlu Region increased their number of participants.

It is interesting to note that the Nanlu Region was invaded by the Revolutionary Army in November 1925 and the island was invaded in January of 1926. Once again recruitment for the Peasant Institute seems to have been related to plans for geographical expansion.

The sixth and last session of the Peasant Institute began May 3, 1926 and lasted until the fifth of October. Mao Tse-tung was in charge of the school, and 318 students were graduated. Only two of these graduates were from Kwangtung. The remainder came from eighteen other provinces.³⁷

The Peasant Institute developed rapidly in a little over two years. Its policy of recruitment appears to have been directly related to aspirations for territorial expansion, and by its last session it was training students from every corner of China. In relation to the development of the Kwangtung peasant movement, however, it seems to have been of diminishing importance after the third session, and certainly after the fourth, as the number of Kwangtung pupils enrolled decreased sharply. It might also be assumed that the above stated figures indicate that at least the top organizers of the peasant movement and Peasant Institute, who were chiefly Chinese Communist Party members, began to neglect the peasant movement in Kwangtung in preparation for and participation in the Northern Expedition of 1926.

Despite the neglect that began in mid-1925, the Peasant Institute was extremely important to the growth of the peasant movement in Kwangtung. This was at first particularly true for areas that were under the control of the Kuomintang, where there was a rapid development

of peasant unions during 1924 and 1925. The Peasant Institute was also a significant factor in the development of peasant unions in areas which the Kuomintang annexed in 1925 and 1926.

By comparing which hsien sent students and how many they sent with union membership figures gathered at later dates, it can be seen that the impact of the graduates of the Peasant Institute on the peasant movement in Kwangtung was marked. A hsien that had not sent a pupil to the Institute rarely organized a peasant union, and hsien that sent many students often developed numerically strong peasant unions. To conclude that there was a direct relation between a hsien union's strength and the number of pupils it sent to the Peasant Institute would, however, prove erroneous. One example of the weakness of this hypothesis is that the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region sent relatively few students to attend the various sessions. Yet it was this very region, with Haifeng as its core, that developed the largest and strongest peasant movement in the entire province during the 1920's. That no direct relation existed between a hsien union's strength and the number of pupils it sent to the Institute suggests that local conditions and not just the number of Institute graduates in the area helped determine to what degree peasant unions developed. It also tends to indicate, at least in the case of Haifeng, that local union leadership could and was derived from other sources than the Peasant Institute.

In 1924 the Peasant Bureau concentrated its energy on developing peasant unions in areas under Kuomintang control. Kwangning hsien was nominally within the Kuomintang's sphere of influence during this

period, and a great deal of effort was exerted by the Peasant Bureau to unionize the hsien. Located in the Hsichiang Region, the hsien shared a border with Kwangsi Province and had a population of 400,000 people. Perhaps sixty per cent of the population were tenants. The land was poor and transportation problems tended to make the hsien remote from the rest of the province, although there was a flow of goods between Kwangning and the areas of Ch'ingyuan, Canton, and Hong Kong.³⁸

Warlord struggles were frequent in Kwangning hsien and local gentry armies abounded. Secret societies also existed throughout the region with membership somewhere between 30,000 and 40,000 men, and banditry was under their control. Secret society leaders in the villages had the added strength of being religious figures as well.³⁹

At this time the tenants of Kwangning suffered a deterioration in their standard of living. They customarily paid rents of sixty per cent of their annual crop, and in addition owed labor services to their landlords. Population pressure on the land aggravated the situation because it allowed the landlords to demand higher rents. As a result of these conditions, in the years preceding 1924 hundreds or perhaps thousands of peasants were forced to move to Canton in search of work. Some tenants also attempted to have rents lowered, but the landlords organized armed forces and suppressed these movements. In 1924 there was nominal cooperation between the hsien and the KMT government at Canton, but the landlords were in firm control of the hsien. Their troops were armed with modern weapons and they collected rents by force.⁴⁰

A preparatory hsien union was established in Kwangning in April 1924. Interest in the hsien had initially been aroused at the Peasant Bureau by a group of young men from Kwangning who had attended middle school in Canton. These young men had taken part in the May 4 Movement of 1919 and afterwards became involved in the organization of labor unions in Canton whose members were predominantly from the Kwangning area. They raised funds among these union members to support a peasant movement in Kwangning, and in April 1924 peasant union organizers were sent to the hsien.

These organizers used techniques of oral persuasion that were similar to those that had been used in Haifeng. Organizers spoke in their home villages and lectured in market towns on market days. A house to house canvas to gain members for the unions was also undertaken. To culminate the effort P'eng P'ai arrived in the hsien in mid-May and stayed to give speeches for one week. P'eng must have been quite a charismatic figure and skilled organizer, because membership in the peasant unions rose from 4,000 to 7,000 within two weeks.

The rapid growth of the unions, however, prompted the landlords to launch an attack on union offices. Most of the union organizers were poor peasants who had a difficult time supporting themselves and carrying out union activities at the same time. In the face of the landlords' attacks they fled, and by mid-June many of the unions had disbanded. Only fear of intervention by the Canton Government restrained the landlords from completely crushing the peasant movement. Nevertheless, the peasant unions had been seriously crippled and remained

relatively inactive for several months because the Canton Government was occupied with suppressing the Merchant Volunteer Corps, and could not offer the Kwangning unions any aid.⁴¹

The Merchant Volunteer Corps was first organized in Canton in 1912 and at that time had a membership of 400. By 1924 there were 13,000 members in Canton alone and they represented more than 5,000 firms. The Canton group amalgamated with Merchant Volunteer Corps from 120 different towns and cities in Kwangtung to form a provincial organization in May 1924. The merchants had first organized to defend themselves from bandits. By 1924, however, they shifted the aims of their association and protested the heavy war taxes they were forced to pay to the Canton Government. Things came to a head in Canton when the merchants allied themselves with Ch'en Chiung-ming, went on strike, and barricaded themselves into a section of the city. On October 15, 1924 the Canton Government attacked and crushed the merchants in one day of fighting.⁴²

In late October conditions began to become more favorable for the peasant movement in Kwangning. Since June of 1924 the Kuomintang had been preoccupied by events in Canton and could not devote much in the way of time or troops to areas distant from the city. Once Canton was cleared of the merchants' forces, however, the Kwangning unions could be given aid. In November the return of twenty graduates from the second session of the Peasant Institute must have benefited the movement's development as well.

In November a rent reduction committee was established in Kwang-ning and the unions began to seriously organize the peasants for a 40% rent reduction campaign. To help pay for the expenses of the union and its operatives, ten per cent was to be turned over to the union while the tenant would keep the remainder. This rent reduction campaign led both landlords and peasants to organize armed forces and prepare for future armed conflict. The peasants, however, were armed only with bird guns and each ch'u peasant self defense force had fewer than fifty members. The landlords on the other hand mustered hundreds of men armed with modern rifles per chu, and enticed men into joining their min t'uan forces by offering a ten to eighteen yuan enlistment bonus to each recruit.⁴³

By December events came to a head when landlords sent min t'uan to attack a peasant union meeting hall. Three union members were killed. The struggle that followed spread over the entire hsien and lasted well into February of 1925. The peasants were too weak to win without aid, and in mid-December they requested military support from the Kuomintang in Canton. The arrival of these troops turned the tide, and the peasant unions were victorious. Rents were reduced, unions spread throughout the hsien and to areas that had not previously been organized, and membership in the unions rose dramatically.⁴⁴

This victory, however, was not as impressive as it might be supposed. The landlord forces were disarmed, but bandit affiliated secret societies had not been destroyed. The peasants had only been successful due to the armed intervention of an outside force. After

the Kuomintang troops had successfully intervened on behalf of the peasants they left almost immediately to take part in the First Eastern Expedition, leaving behind only a few modern weapons for the peasants. Still poorly armed, the Kwangning peasant unions were in a precarious position. If the well-armed secret society forces decided to side with the landlords against the unions, the unions would be virtually helpless.⁴⁵

The development of the peasant movement in the Chunglu Region also faced severe difficulties during these years. Bandits, merchants, and landlords had accumulated fabulous wealth through controlling the richest area in the province, and with this wealth came power. They controlled local officials and were only nominally under the control of the Canton Government. They had also created the largest and best equipped private armies in Kwangtung. Peasant demands for rent reduction threatened their interests and aroused their animosity. In Nanhai hsien, for instance, landlord and merchant min t'uan controlled a good part of the hsien, and they resisted not only the penetration of the peasant movement, but the Kuomintang Government as well. In Chungshan hsien peasant union organizers began to work in May 1924, and a good many pupils were sent to the Peasant Institute from that hsien. Still, the peasant union organizers met constant opposition. In the fall of 1925 merchants who had nearly been ruined by the Canton-Hong Kong strike and boycott attacked the hsien seat and seized it. They also attacked peasant union buildings throughout the hsien. Although the merchants were suppressed by the Canton Government, they had dealt a grievous blow to the peasant movement in Chungshan.⁴⁶

In the Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions Ch'en Chiung-ming remained in control despite his defeat before Canton in November 1923 (see p. 55). Following Sun Yat-sen's departure for Peking in November 1924 a split in the Canton Government began to take shape. Ch'en took advantage of this situation and launched another attack on Canton in December 1924.⁴⁷

The Kuomintang army drove Ch'en's forces back, and prepared to launch a counterattack. In preparation for what was to be the First Eastern Expedition the Peasant Bureau sent out undercover agents to organize peasants in the Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions to harass the warlord troops. When the Kuomintang troops set out, several Bureau members and ten students from the third session of the Peasant Institute travelled with them as a propaganda team. This team was with the army when it passed through Huiyang, Wuhua, Tzuchin, and Lungch'uan hsien. Propaganda work was intensified in all these hsien, and some of the propaganda team members remained behind the advancing army to organize peasant unions.⁴⁸

The closer the Kuomintang troops came to Haifeng the more warmly they were welcomed by the peasants. On February 25, 1925, Haifeng City was taken. Ch'en fled to Hong Kong. During the entire campaign the peasants had aided the Kuomintang troops. They had served as an intelligence system, had carried supplies, cared for wounded and attacked retreating warlord troops.⁴⁹

With the defeat of Ch'en's forces, the peasant unions that had suffered under his rule and had been forced underground burst forth.

Old unions all across the Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions were reestablished and new unions sprang up as well. The union organizers that travelled with the Kuomintang army not only used oral techniques to mobilize the peasants as before, but also humiliated and intimidated local landlords and officials. Peasant union demands also became more extreme. Because the landlords had supported Ch'en Chiung-ming while the peasants actively aided the Kuomintang, the Kuomintang felt no compunction in disarming the landlords in the face of an expanding peasant movement. This of course weakened resistance to the peasant unions. In Haifeng hsien P'eng P'ai convened a congress of peasants. The hsien union was reorganized, a twenty-five per cent rent reduction called for, peasant self defense forces organized, workers' unions established, and a branch of the Communist Party was founded in Haifeng. All political power in Haifeng hsien rested with the peasant union. The militancy of Haifeng affected the surrounding hsien. Even in the more moderate hsien like Huiyang the growth of the movement's strength was marked.⁵⁰

Due to the explosive growth of the peasant movement after the First Eastern Expedition, the First Peasant Congress of Kwangtung Province was convened May 1, 1925 in Canton. One Hundred seventeen delegates attended, representing twenty-two hsien unions. Between 180,000 and 210,000 peasants were members of these unions.⁵¹

The Second National Labor Congress also opened in Canton on May Day, and the delegates of the two congresses paraded together through the city. Thousands of peasants and workers from the surrounding

area joined them as they marched to the assembly halls of several Canton schools where political workers and students lectured to them. The Kwangtung Peasant Congress lasted ten days and was generally "celebrative" and not "deliberative" in nature.⁵²

After Sun Yat-sen's death in March 1925 a power struggle began to develop within the Canton Government. In June the Yunnan general Yang Hsi-min and the Kwangsi general Liu Chen-huan used their troops to stage an uprising in Canton. Within a week they were suppressed by the armed workers and Whampoa cadets. Forced to flee the city, the remnants of these warlord troops were wiped out by peasants in the Hsichiang Region.⁵³

Although the revolt in Canton was quelled rapidly, it set off a series of events that proved a major setback to the peasant movement in the Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions. The First Eastern Expedition had failed to rid the area entirely of Ch'en Chiung-ming's soldiers, and in June 1925 these troops were still garrisoned in Lufeng and Tzuchin hsien. When the Yang-Liu uprising broke out, Hsu Ch'ung-chih, who was in command of the Kuomintang forces in the area, moved his troops to Canton. He hoped that he would be able to increase his influence in the Canton Government. To protect his rear he made a deal with Ch'en Chiung-ming's supporters and left the peasant unions unprotected before the counter-revolutionaries.

In Haifeng P'eng P'ai moved the peasant union to a mountainous area and returned to Canton. The landlords, with the local police and Ch'en Chiung-ming's troops, crushed the peasant movement and executed

over seventy members of the Haifeng union. This was the most violent attack the Haifeng peasant union had experienced, but such reprisal was by no means limited to this hsien only. All across eastern Kwangtung unions were put down. In P'uming the union building was destroyed, and in Tzuchin hsien the homes of union staff members were plundered and union business brought to a virtual halt. Following the First Eastern Expedition Wuhua hsien organized between seventy and eighty hsiang unions with a total membership of over 30,000 men. (For a description of the hsiang see p. 6 in the Introduction.) With the outbreak of the counter-revolutionary attacks the unions were smashed, members arrested, and peasant self defensemen were held for ransom. In Huiyang the peasant union was overthrown, but the peasant self defense forces successfully resisted attempts by local landlords to disarm them.⁵⁴

In Canton tensions between the left and right wings of the Kuomintang increased. Following the May Thirtieth Incident in Shanghai a sympathy march was staged in Canton in June 1925. The demonstrators were fired upon, and a number of unarmed students, some of them girls, were killed. The incident became known as the Shameen Massacre and in retaliation the left wing of the Canton Government organized a general strike and boycott of Hong Kong. Workers in the Canton area and peasants along the Kwangtung coast from the delta to Swatow were mobilized as pickets to keep goods from going to or coming from Hong Kong. Due to the stranglehold the strike and boycott had on Hong Kong and British trade in south China, the British Government

began to aid Ch'en Chiung-ming financially, and this helped Ch'en re-assert control over eastern Kwangtung in August and September.⁵⁵

To defend themselves against the resurgence of Ch'en Chiung-ming the left wing of the Canton Government began to plan the Second Eastern Expedition. Chiang Kai-shek had expelled Hsu Ch'ung-chih and his troops from Canton after it was learned that Hsu had colluded with Ch'en, and in October 1925 it was Chiang who prepared to retake the Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions.⁵⁶

Although the peasant unions in the two regions suffered severely during the period when Ch'en reasserted control over the area, communications were kept open between the Peasant Bureau in Canton and the various hsien. Even before the Second Eastern Expedition began, an intelligence system had been established that would aid the Kuomintang forces, and the Peasant Bureau sent agents out in advance of the expedition to mobilize the peasants for the struggle against Ch'en's troops.⁵⁷

The Second Eastern Expedition was launched in October, and Huichou City fell October 14, 1925. Once again the peasants rose to support the Kuomintang army, and in some regions their self defense forces seized control before the regular army arrived. The army passed through Haifeng and reached Swatow November 4. With the successful conclusion of the Second Eastern Expedition a new stage of the peasant movement in eastern Kwangtung began to take shape.⁵⁸

While the Second Eastern Expedition was underway Teng Pen-yin, who was Ch'en Chiung-ming's subordinate in the Nanlu Region, attacked Canton. He was driven back, and with the victory in eastern Kwangtung

the Canton Government launched the Southern Expedition which was to clear Teng out of the Nanlu Region. Peasant union organizers had secretly organized peasants in Haik'ang hsien since November 1924, and by November 1925 forty-one hsiang unions in three different ch'u existed. During 1924 and 1925 peasant unions were also secretly organized in Tienpai, Suich'i, and Hua hsien. The peasants that had been organized aided the advance of the Kuomintang troops, and by the end of 1925 all of southern Kwangtung had been taken. The last remnants of Ch'en Chiung-ming's supporters were defeated on Hainan Island by the end of January 1926.⁵⁹

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF THE SECOND EASTERN EXPEDITION AND THE SOUTHERN EXPEDITION TO THE SECOND PROVINCIAL PEASANT CONGRESS OF MAY 1, 1926

The Eastern and Southern Expeditions of late 1925 unified all of Kwangtung under the control of the Kuomintang. From this time until May 1926 proved to be a period of resurgence and rapid expansion in which the Kwangtung peasant movement reached its peak. The Kuomintang's military successes weakened forces that had previously hindered peasant union development. Union organizers who followed in the wake of the military campaigns made more extensive demands for rural change and employed more radical mobilization techniques. At the same time, however, the split between the left and right wings of the Kuomintang continued to widen. The very strength of the peasant movement and its increasingly militant posture further aggravated the party rift. The eventual outcome of the struggle between left and right Kuomintang

members determined the fate of the peasant movement itself.

Probably in response to the acquisition of new territory and the growth of peasant unions throughout the province the Peasant Bureau in December 1925 divided the province into seven regions. Each region consisted of a number of hsien coordinated by a regional office. The regional offices were placed in cities that played a vital role in the region's communications network (for a list of the seven regions and the hsien they included see Table I in Appendix I). How important a role these offices played is uncertain. The office's importance may well have varied from region to region. The Chunglu Region had its office in Canton, and since Lo Ch'i-yuan served as both Peasant Bureau Secretary and head of Chunglu's regional office, the close coordination between the two offices probably greatly benefited the region. The Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region, however, had its office in Swatow while the center of the peasant movement was located to the west in Haifeng. Although at least one meeting of representatives from the region's various peasant unions took place in Swatow, whether Swatow or Haifeng played a more significant role in the coordination of the region's peasant movement is open to speculation. In general, however, the role of the regional offices seems to have been significant. They co-ordinated the region's union activities, and they served as a pivot between the provincial office in Canton and their own region, relaying information and directives.⁶⁰

Even before the Second Eastern Expedition came to a close the peasant unions in the Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions began

to reorganize themselves and prepared to expand. In Huiyang hsien remnants of the warlord forces broke into groups of bandits and harassed the peasants, but the peasants organized a successful resistance to suppress these elements. Officials who had oppressed the unions were arrested and preparations were made for a hsien-level peasant union congress.⁶¹

The Peasant Bureau in Canton played an active role in the organization of the hsien congress and union. Three Peasant Bureau operatives went to Huichou City after it had fallen. They established a headquarters from which the existing ch'u peasant unions could be put in order, and which acted as a central directing department for all the work carried out throughout the hsien. They decided that a hsien level union should be created immediately, and on November 14 the original three operatives were joined by a fourth from the Provincial Peasant Union. The same evening they called a conference and established the rules and agenda for the hsien congress which had been set to open November 16. At the evening meeting they resolved that each ch'u would send a delegation to the congress. The delegation would consist of at least one representative from each hsiang union within the ch'u. Each ch'u delegation would select a chairman, and the chairmen would themselves form a preparation committee that would be headed by one of the chairmen and by a representative from the Provincial Peasant Union office. They also decided that each delegation would hold a meeting every morning before the afternoon sessions of the congress convened. At the afternoon sessions each hsiang would present a report that

discussed peasant union and peasant self defense membership statistics; the membership, leadership, and arms of the min t'uan, merchant and bandit groups; the attitudes of local officials and regional troops toward the unions; the demands of the peasants; the background of union delegates; and other issues. Although the Huiyang surveys are not available, it is interesting to note that reports that are available from the Nanlu Region and had been compiled by early 1926 follow the same format as the one established in Huiyang. Both the kind of information sought in Huiyang and other hsien and the uniformity with which it was collected across geographical areas, reveals a growing sophistication in the information gathering techniques of the peasant movement.⁶²

The First Huiyang Hsien Peasant Union Congress began November 16, 1925. Over one hundred hsiang delegates attended, as well as students, workers, soldiers, and Kuomintang Party members. The vast majority of the peasant union delegates were tenants. Peasant movement organizers, however, attempted to broaden the appeal of the union beyond purely economic issues. Their success through techniques of persuasion, education, and by involving peasants in the Canton-Hong Kong strike and boycott as pickets and in the campaigns against Ch'en's warlord troops, can be seen in the results of a poll taken among the union delegates at this congress. About 70% stated that they espoused the Three People's Principles, and approximately 60% stated that they supported unity with the world proletariat. The delegates as a group represented five ch'u unions consisting of seventy-six hsiang unions with a total membership of 3,813 men.⁶³

Huiyang hsien was not the only hsien in eastern Kwangtung to be reorganized and to hold a peasant union congress. Haifeng reestablished its six ch'u unions, and held a congress on October 28, 1925. Wuhua hsien reorganized between seventy and eighty hsiang unions with a total membership of over 30,000, and held their hsien level congress on November 11, 1925, and Huilai, Tzuchin, Hsingning, P'uning, and Ch'aoan all began to reestablish unions.⁶⁴

In Haifeng the peasants restored their control over the hsien, and in 1925 and 1926 they passed several rent reductions amounting to a total rent reduction of 64 per cent. This took place at a time when the Kuomintang, split between left and right, refrained from passing any rent reduction at all. Peasant union members publicly humiliated members of the old local elite, and tenants claimed property rights to the land they tilled and beat their landlords. The unions also executed many members of the local elite and many local toughs who had gained notoriety through oppressing the peasants. In addition to the growing peasant union, workers, students, and women organized unions. A branch of the Chinese Communist Party coordinated all of these unions and became if not in name at least in reality the hsien government. At the same time they created Chinese Communist cells throughout the villages. In this manner Haifeng developed the strongest and most radical peasant movement in all of Kwangtung.⁶⁵

Rapid development of the peasant movement, however, was not limited to the Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions in eastern Kwangtung. Ch'uchiang hsien in the Peichiang Region which had begun to

organize in 1924 increased its membership and founded a hsien level peasant union in November 1925. The Chunglu and Hsichiang Regions, in spite of constant battles with min t'uan, established a number of new hsiang unions and organized peasant self defense forces.⁶⁶

In the Nanlu Region peasant unions and self defense corps sprang up rapidly after the Southern Expedition secured the area. The peasant organizers used varied organizational techniques and used other than purely economic appeals to gain union members. Besides the standard technique of public addresses in the market towns, the organizers also led marches and held mass meetings. At such demonstrations the peasants paraded carrying arms, tools, and banners that proclaimed economic demands and slogans denounced Japanese actions in Manchuria. Paraders at one demonstration dressed as militarists, local toughs, vile gentry, capitalists, imperialists, and oppressed people from Africa and Asia. During another march the demonstrators broke from the set parade route, stormed the local min t'uan office, dragged the min t'uan chief into the street and beat him. Only because the peasant organizers intervened did he escape with his life. Such tactics aroused the animosity of the local officials and elite, but because much of their power and authority had been reduced by the Kuomintang intervention they were forced to moderate their opposition to the peasant movement.

The organizers used various issues to mobilize the peasants. They pressed for reductions in the number of miscellaneous taxes and reduced interest rates on short-term loans. In coastal areas they organized fishermen into unions, and they fostered a movement in areas

where Buddhist monasteries still existed to force the nuns into secular life and to marry. In areas that bordered on Kuangchou Bay organizers took advantage of local resentment directed against Catholic missionaries and converts and formed a society to "oppose Catholic propaganda." Sixty families in one area were induced to quit the church, and more than 2,000 families and their French priest moved into the French Concession.⁶⁷

The anti-Christian campaign in the area bordering Kuangchou Bay was not an isolated incident. It was part of a campaign that had been initiated in Canton in December 1924 by the young men's club of the Kuomintang. Subsequently it spread over the province. This anti-Christian movement probably became most powerful in the Swatow area where it occupied and seized missionary schools in the last months of 1925.⁶⁸

As the peasant movement gained momentum conflicts intensified throughout Kwangtung between not only the unions and Christian missionaries but also between the unions and supporters of the local order. The latter was much more serious than union-Christian conflict because it led to the death of nearly 170 peasant union leaders between May 1925 and May 1926. Over 100 died in combat with warlord troops, thirty-three fighting min t'uan, more than twenty in struggles with landlords over rent reduction, seven in opposition to "avaricious officials," and one in a struggle with imperialists. A list of the number killed from each hsien follows below.⁶⁹

Kaoyao	9
Paoan	7
Shunte	20+
Hua hsien	1
Wuhua	16
Haifeng	53 48 men/ 5 women
Lufeng	38 36 men/ 2 women
Chungshan	7
Tungkuau	4
Ch'ingyuan	1
Canton (metropolitan area)	2
Kwangning	20

Significantly, the hsien in which the strongest peasant movement developed also suffered the greatest number of deaths. This tends to indicate that the stronger the unions became the more violent was the struggle between the peasant unions and their rivals. More than 100 of the deaths occurred in Haifeng or two of its neighboring hsien, the area which developed the most powerful peasant movement in Kwangtung. Another twenty-nine of the deaths occurred in Kwangning and Kaoyao, the core of the peasant movement in the Hsichiang Region. More than forty of the deaths occurred in seven different hsien in the Chunglu Region. What is important to note here is that the Chunglu unions reporting leaders killed had much lower membership figures than those peasant unions suffering deaths in the other two regions. Opponents of the peasant movement in Chunglu Region appear to have been more powerful and reacted more swiftly and violently against the unions than opponents of the peasant unions in other areas.

Haifeng hsien had far more union leaders killed than any other hsien and also had the reputation for having the most radical peasant movement in the province. Other hsien in the province, however, engaged

in quite extreme policies. A Kuomintang report of the period states:⁷⁰

In some districts, the peasant union errs by intervening in the local administration and by detaining persons on its own initiative . . . The peasant union in Hsinhui hsien often seeks out persons who have fled to Canton and executes them. The same is true of the peasant movement in Nanhai hsien and Hua Hsien. There is no need to mention Hailufeng here! In Ch'ingyuan hsien they arrest people, charge fines and release them only to arrest them again on some other peasant's charge.

The Provincial Peasant Union kept records of disputes between peasants and their opponents. These records reveal the types of conflicts the unions were involved in and the frequency with which they occurred. In the first three and one half months of 1926, 2,526 cases were reported to the Provincial Peasant Union. Each month saw an increase in the number of cases received: in January there were 558 cases reported; in February 717; in March 816; and in the first half of April 435. This meant the average number of cases per day rose from 18.6 in January to 29 per day in April. This tends to indicate that peasant movement activities increased during this period, or that at least conflict between the unions and their opponents increased.⁷¹

Unfortunately the available records do not state where all of these cases originated, but information on a sample of 164 of these cases is available. The sample is weighted heavily towards the Chunglu Region, with 126 or 77% of the 164 cases. This does not necessarily mean that 77% of the 2,526 cases were from the Chunglu Region, but if that was in fact the distribution of cases handled in Canton, it might indicate that the six other regional offices only sent cases which

they could not resolve to Canton. This would mean that Canton only handled cases referred to it from other regions while handling all the Chunglu Region's cases. It is also possible that due to the Chunglu Region's proximity to Canton and the Provincial Union more of the region's cases reached Canton.

Despite the imbalance of the sample, the types of disputes that occurred and whether or not they were resolved is an indication of peasant movement strength at this time. Cases involving oppression of peasants by min t'uan, "vile gentry and local bullies," bandits, warlord troops, and corrupt officials numbered 86 or 53% of the total. Conflicts over tenancy and rents numbered 34 or 21% of the 164 cases. In four of the sample cases the peasants met with defeat. In twenty cases the peasants were victorious. The most interesting point however, is that 117 or 71% of the cases had not been resolved in any fashion by June of 1926. These statistics indicate that during these months the peasant unions struggled to establish themselves and to root out their enemies in the villages. Despite the fact that this period presented the most favorable conditions for the development of the peasant movement, it still found itself incapable, at least in the Chunglu Region, of dealing effectively with large segments of its opposition,⁷² and the movement's leadership was well aware of this inability.⁷²

On May 1, 1926 the Second Peasant Congress of Kwangtung Province was convened in Canton. The First Peasant Congress in May 1925 had brought together delegates from twenty-two hsien representing 210,000 peasant union members. The Second Peasant Congress had representatives

from sixty-one hsien peasant unions with a total membership of 626,457. The growth of the peasant movement by thirty-nine hsien and 415,000 members is truly remarkable,⁷³ but it must also be remembered that there were 94 hsien in Kwangtung, and the province had a population of between 30,000,000 and 40,000,000 people. These facts indicate that the peasant movement was geographically widespread, but still had a limited membership.

A regional breakdown of the May 1926 peasant union statistics reveals that the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region had the numerically strongest peasant movement in Kwangtung. Twelve of the region's seventeen counties had organized hsien level unions with a total membership of 352,367. (For statistics on which hsien in each of the seven regions unionized, how many members each hsien union had, and how many ch'u and hsiang unions had been formed in each hsien, see Tables VIII-XIV and Map II in Appendix I.) Union members however were not evenly distributed among the twelve hsien. Instead, three of the hsien contained 300,000 of the union members. Haifeng was by far the largest of these three with 194,411 members. Lufeng had the second largest organization in the region with 65,000 members, and Wuhua hsien was the third of the big three and had 41,419 members. After the top three the size of peasant organizations in the remaining hsien dropped precipitously, only two hsien having memberships above 10,000.⁷⁴

Because most of the unions in this region were newly organized and still small, they were vulnerable to possible attacks from local bandits or min t'uan. The unions relied on the military protection

of Kuomintang troops, and peasant self defense forces were numerically weak and poorly equipped. Even in Haifeng where unions had been longest established, the peasant self defense forces were not well armed. The strength of the Haifeng peasant movement seems to have developed at least partially because its opponents had been weakened by the Second Eastern Expedition, and not because the peasants had armed themselves and then overthrown the local landlords and officials. Because the local min t'uan had never been very powerful in Haifeng or in Lufeng the peasants did not need to develop an exceptionally powerful force to maintain control in either of the two hsien. In other counties in the region the min t'uan were more powerful, but the peasant unions were younger, smaller, and no better armed, than the unions in Haifeng and Lufeng.

The Huichou Region, bordering on the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region, felt the influence of the Haifeng peasant movement. Huiyang and Tzuchin hsien both had common borders with Haifeng, and they developed the strongest unions in their region. The region consisted of eight hsien with the regional office located in Huichou City. Although five of the eight hsien had developed hsien unions with a total of 28,297 members, more than 23,000 of these members came from Huiyang and Tzuchin. Huiyang hsien peasant union had grown from nearly 4,000 members in November 1925 to 13,703 by the Second Peasant Congress. A number of new hsiang unions had organized, but this growth was still confined to the five ch'u that had originally been organized. The unions had successfully consolidated their positions and had purged gentry from

their membership. The northeast section of the hsien, however, remained unorganized. Tzuchin hsien had organized unions with a total membership of 9,681, and battles frequently broke out between the unions and the large landlords and min t'uan. The memberships of these two hsien had grown dramatically following the Second Eastern Expedition from a core of unions that had been organized as early as 1923, and their authority in portions of the two hsien was extensive. But large areas of the two hsien had not been unionized, landlords and min t'uan had a great deal of power, and the peasant self defense forces were not well armed. Unions in the other hsien had only begun to organize.⁷⁵

In May 1926 the Chunglu Region had organized thirteen hsien level peasant unions with a membership of 101,298. Union membership was fairly evenly distributed, with six of the hsien having union memberships between 10,000 and 20,000. At least eight of the hsien had seen union organization since late 1924. Still, the most successful hsien union which was located in Shunte only had 18,000 union members. Bandit forces, min t'uan, and other troops hired by landlords or merchants had far better arms and outnumbered the peasant self defense forces. In general, the position of the peasant unions in the Chunglu Region was precarious. Only the presence of Kuomintang troops kept the unions from being suppressed, and even so they suffered in repeated clashes with bandits and merchant and landlord forces that had so much power that they were not entirely restrained by the Kuomintang forces.⁷⁶

The Hsichiang Region had its regional office in Kaoyao hsien, and in May 1926 eleven of the fourteen hsien in the region had organized

hsien unions. There were 110,136 peasants in these unions, but members were distributed unevenly among the hsien. Kwangning hsien, where the peasant movement had first organized in the region in 1924, had over 65,000 of the region's union members. From the Second Eastern Expedition until the completion of the Southern Expedition the peasant movement expanded throughout the region, notably into Kaoyao which had 28,000 members in May 1926, Loting which had 4,000 members in May, and Yunan which had 4,000 members in May also. The remaining hsien unions were both young and weak. In general, the bulk of the peasant movement in the Hsichiang Region was concentrated in two hsien and the rest of the hsien unions were young, numerically weak, and poorly armed. The unions in Kwangning and Kaoyao, although comprising over 90,000 of the region's 110,000 peasant union members, still felt threatened by well armed local secret society-bandit forces. Even in Kwangning the unions depended upon the military protection of the Kuomintang because they were poorly armed.⁷⁷

To the north of Canton the Peichiang Region had developed a peasant movement with 15,000 members. Five of the eleven hsien had organized hsien unions, but over 11,000 of the union members were concentrated in Ch'uchiang hsien. Little information concerning the region's peasant movement is available, but from the above statistics it appears that except for the hsien union in Ch'uchiang which had been founded in November 1925, the unions in the Peichiang Region had only recently been founded and had few members and little strength.⁷⁸

Ten of the Nanlu Region's fifteen counties established hsien level unions by May 1926. They had a total membership of 10,000. Although some organization had occurred in the region before the Southern Expedition of November 1925, most of the unions only began to organize after that campaign. In May 1926 the peasant movement was still in its infant stages. The unions were very weak, their memberships ranging from 100 to 1,200. Very few Nanlu residents had graduated from the Peasant Institute, and those who had attended were predominantly from Suich'i hsien. Only in Haik'ang and Suich'i hsien, which had both seen peasant union organizers in the year before the Southern Expedition, had the unions developed any strength. Haik'ang hsien had 3,400 members in its unions, and Suich'i hsien had 2,800 unionists. The peasant unions in these two hsien attempted to arm themselves, and Suich'i even succeeded in collecting some 550 rifles and pistols of assorted makes. Even so, they could not compete militarily with min t'uan who had perhaps 10,000 rifles and pistols per hsien, or with numerous bandit groups that could have as many as several thousand members and perhaps 500 modern rifles. Despite the movement's military and numerical weakness, its growth in the first three months of 1926 was dramatic and rapid.⁷⁹

Hainan Island consisted of thirteen hsien, and six of them had organized hsien level unions by May 1926. Nearly 9,000 peasants had been organized, and membership was relatively evenly distributed among the six hsien. Except for one hsien which had 253 union members the remaining hsien had from 900 to 2,600 members. In general the

peasant unions on the island seem to have been weak, only two of the hsien having more than 2,000 union members. Since the island had not been cleared of Ch'en Chiung-ming's troops until January 1926, perhaps its peasant movement was at a stage of development comparable to that of the Nanlu Region.⁸⁰

In summary, it can be stated that the May 1926 statistics from the Second Peasant Congress reveal spectacular growth in both the number of unions and the number of union members. The statistics also reveal that the peasant movement developed unevenly between regions. More than 560,000 of the 626,000 peasant union members came from only three of the province's seven regions, and half from one region (see Table XV Appendix I). The peasant unions also developed unevenly within the regions themselves, some hsien having the majority of union members in the entire region: for instance, Haifeng in the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region; Kwangning in the Hsichiang Region; and Ch'uchiang in the Pei-chiang Region. Uneven development was a problem even within the hsien themselves. This clearly was the case in Huiyang hsien (pp. 89-90) where unions were organized in the southwest corner of the hsien, but did not penetrate the hsien's northeastern area. These conditions, when combined with the peasant movement's reliance upon military support from the Kuomintang and its failure to arm, made the movement susceptible to suppression by local bandit, landlord, and min t'u'an forces. These considerations must be kept in mind when viewing the fate of the peasant movement in the post May 1926 period.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY SUPPRESSION OF THE PEASANT UNIONS IN MID-1926 TO FINAL SUPPRESSION OF THE HAILUFENG SOVIET IN 1928

Although the Kwangtung peasant movement in June of 1926 reported it had expanded to 73 hsien level unions and increased its membership by nearly 75,000,⁸¹ its position had already been undermined by late March. Tensions between the left and right wings of the Kuomintang increased after Sun's death in 1925, and in the tangle of factional strife Chiang Kai-shek launched the Canton Coup. On the evening of March 20, 1926, Chiang's troops arrested the Communist political workers among their ranks. Then they raided the Canton-Hong Kong Strike Committee office and disarmed its members. They placed Soviet advisors under house arrest, and even arrested some Chinese Communists. With this rapid blow Chiang destroyed the civilian Military Council's authority and gathered its power into his own hands.⁸²

A plenary session of the Kuomintang Central Executive Committee met on May 15, 1926. At this meeting a resolution passed which pressed for the initiation of the Northern Expedition. Chiang was proclaimed Commander-in-Chief of all Kuomintang troops, and all government and party offices subordinated to him. This session also strictly limited the position of the Chinese Communists in the Kuomintang. The Communists were to hand over a list of all their members in the Kuomintang, they could no longer be heads of any party or government department and were removed from such posts, only one third of any committee could be Communist Party members, Kuomintang Party members could not join the Communist Party without losing their Kuomintang membership,

and all orders issued by the Communist Central Executive Committee to its members had first to be approved by the Kuomintang.⁸³

Despite the setback caused by the Canton Coup and the May 15 reorganization order, the Communists did not separate from the Kuomintang. Plans for the Northern Expedition continued, and the campaign was launched in July.⁸⁴

Heartened by the successes of the right-wing in Canton, reactionary elements in the rural areas began to launch attacks against the peasant unions in June. Local bandits frequently allied themselves with the landlords and min t'uan to destroy union buildings, to kill peasant union leaders, and to disperse peasant self defense forces. These attacks became more violent as the best Kuomintang troops left the province to participate in the Northern Expedition, leaving behind only troops of poor quality who could not restrain the local forces. In addition the peasant movement's attempts throughout 1926 and into early 1927 to arm and strengthen the peasant self defense forces proved fruitless. The Kuomintang military opposed arming the peasants because they did not want the competition of an independent armed peasant force, and the Communist leadership backed the Kuomintang in an attempt to avoid a split between the two parties.⁸⁵

Without arms the peasants could not defend themselves, and throughout the summer of 1926 attacks on unions occurred from Lo-ch'ang hsien in the Peichiang Region to Huiyang hsien in the Huichou Region. In the Hsichiang Region unions in Kwangning, Kaoyao, Fengch'u'an, Yunan, and Tech'ing hsien suffered bitterly when local secret society-bandit forces united with the landlords to crush the peasant movement.⁸⁶

In the Chunglu Region where the peasant unions participated in the Canton-Hong Kong strike as pickets, their position seems to have deteriorated as the strike collapsed. Their participation in the strike and their demands for rent reduction gained them the animosity of both the landlords and the merchants of the region. The landlords and merchants controlled powerful armed forces, and the peasant self defense forces were no match for them. Thus, the outbreak of anti-peasant union activities in the summer of 1926 crippled the peasant movement, particularly in Shunte and Chungshan hsien.⁸⁷

In the Nanlu Region the local elite formed the "Society for Preservation of Religion," and joined forces with a large group of bandits who controlled Lingshan hsien. This bandit army swept over the region and attacked both Kuomintang troops and the peasant unions. The peasant movement in Haik'ang hsien was particularly hard hit.⁸⁸

By the end of 1926 the peasant movement in Kwangtung had been seriously weakened. At the same time, however, the Northern Expedition had been spectacularly successful. The city of Wuhan and all of Central China fell to the Kuomintang by mid October. In Hunan and Hupei the peasant movement expanded at an incredible rate. After the fall of Wuhan Chiang Kai-shek continued to press his attack in the lower Yangtze, but growing tensions between left and right wings of the Kuomintang caused the left wing in Wuhan and the right wing under Chiang at Nan-king to form separate governments in January 1927.

One of the reasons for the Kuomintang Party split was the rapid growth of the peasant movement in Hunan and Hupei, and the increasingly

extreme activities and demands of the peasants. In November and December 1926 the Executive Committee of the Comintern decided that the Chinese Communist Party must not split from the Kuomintang, that peasant demands for redistribution of land should be met, and that soviets could not yet be created. This policy proved contradictory. Peasant demands could not be met without causing a rupture between the Communists and Wuhan. Despite this, the policy remained in effect until August 1927, and virtually assured that the Wuhan Government would suppress the peasant unions and purge the Communists from its government.⁸⁹

In April Chiang launched coups in Shanghai and Canton which effectively crushed left wing power in the two cities. The Wuhan Government, which had been preparing to break with the Communists moved further along this path in late May when militarist "mutinies" began brutally to suppress the Hunan and Hupei peasant unions. By the middle of July the break between the left Kuomintang and the Communists became official.⁹⁰

In response the Chinese Communists planned a joint peasant and military uprising. Various cities would be seized by uprisings of forces both inside and outside of the cities. Troops in the vicinity of Nanch'ang were to capture that city and peasants in Hunan, Hupei, Kwangtung, and Kwangsi were to rise and help liberate key cities in the various provinces. The military uprising in Nanch'ang broke out prematurely on July 31, however, and disrupted these plans. By August 5 the Communist forces had been forced from Nanch'ang and had begun to march south. Kwangtung Province was their ultimate destination.

Kwangtung and Kwangsi were dropped from the plans for the Autumn Harvest Uprising, because its organizers felt that thorough preparations and coordination of the uprising could not be achieved in such an extensive area in the time available. For these reasons the Communists concentrated their efforts on organizing the Hunan and Hupei peasants for the overthrow of the Wuhan Government. The Autumn Harvest Uprising began September 8, but it proved to be a dismal failure. Previous attacks on the peasant unions had weakened them, and the peasants had few arms. From this defeat, however, emerged a new Communist policy. In May Mao had proposed the confiscation of all landlord land, but the Party Central rejected his proposal for fear of causing a split with the Wuhan Government. In September Mao began to implement his May proposal. The Communist Party separated itself from the Kuomintang at this time, and established Soviets. In November 1927 the Communist Party officially recognized the Soviets, and confiscation and collectivization of all land became Party policy. These actions, however, came too late to prevent the crushing of the peasant movement in Hunan and Hupei. The land policy of confiscation and collectivization of all land was probably premature at this time, and further weakened the appeal of the Communists in the villages.⁹¹

Although the Communist Party recognized the necessity of Soviets and established the radical land policy of confiscation and collectivization, the Party still regarded the cities as the key to the revolution's success. Mass peasant uprisings linked with worker's risings were to seize cities. These plans came too late. The counter-revolution

had proceeded too far. It had weakened the organizations of the peasants and workers, and several disastrous defeats arose from this November policy. One of these defeats was the Canton Commune of December 11-13, 1927. It was particularly poorly organized. No general strike was called before the revolt, and no real workers support mobilized. No organizational work had been done among the peasants either, and the uprising was easily defeated. Only in April 1928 was the November 1927 "putschist" line abandoned, and with its demise came the end of a phase of the revolution.⁹²

Between the initiation of the Northern Expedition in July 1926 and April 1928 the peasant movement in Kwangtung was crushed, and by the end of 1928 only a few scattered pockets of peasant resistance still existed. Attacks in the summer of 1926 had weakened peasant unions all across the province, but unions in the Hsichiang Region appear to have suffered the most severe attacks at this time. When the April 15 coup struck Canton only three days after the Shanghai Coup of April 12, 1927, it took the Communists by surprise. Chiang Kai-shek's followers rounded up Communists. A bitter armed conflict ensued in which the railroad workers sided with the Communists, but the battle ended in victory for Chiang's forces. On the same day Chiang's supporters suppressed the Communists in Swatow. With Canton in the rightists' hands the center of the Communist communications network in the province was destroyed and local areas had to fend for themselves.⁹³

Following the April 15 Canton Coup, the counter-revolutionary forces suppressed peasant forces in the Chunglu Region and "pacified"

the Peichiang Region. The peasant movement in the Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions had more success in preserving their unions. Even prior to the Canton Coup the Communist leadership of the peasant movement had organized the Tungchiang or East River Military Council which encompassed the two regions. They also bolstered the peasant self defense forces so that they would be capable of defending the unions from Kuomintang troops. By early May these forces numbered several thousand men, but they were generally very poorly armed. The center of the peasant resistance was the Hailufeng area which consisted chiefly of Haifeng and Lufeng hsien. The Hailufeng area also included portions of neighboring hsien, and in early May 1927 the peasant movement seized control of much of the area between Huichou City and the outskirts of Swatow. Besides Haifeng and Lufeng large portions of Huiyang, Tzuchin, Wuhua, Huilai, P'uning, Chiehyang, Ch'aoyang and Ch'aoan had been taken.⁹⁴

In Hailufeng the peasants had complete control of the area, and they executed officials and prominent counter-revolutionaries. This did not last long, however, because on May 9 Kuomintang forces defeated the peasant troops and reoccupied the city of Haifeng. The peasants' experiences with clan warfare made them adept at secret organization, however, and the rural areas remained Communist. Several attempts by the peasants to recapture Haifeng City, however, ended in defeat. This encouraged landlords, merchants, and officials who had fled to Hong Kong or Macao to return. They regained their original property rights, raised rents, tortured peasants, and pushed the Communists farther and farther back into the mountainous areas of Hailufeng.

The position of the landlords seemed even more secure when in the latter half of May peasants in Wuhua hsien attempted a revolt and were crushed.⁹⁵

The landlords' position did, however, have its weaknesses.

Not all the peasant union organizations had been disbanded by the Kuomintang. Some, like the pig cooperatives, still existed, and the Communists used them as a front to secretly reorganize the peasants. On the surface, however, everything remained peaceful. Kuomintang troops were reduced to one division stationed in Huichou City. In addition the peasants had not paid rents since the autumn of 1925, and the reimposition of the old rule and its rents caused unrest and discontent in the villages. The Communists played on this discontent and pushed slogans like "Land for the Tiller." Without Kuomintang troops in the vicinity to restrain them, the peasants began to kill their landlords with increasing frequency.⁹⁶

In mid August the order for the Autumn Harvest Uprising reached the Hailufeng Communists, and so did the news of the southward march of the Nanch'ang troops under Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing (see page 97). The Communists in Hailufeng planned a second uprising for September 1. As the main force of Kuomintang troops had moved to Huichou City, they were only opposed by weak min t'u'an that had been left to hold the area. Thus, the uprising was successful and by September 8 all of the area except Haifeng City had been seized, and even Haifeng fell on September 17.⁹⁷

When the area had been secured the Communists reestablished their government, and created a base in the mountainous border area

of Haifeng, Lufeng, Huiyang, and Tzuchin hsien in preparation for the eventual return of counter-revolutionary forces. The new government also undertook the radical policy of encouraging the peasants to kill all those who had supported the traditional order, burn their homes, and seize their property. The violence spread rapidly throughout Hailufeng, and even small merchants and small landowners were classified as reactionaries.⁹⁸

September 25 saw the return of anti-Communist troops to Hailufeng. The Party removed to its mountain base, and the rural areas remained solidly under their control. The Kuomintang troops only held the two cities of Haifeng and Lufeng and merely ventured into the villages to seek out the Communists. To gain information they tortured villagers. The peasants began to post sentries to warn the villages of approaching anti-Communist troops. The peasants fled to the hills or sometimes ambushed these intruders. In retaliation for the ambushes their villages were burned. Perhaps one quarter of Haifeng hsien's villages were destroyed in a period of three or four months.⁹⁹

When the Hailufeng peasant forces learned that the Ho Lung-Yeh T'ing army had been defeated in early October they felt greatly disappointed. The troops that had marched south from Nanch'ang, however, had been beset by problems almost from the outset. Disease and desertion decimated the ranks of the troops, morale was low, and propaganda work among the soldiers almost nonexistent. Once the troops reached Kwangtung the leadership planned a peasant revolt and a redistribution of land which would create a new mass base for the

revolution. The expedition's land policy, however, was less radical than policies that had previously been implemented in Kwangtung. To alienate the peasants further, the expedition gained its funds through cooperation with local landlords rather than by expropriating their holdings.¹⁰⁰

The choice of routes for the march also proved disastrous. The march through Kiangsi had been bad enough. Peasants had never before been organized in the province, and the Communists found it hard to attain aid and supplies. The line of march in Kwangtung proved even worse. Rather than routing their troops through Wuhua and Haifeng where they could have expected strong peasant support, the Communists marched on Swatow. The peasant movement was particularly weak north of the city, and the only explanation for the Communists' behavior must be that they were preoccupied with the seizure of cities, in this case Swatow. Ignorance of conditions in this area of the province can not be argued, because P'eng P'ai marched with the expedition and obviously knew eastern Kwangtung intimately.¹⁰¹

Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing defeated Kuomintang troops north of Swatow September 23, and peasants in the area west of the city rose and seized the hsien capitals of Chiehyang and Ch'aoyang, killing many counter-revolutionaries. Peasant troops, followed by elements of Ho Lung's forces entered Swatow on September 24. The expeditionary troops aided the P'uning peasants in capturing the hsien seat, but then restrained them from killing landlords and local bullies. In late September and early October the forces of Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing suffered a series

of bloody defeats in Chiehyang hsien. By October 3 Swatow had been cleared of Communist forces, and the returning Kuomintang troops burned the regional peasant union office.¹⁰²

Peasants in the Leichou Peninsula and on Hainan Island staged uprisings at the time of the fighting about Swatow, but due to a lack of coordination they were suppressed one by one. The uprising on Hainan caused extensive damage, and as late as the mid 1930's many villages remained deserted and remnants of burned houses abounded. The peasant unions in the Hsichiang Region, however, had been so weakened that they raised no protest at all, even when warlord troops traversed the region.¹⁰³

Poor plans, poor organization, the peasants' inability to create a well armed independent military, lack of coordination, lack of propagandaization of the peasants, and lack of an attractive land policy, led to the failure of the uprisings. Even where the peasants revealed strength, like in the counties west of Swatow and in Hailufeng, they had not received the military support that they should have. Weakened by attacks since mid 1926, these defeats ground the Kwangtung peasant movement even further down.

In Hailufeng fighting continued in the villages. The bad news that the Ho Lung-Yeh T'ing force had been defeated was compounded by the fact that many of these troops had reached Lufeng but had surrendered to the counter-revolutionaries instead of joining the Hailufeng peasant forces.¹⁰⁴

On November 1 the counter-revolutionary forces again withdrew from the Hailufeng area, this time due to a struggle between Li Chi-shen

and Chang Fa-k'uei. When Li took his troops into eastern Kwangtung to suppress Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing, Chang had seized Canton. Li therefore returned to Canton to oust Chang, leaving Hailufeng without military protection. The Communists acted immediately and took control of the entire area. By November 19 the last landlord resistance had been wiped out.¹⁰⁵

The Communists established a temporary revolutionary government and convened a meeting of peasants, workers, and soldiers in the city of Haifeng from November 19 to 21. P'eng P'ai attended this congress which proclaimed a new Soviet government in accordance with the November policy decisions of the Communist Party. The congress also reestablished the network of mass organizations that had been organized after the Second Eastern Expedition. Resolutions passed by the Congress called for confiscation of all land, even that of the landed farmers, and for the extermination of all landlords and their supporters. Haifeng hsien was divided into nine wards, Lufeng into five, and special wards were created for Tzuchin and Huiyang hsien; one each. The Communist Party coordinated the wards, and P'eng P'ai headed the local Party Committee.¹⁰⁶

Once the Hailufeng Soviet had been established the peasants seized title deeds to the land and destroyed land boundaries. An anti-Christian campaign generated such violence that a number of Chinese Christians were killed, and several thousand fled to Swatow. The Communists and peasants also ruthlessly exterminated the landlords, merchants, and village notables, and exhibited their heads at public

meetings.¹⁰⁷ One participant recounted:¹⁰⁸

"Look at his white hands and face," the peasants said: "There is no mistake. He is a counter-revolutionary landlord's son and a class enemy."

I liked his face, which was open and innocent, and said I thought there was no crime on it and that perhaps he would be glad to join with the revolution against his own father. P'eng P'ai smiled and took me by the hand.

"You are just as young and innocent as he," he said. "Class justice is not personal but a necessary measure of civil war. We must kill more, not less, in case of doubt. You don't know the cruelty in Hailufeng under the landlords. If you had seen what I have, you would ask me no questions. The peasants are a hundred times less cruel than the landlords, and they have killed very, very few in comparison. The peasants know what is necessary for self defense; if they do not destroy their class enemies they will lose morale and have doubt of the success of the revolution. This is their duty and yours."

For several months the area under the control of the Soviet remained stable. Conflict in Canton between Li Chi-shen and Chang Fa-k'uei followed by the turmoil of the Canton commune in mid December 1927 kept the Kuomintang troops preoccupied and away from the Soviet area. At the same time the Soviet was also quite capable of defending its borders against enemies like the min t'u'an of neighboring hsien. Besides the 800 troops that had served with Ho Lung and Yeh T'ing, the Soviet had organized perhaps a thousand peasants into a special armed force and had also organized Red Guards for the protection of the villages. In January 1928 these forces were augmented by the arrival of about 1,200 well armed and well trained troops who had escaped Canton after the Commune collapsed.¹⁰⁹

After the arrival of the troops from Canton, the Soviet began to expand into the counties west of Lufeng. By mid February most of Huilai hsien and P'uning hsien had been seized by the Soviet's forces. Wherever they advanced the local populace gave them substantial support and they were aided by uprisings of local peasant forces. The hsien capital of Ch'aoyang hsien suffered a campaign of terrorist bombings and was seriously threatened by peasant forces. By the end of the month, however, Li Chi-shen had driven the main Communist forces out of Huilai and P'uning although the local Communists still controlled various areas of the two hsien.¹¹⁰

The anti-Communist offensive drove through Huilai and P'uning. By early March all major points in the Hailufeng Soviet had been recaptured. A Communist attempt to retake Haifeng City on May 3 ended in a disastrous defeat, and the Kuomintang troops subsequently began a systematic extermination campaign to clear the area of Communists. Although the Communist forces destroyed several enemy regiments, they eventually were scattered and reduced. The 1,200 man force that had come to the Soviet after the Canton Commune dwindled to 400 men. Natives of central China, these troops could not speak the local dialect, and as a result the local people did not join forces with them. When the unit shrank to 60 men, they fled the region. Mopping-up campaigns continued throughout the summer. Local anti-Communists carried out a savage and vindictive extermination policy that went far beyond the requirements for pacification of the area. Their slogan was, "Kill every red, even if necessary kill ten innocent ones to get one Red."

By the end of the summer the Hailufeng Soviet had been destroyed.¹¹¹

Despite continuing anti-Communist pressure, remnants of the peasant movement persisted to some degree throughout Kwangtung. A fairly well armed peasant force of perhaps 5,000 men remained in the Hailufeng area throughout the 1930's, took part in the war against Japan, and still were active in 1949. Communist partisans also abounded in P'uning and Huilai at least well into the 1930's, and similar forces remained active in the Nanlu Region up until 1949. On Hainan Island Feng Pai'chu had been involved in the earliest attempts to organize peasant unions on the island in the mid 1920's. In 1927 he began guerrilla activities. In 1932 his forces were besieged and virtually annihilated. He went underground, was arrested but later released, and eventually organized and led Communist resistance forces on the island against the Japanese from 1937-1945.¹¹²

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

The peasant movement in Kwangtung began in 1922 when P'eng P'ai organized peasant unions in Haifeng hsien. The unions developed rapidly and by 1923 had spread from Haifeng into Lufeng, Huiyang, Tzuchin, P'unming, and Huilai hsien. All of these hsien, however, were located to the East of Canton and were controlled by Ch'en Chiung-ming. Because the unions existed only as long as Ch'en tolerated them, they limited their activities to forming political organizations, the unions, for the purpose of rural reform. They also attempted not to arouse the hostility of the local elite, and they did not arm themselves. Despite these attempts Ch'en suppressed the unions, and they went underground.

Not until 1924 with the reorganization of the Kuomintang and the subsequent creation of the Peasant Bureau and the Peasant Institute did the peasant movement develop on a province-wide scope. The spread of the peasant movement over Kwangtung was directed and controlled by the Chinese Communists. The Communists had gained control of the Peasant Bureau and Peasant Institute right from the outset, and it was through these institutions that they ran the peasant movement.

Even when the Kwangtung peasant movement reached its peak in 1926, there were never enough trained organizers and staff, and there never were enough funds. Therefore, in the first stages of peasant

unionization after the 1924 reorganization, the peasant organizers concentrated their efforts in areas under the control of the Kuomintang Canton Government. They undertook, however, not only to organize unions for rural reform as had been done in the vicinity of Haifeng, but also to arm the peasants in the hopes of eventually seizing control at the local level.

Certain elements in the Kuomintang were antagonistic to the peasant unions and opposed their rise to power in the rural areas. Although they tolerated the existence of the peasant movement because the unions supplied the Kuomintang with mass support for the party's geographical expansion, they did not desire an independent armed self-governing body that would compete with them for control of the countryside. For these reasons they obstructed efforts by the peasant unions to gain arms. Certain members of the Communist leadership, like Borodin, also sided with these Kuomintang members in an attempt to maintain the United Front. As a result the peasants remained poorly armed and dependent upon Kuomintang military support.

Friction between the peasant unions and their Kuomintang opponents was further aggravated as the unions became increasingly radical during the Canton-Hong Kong strike and during and after the Second Eastern Expedition and the Southern Expedition. The unions, in their attempts to broaden their appeal to the peasants and to secure their position in the villages, became more violent. It was also at this time, following the military unification of Kwangtung in late 1925, that the peasant movement began its most impressive period of growth.

At its peak the Kwangtung movement had perhaps 700,000 members and had organized over 61 hsien peasant unions. This growth and the increasing violence in the villages, however, eventually led to measures taken within the Kuomintang that initiated the suppression of the peasant movement.

Beginning in mid-1926 counter-revolutionaries, encouraged by Chiang Kai-shek's Canton Coup in March 1926 and the May 15 reorganization of the Kuomintang, began to crush the peasant unions. For the most part the unions were destroyed by a coalition of landlord and bandit forces. This seems to have been the case in the Hsichiang, Nanlu, and Chunglu Regions, and probably the Peichiang Region as well. Only the unions in the Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions, and perhaps those on Hainan Island, successfully defended their unions against local opponents.

When the split between the Kuomintang and the Communists became open in April 1927, Chiang's supporters in Canton crushed the Communist-led worker and peasant forces and then proceeded to mop up any remaining resistance in the Chunglu Region. The peasant forces in eastern Kwangtung defended their unions more successfully, and they established control over a large area of the province. In the following months the Kuomintang made several attempts to crush these unions. For a short time the peasants in the Hailufeng area consolidated their position in the face of these attacks and formed a soviet. Eventually it was crushed by a full force invasion of regular Kuomintang troops. By the summer of 1928 only remnants of the peasant movement existed in scattered groups throughout Kwangtung.

In a period of a little over half a dozen years the peasant movement in Kwangtung saw the first attempts in China to unionize peasants, a tumultuous period of growth and conflict, and the creation and destruction of the first and one of the most radical soviets in the entire country. Why was the peasant movement in Kwangtung defeated? Why were some areas in the province more successfully organized than others? What local factors aided or hampered the development of unions in the various regions?

Although the peasant movement in Kwangtung was suppressed, it must also be remembered that the movement was quite successful for a certain amount of time in various regions of the province. The answer, therefore, of why the movement ended in defeat is not a simple one. At least a large portion of the explanation, however, lies in certain policies the leadership of the unions followed during the course of the movement from 1922-1928.

One of the most critical of these policies was the reliance upon the Kuomintang for military support. Although it initially aided the spread of unions and gave the unions much-needed support, this policy ultimately left the peasants incapable of defending themselves when outside support was withdrawn and when cooperation between the Kuomintang and Communists ceased. Linked to this policy was the inability of the peasant unions to arm themselves. Although the peasant organizers realized the necessity for creating armed peasant forces, they were opposed by both Kuomintang and Communist leaders. Thus, despite the fact that some of the unions proved more capable of defending themselves

than others, none of the unions received enough arms or military training to sustain themselves against a concerted attack.

The peasant movement made a second critical mistake in its policy regarding the movement's relationship to the cities. Although an organization based on rural support, the unions concentrated their administrative offices and communication centers in the cities. From Canton to the regional cities like Haik'ou and Swatow, to the hsien and ch'u seats, the peasant movement established its organizational network in the cities. Control, or at least the non-interference of those in control of the cities, therefore, was crucial to the survival of the unions. Even before the collapse of the United Front the location of union offices in cities and towns made them susceptible to attack by bandit or landlord forces, and when the United Front fell apart in April 1927 union offices throughout the province were closed. The destruction of the provincial office in Canton brought a virtual halt to communications between the regional union offices.

After the peasant unions had been driven from their positions in the cities, they established underground offices and communications networks both in the countryside and in the cities. Rather than concentrating their efforts at organization of the rural areas and isolation of the cities, however, they organized the rural areas and then launched attacks to recapture the cities. Inadequately armed and trained their attempts to regain control of the cities were repulsed. These defeats only served to disperse and demoralize the forces previously mobilized in the countryside. Eventually this policy so weakened organization

in the rural areas that they lost control of the areas in the countryside that they had previously held. The Communists, however, learned from their mistakes and began to organize their soviets in border areas that overlapped provincial and hsien boundaries. They also ceased to attack cities and instead developed their strength in the countryside.

The policy of confiscation of all land and execution of landlords, local toughs, and village notables that the peasant movement adopted in the Hailufeng area after the KMT-CCP split, may also have led to the defeat of the movement. The Communists felt that the violence of class war was necessary to mobilize the peasantry behind the movement, but perhaps such radical and violent tactics alienated a significant number of the local residents. Whether the violence of the peasant movement mobilized or alienated the peasants is not certain, but the violence associated with the peasant unions before the KMT-CCP split did aggravate the rift between the two parties. This rift ended in the collapse of the United Front and brought an end to the Kuomintang's military support of the peasant unions, the disastrous effects of which have been discussed previously. In the sense that the violent activities of the unions alienated members of the Kuomintang, it can be stated that this policy led to the failure of the peasant movement.

Perhaps even more significant than the violence itself was the viewpoint of the peasant union organizers. It was their view of Chinese society and the role of the peasant movement that not only made the violence possible but made it inevitable. The peasant organizers believed in class struggle and promoted it. They opposed nearly every

facet of the traditional rural society from the landlords and clans to the unequal status of women. In short, they wished to destroy the traditional society and remake it. Because of this wish they did not align themselves with existing groups in the villages, but instead established their own organization, the union, along class lines. They then attempted to wrest control of the villages from the traditional vertically organized groups. The Communist's policy, therefore, became one of opposition and confrontation along class lines. Despite the limitations and weaknesses of this position it allowed them to attempt a thorough rural revolution, which certainly appealed to a number of Chinese. In later years the Communists continued their class analysis of Chinese society. They, however, moderated the extremes of class struggle that had predominated in the 1920's, developing a policy of achieving consensus among a broader based segment of Chinese society.

From its very outset the peasant movement followed a policy of class struggle and opposition to the traditional order's institutions and groups. Even in Haifeng, where the peasants initially attempted not to threaten or antagonize the landlords, the unions established their power by seizing control of the markets and by fulfilling and replacing certain roles of the clans. Later rent reduction campaigns like the one in Kwangning hsien and the interest rate reduction campaigns of Haik'ang and Suich'i hsien were not negotiated but were straight forward demands made by the unions. Such a policy of confrontation and opposition, however, isolated and estranged the unions from the traditional sources of power in the villages. The unions had many enemies and few

allies in the traditional order. In many instances this is a probable explanation for why the unions failed to organize in some areas, and why some unions collapsed after they had been established. Frequently local power groups among the traditional order opposed the unions and held more power than the unions could compete with. Some organizers, realizing the weakness of their position in the local area, attempted to overcome this imbalance of power by seeking allies among the secret societies. Usually such attempts failed miserably, as was the case in the Hsichiang Region and most of the Chunglu Region.

In considering the reasons for the failure of the peasant movement in Kwangtung, it must be remembered that it was in Kwangtung that the Chinese Communists made their first attempts at organization of rural China. They learned a great deal very quickly during these years. In particular they developed organizational and information gathering techniques. Mao himself, as head of the sixth Peasant Institute, learned a great deal about what type of information to seek in the villages and how to collect it. Still, inexperienced and recently trained organizers often made mistakes. It was a period of trial and error, a period of experimentation, and as such it hampered the growth of the peasant movement.

The growth pains and inexperience of the movement are revealed quite clearly in the experience of the Peasant Institute. As each successive class graduated the curriculum became more sophisticated, but even the sixth Peasant Institute saw changes in its structure that attempted to correct for previous failings and to improve the quality

of the Institute's training. Because the training of students at the Institute was changed from class to class, the quality of the graduates varied once they found themselves in the field.

Another difficulty associated with the Peasant Institute was that it never supplied enough peasant union operatives to meet the demands of the peasant movement in Kwangtung. This shortage of trained staff existed because such a staff of union organizers had to be trained and organized from scratch. In addition the rapid growth of the movement's membership outstripped the efforts to train more personnel. The development of such a situation occurred at least partially as a result of the policy which deemphasized the Kwangtung peasant movement and exerted more effort in training personnel for the unions in central China.

As a result of the shortage of trained peasant union operatives, only enough organizers existed to promote unions in limited areas. Perhaps this helps explain why union development frequently concentrated in one hsien in a region, like Kwangning in the Hsichiang Region and Ch'uchiang in the Peichiang Region, and only after establishing itself in that hsien would the movement begin to spread to neighboring hsien.

The limited number of trained organizers not only hampered the geographical expansion of the movement, but it also weakened the movement's ability to organize and mobilize the peasants within the hsien that did unionize. In Huiyang hsien, for instance, because of the limited number of trained organizers only certain ch'u were unionized, and efforts to organize the remaining ch'u had to be postponed. Only

after the existing ch'u unions had been firmly established could effort be diverted to the remaining ch'u in the hsien.

With the number of graduates available from the Peasant Institute strictly limited, a certain amount of union leadership had to be raised from within the unions themselves. This presented a number of problems. Landlords frequently attempted to join and control the unions, thereby undermining their effectiveness. Even when the problem of landlord infiltration had been successfully dealt with, other factors of local leadership significantly shaped the development of the unions. For example, Haifeng hsien sent few of its union members to attend the Peasant Institute. Yet, the hsien developed the most powerful peasant organization in all of Kwangtung. This seems in part due to the fact that an able man, P'eng P'ai, gained the support of many young intellectuals and students in the hsien. They served as the core of organizers for the Haifeng peasant movement. They were also largely from the upper and middle classes, and because of their status in the local community the organization they created was not suppressed immediately.

The union organizers in Kwangning hsien, in contrast to those in Haifeng hsien, were poor peasants. Because they did not have sufficient funds they had to work to support themselves and could not devote all of their time and energy to union activities. They also met with immediate and persistent opposition from the landlords. The organizers in Kwangning may have been as capable as those in Haifeng, but they certainly did not have the same status or financial position. As a result the two hsien developed radically different peasant movements,

the Kwangning union being far less successful than the Haifeng union.

The above discussion goes a long way toward answering why the peasant movement eventually failed in Kwangtung, but it does not sufficiently answer why some areas in the province organized unions more successfully than other areas, or what factors aided or hampered the development of unions in the various regions. Unless one throws up his hands and says it was chance or fate, the only way to answer these questions is by comparing various conditions in the regions. By making such a comparison some striking patterns emerge and help explain the above questions; such a comparison also helps answer the question of why the movement collapsed.

The condition of communications and transportation influenced the development of the peasant movement in Kwangtung. Although Canton was the economic and political center of the province, the poor communications and transportation systems that plagued Kwangtung caused areas geographically removed from Canton to be relatively independent of the government in Canton. This situation both aided and hampered the peasant movement. When the Kuomintang Canton Government supported the peasant unions, proximity to Canton brought military and political support. Once the Kuomintang began to suppress unions, however, peasant unions near the city were more susceptible to attack. The experience of the unions in the Chunglu Region illustrates this condition quite well. Only with Kuomintang support could the unions penetrate the region, but after the April 1927 coup in Canton, the Chunglu peasant unions could not resist their local enemies or the government troops in Canton.

Being physically distant from Canton had its advantages and disadvantages as well. During the period of Kuomintang support for the unions, peasants in remote hsien found it difficult to obtain military support. The peasant movement in Kwangning hsien of the Hsichiang Region had to wait until the Merchant Volunteer Corps had been defeated before troops could be sent to aid their rent reduction campaign. Even after the troops arrived, they stayed only a short time and then hurried off to participate in the First Eastern Expedition. Regions like the Nanlu that were outside the Kuomintang's sphere of control until November 1925, received no military support from the Canton Government until that time. On the other hand, once the Kuomintang turned against the unions, the peasant movement located in regions distant from Canton proved more capable of maintaining their organizations. The unions on Hainan Island and in the Hailufeng area are perhaps the best examples of this.

The Hailufeng area was geographically remote from Canton, and in part this promoted a condition whereby political control of the area switched hands several times. The unique combination of these two factors dramatically shaped the development of the area's peasant movement. At the time P'eng P'ai first began to organize in the Haifeng area it was under the control of Ch'en Chiung-ming. Ch'en suppressed the Haifeng unions in 1923 because he felt they had connections with his rival Sun Yat-sen. After the First Eastern Expedition the unions sprang back up. Ch'en regained control of the area later in 1925 and suppressed the unions again. Once again the Kuomintang recaptured

the area, and the unions reorganized themselves. Each successive attack against the unions proved more violent, and each time the unions reorganized the peasants became more thoroughly politicized and radicalized. After the Second Eastern Expedition the peasants had become so militant and the local elite had been so weakened, that the peasants were able to seize control of and govern entire hsien. In this backhanded manner the location and political instability of the area aided the development of the peasant movement.

One would think that regional conditions critically influenced the movement's appeal to the peasant. In large measure regional conditions were shaped by the productivity and the density of its population. The Chunglu Region had by far the densest population of any region in Kwangtung, but it also produced more wealth than any other region in the province. It was therefore more capable of supporting a large population than an area like Hsichiang. Hsichiang had a dense population and was also agriculturally poor. The other regions of Kwangtung were agriculturally poorer than the Chunglu Region, but they did not support as dense a population as either the Chunglu or Hsichiang Regions. Either because of emigration, as was the case in the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region, or because the region had not been completely settled, as was the case on Hainan Island and in the Nanlu Region, they avoided the situation of too many people competing for relatively little produce that plagued Hsichiang. It therefore makes sense that one of the numerically largest peasant unions in the province would develop in Hsichiang Region's Kwangning hsien.

Contesting wealth and population density, however, does not present a complete picture of the situation in the various regions. Clearly, many factors influenced a region's conditions, and tenancy and the conditions of tenancy were extremely important in shaping the regional scene. Tenancy was prevalent throughout the province except on Hainan Island, and as many as 60% of the peasants were tenants in numerous regions. The highest rates of tenancy, however, existed in the Chunglu Region where as many as 90% of the peasants were tenants. The conditions of tenancy, however, were probably more significant in determining the peasant's condition than the actual fact of tenancy itself. Tenants usually paid their rents in kind, and rents of 50% of the season's crop were common, except in the Hsichiang Region where rents normally consisted of 60% of the season's crop. Poor productivity and intense competition for land in Hsichiang made the tenants vulnerable to the most extreme demands of their landlords. Throughout Kwangtung tenants could be physically abused by their landlords, but the Hsichiang Region saw the most violent of these situations. On the other hand, the most favorable rents and treatment that tenants received, appears to have occurred when the tenants rented land from a clan. This situation was prevalent in Mei hsien of the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region and in certain portions of the Chunglu Region. Tenants in the Chunglu Region who rented from subcontractors, however, suffered as severe exploitation as tenants in any other region in Kwangtung. Thus, the worst conditions existed in the Hsichiang and Chunglu Regions. In many parts of Chunglu, however, tenants who rented land appear to

have been treated quite fairly. Such varied conditions among the tenants in Chunglu made it difficult to organize the peasants along lines of tenants rights.

Despite the great number of tenants and the severe terms of tenancy in the Hsichiang Region and in much of the Chunglu Region, the peasant movement did not prove very successful in either of the two regions. This seems to have been due in large measure to the gentry in these regions. They were probably the most powerful gentry in all Kwangtung. In general gentry throughout the province controlled the min t'uan, but the self-defense forces that had developed in Hsichiang and Chunglu had no rivals in all of Kwangtung. In the Hsichiang Region the gentry had developed powerful forces to protect their interests from the region's bandit-secret society elements. Although they did not have the wealth at their disposal that the gentry from the Chunglu Region had available, they still developed formidable min t'uan forces. In the Chunglu Region it was not competition over scarce resources that generated powerful gentry, but competition over and control of vast amounts of wealth. The Chunglu gentry also frequently had close ties with the Kuomintang. As a result the Kuomin-tang often-times sided with the gentry against the peasants even before the collapse of the United Front. In the rest of the province the gentry held considerably less power than they did in the two regions discussed above. Furthermore only in the Hailufeng area, where the gentry and min t'uan were weakest, did the peasants gain control of the hsien. In addition this occurred largely because the gentry in the Hailufeng

area had supported Ch'en Chiung-ming against the Kuomintang. As a result even the more conservative members of the Kuomintang felt few qualms about abandoning the Hailufeng gentry to the wrath of the peasants.

Not only the gentry controlled self-defense forces; so did the clans. They also frequently held large tracts of land. Although clans did not wield a great deal of power on Hainan Island or in most of the Nanlu Region, their power in the Peichiang, Chunglu, Huichou, and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions was extensive. Most powerful in the Chunglu Region, the clans held hundreds of thousands of mou and virtually ran the villages. Although the peasants often suffered under extremely harsh conditions they did not know who to direct their frustrations against. Even though the clan frequently held the land, it also rented it to the peasant on relatively fair terms. In the intense competition for the wealth of the region, the clans served as a viable unit which the peasant clung to in the struggle for survival. With the clans so entrenched in the villages the peasant organizers found it extremely difficult to penetrate the local communities, and they could not match the strength of clan-controlled min t'uan.

Clans in the Huichou and Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Regions did not have the great wealth of the Chunglu clans, but they had developed great cohesion in the frequent clan and Hakka-Cantonese warfare that took place in the regions. It was largely due to the success of the peasant organizers in bringing an end to this clan warfare in Haifeng, thereby supplanting the clans, that the unions became powerful in the Hailufeng area. In other areas union organizers promoted conflict between the

peasants and single conspicuous clans. The Lin clan in Wuch'uan hsien and the Fang clan in P'uning hsien had both generated resentment over their positions of power and wealth, and were singled out by organizers for attack. In P'uning the conflict became very bloody, but proved inconclusive. In Wuch'uan the peasant movement had not developed sufficient strength prior to the collapse of the United Front, and as a result no attack was launched against the Lin clan.

Another source of armed force that existed throughout rural Kwangtung were the bandits. They could either support or oppose the peasant movement, but they frequently opposed it because they worked within and had established themselves in the traditional society which the peasant unions wished to destroy. Due to the great wealth available in the Chunglu Region, the bandits there acquired more power than in other regions. Nevertheless, in the Nanlu and Hsichiang Regions bandits had become quite formidable through their control of the Yunnan-Kwangtung opium trade. The weakest bandit forces existed in the Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region. In the Chunglu, Nanlu, and Hsichiang Regions, where the bandits held considerable power, they allied with the gentry and suppressed the peasant unions. Only the unions in the Hailufeng area and probably on Hainan Island, where the bandits posed little threat, did the unions persist after the outbreak of counter-revolution in mid-1926. The existence of bandits also frequently led to the development of a strong min t'u'an force in the same region. This meant that the peasants usually faced two opponents when there were bandits in the region. In the Hsichiang and Chunglu Regions for instance, both min t'u'an and bandits participated in the destruction of the peasant unions.

Although peasant unions faced severe opposition in regions where powerful bandit and min t'uan forces had developed, they also could draw on certain peasant grievances that persisted in the same regions. Areas that had organized powerful min t'uan, for instance, frequently created systems of numerous and excessive taxes. These taxes were collected ostensibly to pay for local self-defense. Quite often, however, they were used to milk the peasants and enrich the local elite. The peasants bitterly resented this situation, and union organizers throughout Kwangtung used the issue of excessive taxation to mobilize peasant support. As has been previously stated, however, the unions usually failed in spite of strong peasant grievances concerning taxation because of their inability to compete with local armed forces.

Changes in the economy and society also generated frustrations and discontent that the peasant movement attempted to utilize in organizational drives. Foreign contact, both economic and cultural, played a significant role in the changes Kwangtung underwent. The penetration of foreign goods like petroleum oil and cotton cloth certainly had its impact. Some native industries like sugar were destroyed by foreign competition. Others, like silk and a particular cloth produced in Swatow, however, actually increased their production. Women working in mills gained a certain amount of economic independence, and at least partially due to the influence of Christian missionaries women's rights organizations were developed. This began to alter the traditional family structure. Overseas emigration and foreign-style education

caused further changes in patriarchal power and the family system in general. Although pervasive, the impact of these changes and the attitude of the peasants towards them are difficult to assess.

In general, the centers of population and wealth around Canton and to a lesser degree Swatow had been the most deeply influenced by economic and social change. These areas had been in contact with the West longer than any other regions in the province, and commercialization and technological advancements had proceeded further. Yet, it was in areas peripheral to the centers of economic and social change, not in the centers themselves or in the most remote areas of the province, that the peasant movement had been most successful.

Perhaps this situation developed because the peripheral areas had felt the impact of industrial goods imported from Canton, Hong Kong, and Swatow, and had seen significant numbers of their residents depart for the cities in search of work. At the same time the peripheral area's productivity did not increase. Due to these conditions local unrest could generate a peasant movement while remote areas did not develop unions because they had not suffered the dislocations of the peripheral areas.¹

Another explanation might be that peasant organizers never were recruited from much of remote Kwangtung. Since unions usually were organized by operatives native to the locality in which they worked, this is a significant factor in the lack of development of unions in remote hsien. Perhaps few peasant organizers had been recruited from these hsien because the local people showed little interest in the

movement or had little knowledge of it. The movement, however, did begin to spread into these remote hsien by May 1927 once organizers began to work in them. Thus, it is possible that the limited number of peasant organizers and not lack of peasant interest that was chiefly responsible for the lack of unions in these hsien.

The economic and commercial centers of Kwangtung also developed relatively small peasant unions. Did this occur because the wealth in these centers raised the peasants' standard of living? Perhaps, but it should also be kept in mind that the great wealth generated in these centers also produced the most powerful gentry, clans, and bandits in the province. Unrest and dissatisfaction may have been as rife in these commercial centers as in the peripheral areas, but because of the great strength of the traditional order the peasants could not successfully organize. In addition, a great deal of unrest was exhibited in such centers. A large and militant labor union movement developed in these parts of Kwangtung in the 1920's. Many of these unions were in fact involved in either transport or agriculturally-linked industries, and the laborers themselves frequently maintained close ties with their native villages after arriving in the city. Thus, labor unrest expresses, among other things, peasant unrest.

Is the reverse of the above statement true? Does urban discontent find expression in rural movements? Eric Wolf in Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century states that peasants who worked in cities and still maintained ties with their local villages transmitted "urban unrest and political ideas" from the cities back to the villages.²

In Kwangtung the peasants that went to work in Canton frequently became involved in radical labor organization. It was just such a group of young men from Kwangning that formed the core of that hsien's peasant movement. Although this case is clear enough, the relationship between the radical ricksha coolies, natives of Hailufeng who worked in Canton, and the Hailufeng peasant movement is not clear.

Information on the role that ethnic differences played in the appeal of the peasant movement is also inconclusive. Certainly Hakka and Cantonese did not trust each other much, and also because of linguistic differences organizers probably had to be recruited, trained, and returned to their native localities. The effectiveness of an outside organizer working in areas checkered with Hakka and Cantonese villages was probably severely limited. Since so few graduates were available from the Peasant Institute, and because outside organizers were of limited use in mixed areas, this may at least partially explain why certain areas, like portions of Huiyang hsien, never organized unions. This is, however, purely speculative.

It is also uncertain how important anti-Christian campaigns became as a tool of mobilization for the peasant unions. Certainly they never flourished in areas where there were no missionaries and no converts. These campaigns seem to have gained significant support near Kuangchou Bay, the French concession on the Leichou Peninsula, where there were a number of French priests and their Catholic converts. Such campaigns also proved to be quite virulent near Swatow, which had a long history of missionary activity and sizeable groups of Chinese

Christians. Little else, however, can be said about their significance at this time.

Roy Hofheinz Jr., in writing of variables that may have influenced whether an area would be susceptible to Communist peasant organization, cites four major areas of concern. They are: potential grievances, political development, cultural conditions, and degree of modernization.³ His discussion of these variables covers all of China and includes not only the period of the peasant movement, but the Kiangsi Soviet period and the Yenan period as well. For these reasons its adaptability to this work is limited.

His list of potential grievances coincides with many of those discussed previously in this paper; inequality of land distribution, high rents, excessive and numerous taxes, high interest rates, and harsh landlord-tenant relations. As has been stated before, even though many of the above conditions existed simultaneously in each of the regions, grievances alone could not generate an active peasant movement.

The second variable begins to answer the question of what conditions were necessary to generate unions. In an attempt to categorize an area's level of political development Hofheinz deals with the size of bandit groups and KMT membership figures. He does not discuss gentry, min t'u'an, or clans. His belief that areas with strong bandit groupings generally resisted CCP penetration is clearly supported by the experience of the Kwangtung peasant movement as recorded in this paper. The Canton delta had a significant number of KMT members, and this area proved

resistant to unions as well. Certainly other factors entered in, but it was still a significant factor in stifling their development.

His discussion of cultural and modernization variables introduces a number of factors. Most significantly, however, he attacks the belief that the most modernized areas in China were also potentially the most revolutionary. This certainly was the case in Kwangtung, although the reasons why this phenomenon occurred are by no means certain.

In conclusion Hofheinz divides areas that fell under Communist control into three categories. The first he calls "radical hotbeds," or areas that generated a strong Communist minority, oftentimes produced national leaders, but due to their geographic location could not be held by the Communists. The second category, the "border area base," was an area where the revolutionary army could rest, but not an area securely under its control. A number of such areas developed in the Kwangtung hsien that bordered on Kiangsi Province in the late 1920's, but as a category this is really applicable only to a period that followed the collapse of the peasant movement in Kwangtung and we need not discuss it further. The same is true of the third category, or the "great rear area." This was an area remote, secure, and capable of resisting persistent attacks. Obviously enough, no such areas existed in Kwangtung, certainly not during the 1920's.

The only category that seems to have been found in Kwangtung was the first, and notably there were a number of such hotbeds in the province. Haifeng, of course, is the most obvious example, but certain

hsien on Hainan Island, and perhaps Kwangning hsien and several hsien bordering on Haifeng, like Lufeng, Huiyang, and P'uning also fit this category.

Conditions in rural Kwangtung during the 1920's proved to be miserable for the majority of the peasants. Discontent was deep, but its causes often disparate and hard to pinpoint. In addition forces that opposed peasant organization and social change were entrenched and powerful. How then could all this discontent and unrest be tapped and the peasants mobilized for social revolution? This was one of the chief problems that the Chinese Communists faced in Kwangtung, and in addition they had no previous experience upon which to draw. In their attempt to overthrow the traditional order they found themselves opposed to nearly every source of power in the countryside; gentry, min t'uan, clans, and bandits. At the same time they did not have their own military and failed to develop adequate self-defense forces. Thus, they were vulnerable to attack from their enemies who were often excellently armed. As a result, only in exceptional cases and under exceptional conditions where elements of the traditional order held relatively little power did the unions succeed even temporarily in establishing and maintaining themselves without outside military support.

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⁶ Chung-kuo nung min (CKNM) (The Chinese Peasant), X (October, 1926), 31.

⁷ Roy Hofheinz Jr., The Peasant Movement and Rural Revolution: Chinese Communists in the Countryside, 1923-1927 (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard, 1966), pp. 184-185.

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¹⁰ LSJ, I (1922), 67.

¹¹ LSJ, V (1926), 246; LSJ, I (1922), 72-77; North China Herald (NCH), Volume 139, p. 58 and p. 302.

¹² LSJ, VII (1928), 11; Myron L. Cohen, "The Hakka or 'Guest People': Dialect as a Sociocultural Variable of Patrilineal Bonds in a Chinese Village," Ethnohistory, SVI (1968), 248-250.

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¹⁴ LSJ, I (1922), 68-70.

¹⁵ LSJ, I (1922), 69.

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¹⁷ LSJ, XIV (1935), 582.

¹⁸ Ch'en, Agrarian Problems, p. 13 and p. 116; CYB, 1921-1922, pp. 24-26.

¹⁹ NCH, Volume 138, p. 446; Japanese Foreign Office, The Present Condition of China: With Reference to Circumstances Affecting International Relations and the Good Understanding Between Nations Upon Which Peace Depends, Document A (? July, 1932), p. 5 of Appendix A-1.

²⁰ NCH, Volume 138, p. 446 and Volume 157, p. 291.

²¹ CEJ, IV (1929), 604; Negishi, Minami Shina Nogyo Keizai Ron, pp. 76-79; LSJ, XII (1933), 266 and 269; CKNM, IV (1925), 383-410 and V (1926), 525-553. All information for the remainder of this section's discussion of the Nanlu Region is derived from the above pages in CKNM unless otherwise cited.

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²³ Besides CKNM as cited above see Ch'en, Agrarian Problems, pp. 115-116 and Hsin-hsiung Lin, The Kwangtung Provincial Land Investigation Records in the Taiwan Provincial Library, in a letter to E. Wickberg, March 21, 1968.

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²⁵ CYB, 1921-1922, pp. 287-288.

²⁶ This information on rent and rent conditions is found in nearly identical passages in both CKNM as cited above and in Ch'en Han-sheng, "Kwangtung sheng tsu-tien kuan-li," (Land Rent Practices in Kwangtung Province), Chung-kuo ch'ing-chi nien-chien (CKCJNC) (Chinese Economic Yearbook), I-III (Shanghai: Shanghai Commercial Press, 1934), pp. (G)239-(G)240.

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²⁸ Besides CKNM as cited above see NCH, Volume 143, p. 297, and Ch'en, Agrarian Problems, p. 33.

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³⁰ Hofheinz, The Peasant Movement, p. 91; LSJ, I (1922), 32 and XII (1933), 269; Chinese Economic Monthly, III (January-December, 1926), 211-214; CEJ, IV (1929), 604.

³¹ Hofheinz, The Peasant Movement, p. 92; LSJ, III (1924), 1-2.

³² Cohen, "The Hakka," p. 250.

³³ Hofheinz, The Peasant Movment, p. 92; Japanese Foreign Office, The Present Condition in China, p. 123.

³⁴ Hofheinz, The Peasant Movement, p. 94.

³⁵ CKCCNC, p. (G)238.

³⁶ Ch'en, Agrarian Problems, p. 115; Hofheinz, The Peasant Movement, p. 93.

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³⁸ LSJ, III (1924), 2, and VI (1927), 251 and 248.

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⁴⁰ Japanese Foreign Office, The Present Condition in China, p. 123; LSJ, V (1926), 257.

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⁴² CKCCNJ, pp. (G)238-(G)239.

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⁴⁴ Nankai Social and Economic Quarterly, LIX (1933?), 613-615; LSJ, VII (1928), 149.

⁴⁵ LSJ, II (1923), 75, 81-82, III (1924), 123, XII (1933), 57-59; CEJ, I (1927), 564, III (1929), 516.

⁴⁶ CEJ, IV (1929), 604, II (1928), 149.

⁴⁷ CKCCNC, p. (G)236. The information cited here and in later references to CKCCNC is also found in Nung-min wen-t'i ts'ung-k'an (NMWT) (Collection on the Peasant Question), (Canton ?: 1926?), p. 130 forward; LSJ, X (1931), 174.

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- ⁴⁹ CKCCNC, p. (G)235.
- ⁵⁰ CKCCNC, pp. (G)235-(G)236, (G)239.
- ⁵¹ CKCCNC, p. (G)239.
- ⁵² Japanese Foreign Office, The Present Condition in China, pp. 122-123 and p. 4 Appendix A-1.
- ⁵³ Ch'en, Agrarian Problems, p. 10.
- ⁵⁴ NMWTTK, pp. 130-133.
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- ⁵⁷ NCH, Volume 143, p. 875.
- ⁵⁸ NMWTTK, p. 130; Lin, Kwangtung Land Records, letter to E. Wickberg; Chinese Economic Monthly, III (January-December, 1926), 214, 296, 526; CEJ, I (1927), 876, 963; NCH, Volume 153, p. 528; LSJ, X (1931), 380.
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- ⁶⁰ Cohen, "The Hakka," p. 250; LSJ, VI (1927), 244-249, VII (1928), 18.
- ⁶¹ NMWTTK, p. 134; Ch'en, Agrarian Problems, pp. 31-37.
- ⁶² CKNM, III (March, 1926), 271-272; NCH, Volume 138, p. 61.
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- ⁶⁴ NMWTTK, p. 130; Ch'en, Agrarian Problems, p. 33.
- ⁶⁵ LSJ, VI (1927), 242, VII (1928), 18; Cohen, "The Hakka," p. 250.
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⁴¹ For a description of the Kwangning peasant movement see KNKM, pp. 139-147 and Hofheinz, The Peasant Movement, pp. 95-110.

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- ⁷⁷ CKNM, VI-VII (June-July, 1926), pp. 652-653, p. 773.
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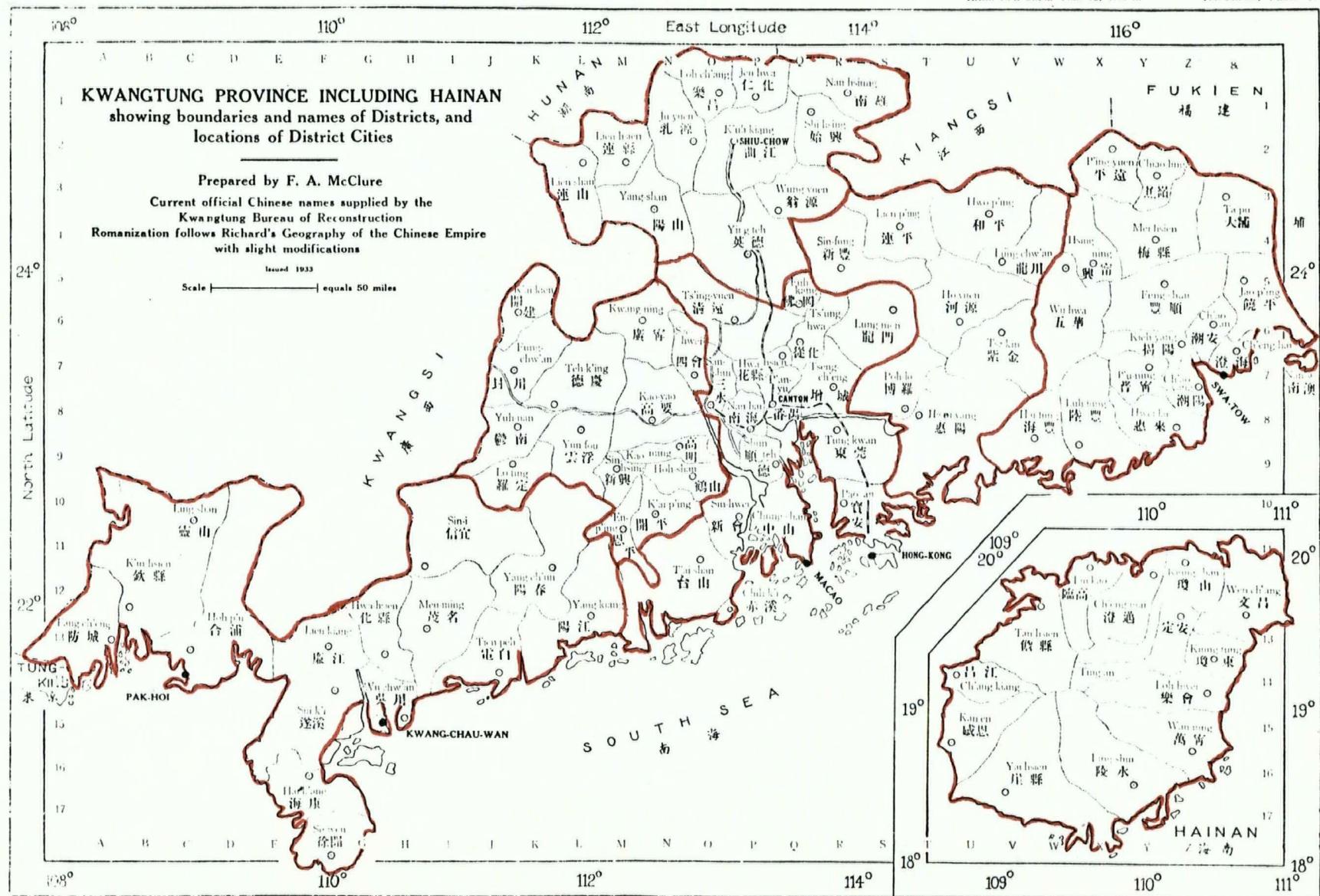
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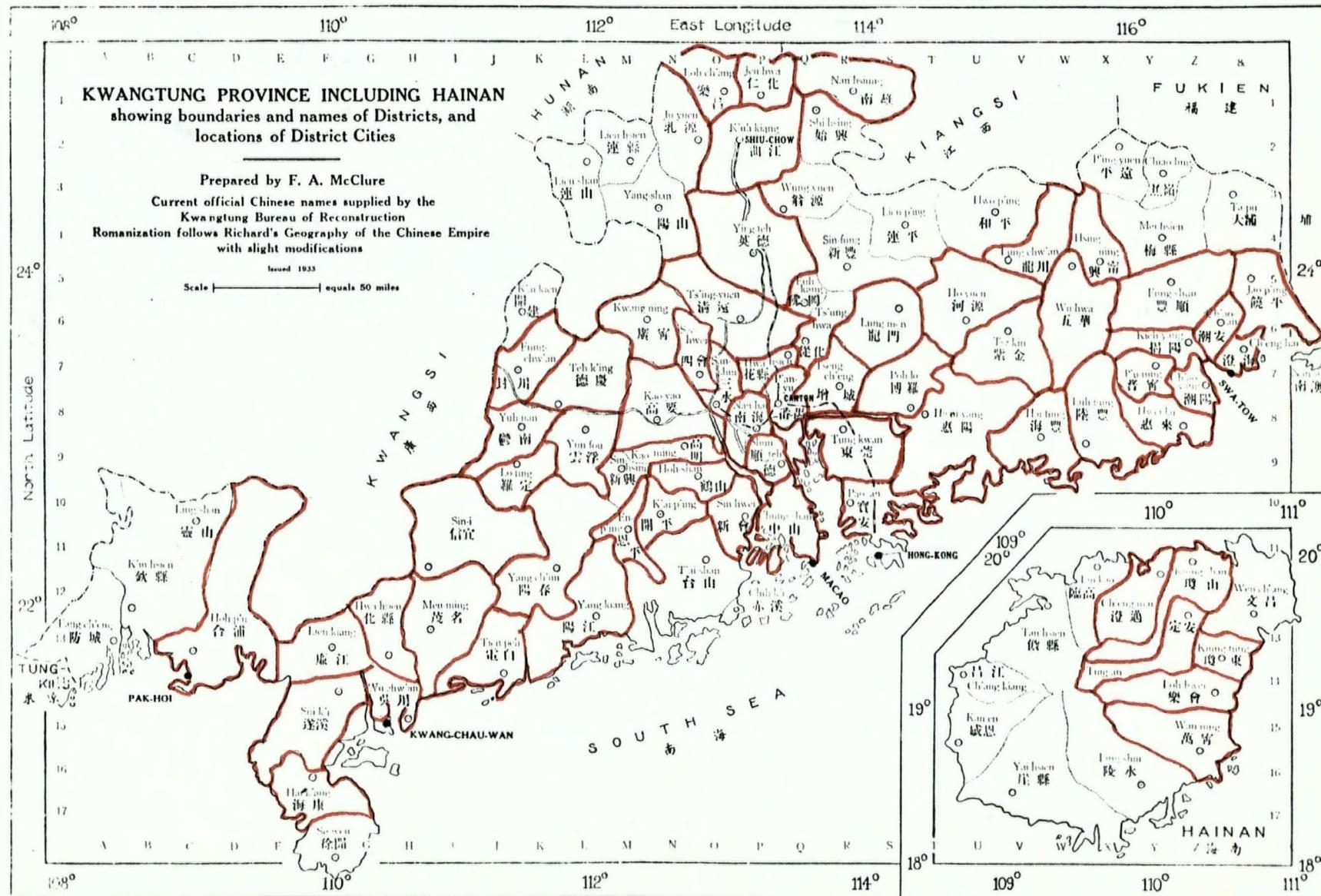
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APPENDIX I



Map 1 - Boundaries of Kwangtung's Seven Regions



Map 2 - Hsien Unions Organized by May 1, 1926

TABLE I

LIST OF HSIEN IN KWANGTUNG'S SEVEN REGIONS

<u>Ch'iumgyai Region or Hainan Island</u>	瓊崖
Ch'iumgshan hsien	瓊山
Ch'engmai hsien	澄邁
Tingan hsien	定安
Wench'ang hsien	文昌
Ch'iumgtung hsien	瓊東
Lohui hsien	樂會
Linkao hsien	臨高
Tan hsien	儋縣
Yai hsien	崖縣
Wanning hsien	萬寧
Lingshui hsien	陵水
Kanen hsien	感恩
Ch'angchiang hsien	昌江

<u>Nanlu Region</u>	南路
Maoming hsien	茂名
Tienpai hsien	電白
Hsin-i hsien	信宜
Hua hsien	化縣
Wuch'uan hsien	吳川

Table I - Continued

Nanlu Region (Continued)

南 路

Lienchiang hsien	廉 江
Haik'ang hsien	海 康
Suich'i hsien	遂 溪
Hsuwen hsien	徐 閩
Yangchiang hsien	陽 江
Yangch'un hsien	陽 春
Ch'in hsien	欽 縣
Fangch'eng hsien	防 城
Hop'u hsien	合 浦
Lingshan hsien	靈 山

Hsichiang Region

西 江

Kaoyao hsien	高 妥
Ssuhui hsien	四 會
Hsinhsing hsien	新 興
Kaoming hsien	高 明
Enping hsien	恩 平
Kwangning hsien	廣 寧
K'aip'ing hsien	開 平
Haoshan hsien	鶴 山
Fengch'uan hsien	封 川
K'aichien hsien	開 連
Tech'ing hsien	德 慶

Table I - Continued

Hsichiang Region (Continued) 西江

Loting hsien	羅定
Yunfou hsien	雲浮
Yunan hsien	鬱南

Peichiang Region 北江

Ch'üchiang hsien	曲江
Loch'ang hsien	樂昌
Jenhua hsien	仁化
Juyuan hsien	乳源
Wengyuan hsien	翁源
Yingte hsien	英德
Shihhsing hsien	始興
Yangshan hsien	陽山
Nanhsiuung hsien	南雄
Lien hsien	連縣
Lienshan hsien	連山

Chunglu Region 中路

Shih-chiao (metropolitan area of Canton)	市郊
Panyu hsien	番禺
Nanhai hsien	南海
Shunte hsien	順德
Chungshan hsien	中山

Table I - Continued

Chunglu Region (Continued) 中 路

Hsinhui hsien	新會
T'aishan hsien	台山
Tungkuau hsien	東莞
Paoan hsien	寶安
Tsengch'eng hsien	增城
Lungmen hsien	龍門
Hua hsien	花縣
Ts'unghua hsien	從化
Sanshui hsien	三水
Ch'ingyuan hsien	清遠
Ch'ihch'i hsien	赤溪
Fukang hsien	佛岡

Huichou Region 惠 州

Huiyang hsien	[惠 州 府] 惠陽
Polo hsien	博羅
Tzuchin hsien	紫金
Hsinfeng hsien	新豐
Lungch'uau hsien	龍川
Hoyuan hsien	河源
Hop'ing hsien	和平
Lienp'ing hsien	連平

Table I - Continued

<u>Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region</u>	潮 梅 海 陸 豐
Ch'aoan hsien	潮 安
Fengshun hsien	豐 順
Ch'aoyang hsien	潮 陽
Chiehyang hsien	揭 陽
Jaop'ing hsien	饒 平
Huilai hsien	惠 來
Tapu hsien	大 塟
Ch'enghai hsien	澄 海
P'unming hsien	普 寧
Wuhua hsien	五 華
Nanao hsien	南 澳
Hsingning hsien	興 寧
P'ingyuan hsien	平 遠
Chiaoling hsien	蕉 嶺
Mei hsien	梅 畧
Haifeng hsien	海 豐
Lufeng hsien	陸 豐

Source: Chung-kuo nung-min, 1926, pp. 643-644.

TABLE II
1923 PEASANT UNION MEMBERSHIP

Haifeng hsien	12,000
Lufeng hsien	7,000
Huiyang	4,000
Tzuchin hsien	3,000
P'uning hsien	500
Huilai hsien	300

Source: Chung-kuo nung-min, 1926, p. 362.

TABLE III
ORIGINS OF SECOND PEASANT INSTITUTE GRADUATES

<u>Chunglu Region</u>	<u>No. of Graduates</u>	<u>Hsichiang Region</u>	<u>No. of Graduates</u>
Shunte hsien	22	Kwangning hsien	20
Nanhai hsien	17	Kaoming hsien	3
Chungshan hsien	11	Yunfou hsien	3
Ch'ingyuan hsien	8	Kaoyao hsien	1
Hua hsien	7	Hsinning hsien	1
Panyu hsien	6	Loting hsien	1
Hsinhui hsien	4		
Tungkuan hsien	3		
<u>Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region</u>		<u>Nanlu Region</u>	
Haifeng hsien	5	Haik'ang hsien	1
Hsingning hsien	1	Suich'i hsien	1
Wuhua hsien	1		
Tapu hsien	1		
Chiehyang hsien	1		
Chiaoling hsien	1		
<u>Huichou Region</u>		Source: <u>Chung-kuo nung-min</u> , 1926, pp. 182-186.	
Huiyang hsien	2		
Lungch'uān hsien	2		
<u>Hainan Island</u>			
Ch'iungshan hsien	8		
Lohui hsien	3		
Wench'ang hsien	2		
Tingan hsien	1		
Wanning hsien	1		
Ch'engmai hsien (?)	1		

TABLE IV

ORIGINS OF THIRD PEASANT INSTITUTE GRADUATES

<u>Chunglu Region</u>	<u>No. of Graduates</u>	<u>Hsichiang Region</u>	<u>No. of Graduates</u>
Tungkuan hsien	18	Haoshan hsien	10
Hua hsien	12	Kaoyao hsien	5
Chungshan hsien	10	K'aip'ing hsien	2
Shunte hsien	7	Kwangning hsien	2
Canton metro area	6	Hsinning hsien	2
Ch'ingyuan hsien	4	Ssuhui hsien	1
Nanhai hsien	2	Yunfou hsien	1
Hsinhui hsien	1		
Sanshui hsien	1	<u>Nanlu Region</u>	
Fukang hsien	1	Suich'i hsien	1
<u>Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region</u>			
Haifeng hsien	4		
Ch'aoan hsien	4	Source: <u>Chung-kuo nung-min</u> ,	
Wuhua hsien	1	1926, pp. 190-193.	
<u>Huichou Region</u>			
Tzuchin hsien	5		
Huiyang hsien	4		
Lungch'u'an hsien	2		
Hoyuan hsien	2		
Polo hsien	1		
<u>Hainan Island</u>			
Wench'ang hsien	2		
Ch'iungshan hsien	1		
Lohui hsien	1		

TABLE V
ORIGINS OF FOURTH PEASANT INSTITUTE STUDENTS

	<u>No. of Graduates</u>	<u>No. of Auditors</u>
<u>Chunglu Region</u>		
Hua hsien	3	3
Tungkuan hsien	4	
Chungshan	3	
Panyu hsien	2	1
Tsengch'eng hsien	2	
Nanhai hsien	2	
Paoan hsien	1	
Ch'ingyuan hsien	1	
Shunte hsien	1	
<u>Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region</u>		
Wuhua hsien	2	
<u>Huichou Region</u>		
Huiyang hsien	4	
Tzuchin hsien	2	
Lungch'uan hsien	1	
<u>Hainan Island</u>		
Ch'itungshan hsien	3	
<u>Hsichiang Region</u>		
Kwangning hsien	2	
Tech'ing hsien	1	
<u>Nanlu Region</u>		
Suich'i hsien	5	
Haik'ang hsien	2	
Lingshan hsien		1
Leichou City		2
Hunan Province	3	7
Kwangsi Province	2	

Source: Chung-kuo nung-min,
1926, pp. 197-199.

TABLE VI

ORIGINS OF FIFTH PEASANT INSTITUTE GRADUATES

	<u>No. of Graduates</u>		<u>No. of Graduates</u>
<u>Chunglu Region</u>		<u>Nanlu Region</u>	
Hsinhui hsien	3	Suich'i hsien	3
T'aishan hsien	2	Yangchiang hsien	3
Hua hsien	1	Maoming hsien	1
Tsengch'eng hsien	1	Lingshan hsien	1
Shunte hsien	1	Hsin'i hsien	1
Paoan hsien	1		
Chungshan hsien	1	Human Province	44
Sanshui hsien	1		
Nanhai hsien	1	Shantung Province	7
<u>Ch'aomei-Hailufeng Region</u>		Hupei Province	7
Huilai hsien	2		
Chiehyang hsien	1	Kwangsi Province	6
<u>Huichou Region</u>		Kiangsi Province	4
Polo hsien	3		
Lungch'uan hsien	2	Anhwei Province	2
Hoyuan hsien	2		
		Fukien Province	2
<u>Hainan Island</u>			
Lohui hsien	6		
Ch'iungshan hsien	1		
<u>Hsichiang Region</u>		Source: Chung-kuo nung-min, 1926, pp. 203-207.	
Loting hsien	2		
Kwangning hsien	1		

TABLE VII
ORIGINS OF SIXTH PEASANT INSTITUTE GRADUATES

Kwangsi	40
Hunan	36
Honan	29
Hupei	27
Szechwan	25
Shantung	23
Ciangsi	22
Chihli	22
Shensi	16
Fukien	16
Anhwei	15
Chiangsu	10
Yunnan	10
Suiyuan	8
Chahar	5
Jeho	4
Kwangtung	2
Manchuria	2
Kweichow	1

Source: Ti-i tz'u kuo-nei ko-ming chan-cheng shih-ch'i ti nung-min yun-tung, Peking, 1953,
pp. 20-21.

TABLE VIII

CH'AOMEI-HAILUFENG REGION, MAY 1926 UNION
AND MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

<u>Hsien</u>	<u>Ch'u</u>	<u>Hsiang</u>	<u>Members</u>
Ch'enghai	1	4	1,591
Ch'aoan	16	128	11,304
Fengshun	0	12	480
Ch'aoyang	2	32	8,540
Chiehyang	3	75	6,430
Jaop'ing	2	33	1,917
Huilai	2	44	5,420
P'uning	7	144	14,944
Wuhua	8	222	41,419
Hsingning	0	8	911
Haifeng	11	660	194,411
Lufeng	9	510	65,000
 Totals	 62	 1,872	 352,367

Source: Chung-kuo nung-min, 1926,
pp. 650-651.

TABLE IX

HUICHOU REGION, MAY 1926 UNION
AND MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

<u>Hsien</u>	<u>Ch'u</u>	<u>Hsiang</u>	<u>Membership</u>
Huiyang	5	186	13,703
Polo	1	11	507
Tzuchin	4	66	9,681
Lungch'uan	3	37	2,870
Hoyuan	3	24	1,536
Totals	16	324	28,297

Source: Chung-kuo nung-min, 1926,
pp. 649-650.

TABLE X

CHUNGLU REGION, MAY 1927 UNION AND
MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

<u>Hsien</u>	<u>Ch'u</u>	<u>Hsiang</u>	<u>Membership</u>
Canton metro area	2	16	1,174
Chungshan	7	131	17,037
Nanhai	3	84	6,314
Panyu	3	56	5,414
Shunte	5	143	18,585
Hsinhui	2	45	9,479
Tungkuan	4	128	12,705
Tsengch'eng	2	30	3,267
Paoan	6	94	13,759
Lungmen	0	1	31
Hua	3	31	3,878
Sanshui	0	1	68
Ch'ingyuan	3	122	9,587
 Totals	40	876	101,298

Source: Chung-kuo nung-min, 1926,
p. 649.

TABLE XI
 HSICHIANG REGION, MAY 1926 UNION AND
 MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

<u>Hsien</u>	<u>Ch'u</u>	<u>Hsiang</u>	<u>Membership</u>
Kaoyao	1	177	28,658
Ssuhui	0	10	1,647
Enp'ing	0	8	813
Kwangning	25	239	66,122
K'aip'ing	0	15	876
Haoshan	0	5	435
Fengch'uan	0	3	166
Loting	3	73	4,188
Yunan	3	35	4,581
Yunfou	0	9	950
Tech'ing	1	32	1,800
 Totals	36	706	110,136

Source: Chung-kuo nung-min, 1926,
 pp. 652-653.

TABLE XII
 PEICHIANG REGION, MAY 1926 UNION AND
 MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

<u>Hsien</u>	<u>Ch'u</u>	<u>Hsiang</u>	<u>Membership</u>
Ch'uchiang	7	141	11,320
Loch'ang	3	33	1,698
Jenhua	0	10	453
Yingte	0	11	585
Nanhsiuung	0	16	1,346
 Totals	10	211	15,402

Source: Chung-kuo nung-min, 1926,
 pp. 653-654.

TABLE XIII
 NANLU REGION, MAY 1926 UNION AND
 MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

<u>Hsien</u>	<u>Ch'u</u>	<u>Hsiang</u>	<u>Membership</u>
Hua	0	1	359
Haik'ang	6	65	3,400
Suich'i	5	51	2,800
Yangchiang	1	10	1,000
Hop'u	0	3	234
Lienchiang	0	3	500
Tienpai	0	9	500
Wuch'uan	0	1	100
Maoming	1	7	1,200
Hsin-i	-	-	-
 Totals	 13	 144	 10,093

Source: Chung-kuo nung-min, 1926,
 pp. 651-652.

TABLE XIV
 HAINAN ISLAND, MAY 1926 UNION AND
 MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

<u>Hsien</u>	<u>Ch'u</u>	<u>Hsiang</u>	<u>Membership</u>
Ch'itungshan	0	23	2,156
Ch'engmai	0	17	1,420
Tingan	0	5	253
Lohui	0	18	1,439
Wanning	0	9	2,674
Ch'iungtung	0	2	922
 Totals	0	83	8,864

Source: Chung-kuo nung-min, 1926,
 p. 652.

TABLE XV

REGIONAL SUMMARY, MAY 1926 UNION AND
MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

<u>Region</u>	<u>Hsien</u>	<u>Ch'u</u>	<u>Hsiang</u>	<u>Membership</u>
Ch'aomei-Hailufeng	12	62	1,872	352,367
Huichou	5	16	324	28,297
Chunglu	13	40	876	101,298
Hsichiang	11	36	706	110,136
Peichiang	5	10	211	15,402
Nanlu	9	13	144	10,093
Hainan Island	6	0	83	8,864
 Totals	 61	 177	 4,216	 626,457

Source: Ti-i tz'u kuo-nei ko-ming chan-cheng
shih-ch'i ti nung min yun-tung, Peking,
 1953, pp. 38-39.

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