

**Militarism in Modern
China**
The Career of Wu P'ei-fu 1916-39

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Militarism in Modern China

The Career of Wu P'ei-Fu, 1916-39

ODORIC Y. K. WOU

DAWSON

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*For
my father-in-law
Wong Fook-Luen
whose dedication to history has
passed on to his son-in-law*

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Part One

Internal Politics

Introduction

It is my objective in this study first to write a biography of Wu P'ei-fu, a prominent Chinese warlord of the 1910s and 1920s, and secondly to combine it with a study of the phenomenon of militarism, in particular the specific military system over which Wu presided.

Biographical study is indispensable in the field of historical study. Individuals to some extent shape history and the study of a prominent individual provides us with an insight into his individuality. His social and educational background and his training have an influence, to be sure, upon his ideas and policies, and in turn on the manner in which he influenced the course of history. Therefore, by studying the career and ideas of an individual, we are actually looking at one of the forces of history.

Wu P'ei-fu (1874–1939) was one of the most powerful military-political leaders in China during the early republican period. He was one of the best known among the warlords.¹ After the death of his mentor, Yüan Shih-k'ai, in 1916, Wu gradually became the power behind the Chihli clique. Wu was a militarist who meant well. He was not very well educated, but he was a man of vision, who had an ideal to unify China by either negotiation or military force. To him, loyalty to one's superior was a cardinal virtue and, being a military leader of the early republican era, Wu had a rudimentary sense of modern nationalism. He defeated the pro-Japanese generals, Tuan Ch'i-jui and Chang Tso-lin in 1920 and 1922 respectively. From 1922 to 1924 he dominated the Peking government and attempted to realize his dream of the unification of the country. Betrayed by a subordinate, Feng Yü-hsiang, in October 1924, his military influence declined, but his armies were still the first major

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object of attack by the National Revolutionary Army when it launched its Northern Expedition in the summer of 1926. In 1927 Wu P'ei-fu's military power was destroyed and he went into retirement in Szechwan. Then in 1932, he moved to Peking, where he passed his last years. After his defeat the Japanese attempted to persuade Wu to preside over a 'puppet government' they were seeking to create, first for north China and later for all their conquered territories south of the Wall. Wu apparently negotiated with Japanese representatives, but he declined to be drawn into their plan. He died in Peking in December 1939. As Wu was such a prominent military-political figure, a study of his career is essential to our understanding of the warlord period in Chinese history.

A study of Wu's life and career inevitably raises some basic problems about Wu as a warlord. Undoubtedly warlords shared certain common characteristics; yet, it would be erroneous to assume that they were all alike. They came from different regions, had different social backgrounds, underwent different trainings and consequently embraced different ideas and visions.² Each had his own distinct individuality. It is logical, therefore, that Wu P'ei-fu should in some ways resemble and in other ways differ from other warlords of his period. It is of interest therefore to know precisely how he was different, what forces brought him up to a position of national prominence and whether he and his contemporary militarists took the same avenue up the social ladder. Moreover, warlords operated in a transitional period when China was under the heavy influence of Western values and technology.³ As he was both a Confucian student and a militarist trained in military science, we shall see how Wu resolved the conflict between Chinese values and Western technology, which some Ch'ing and Republican scholars struggled to answer, and how he proposed to blend East and West together.

Biographical study, however, is necessary but not sufficient. Analysis of an individual has inherent limitations. By focusing upon an individual and by relying upon his explanations for his actions, the researcher may fail to place the individual in his proper context. He may accept the individual's explanation for his actions, whereas the real explanation may rest elsewhere. An individual is a product of his environment and closely linked with it. His actions and ideas are constantly influenced by others. In short, he is a member of a group in which each member's action and behaviour influences the action and behaviour of others. Hence, a study of the career of Wu P'ei-fu inevitably leads us further into a study of the phenomenon of militarism, the environment in which he

operated and the military system within which Wu conducted his public career.

By militarism in the early republican period, I mean the structure and dynamics within or between military-political power systems organized for both civil administration and warfare in China during the 1920s. Leaders in these systems relied on military force as the final arbiter to all political and financial questions. The systems themselves were characterized by a structured hierarchy dominated by a military class whose ultimate existence depended upon their ability to utilize military force to suppress rival powers. In such power systems military sentiment and ideals were prevalent and military considerations overruled civilian interests. Militarism, therefore, was evidenced by the predominance of a military class in a governing hierarchy, prevalence of military ideals, and subordination of all other interests to those of the military.

Since coercive power was the basis of these systems, military efficiency became the paramount interest of militarist systems. Military efficiency was indissolubly linked with the command of all necessary resources of power and the maintenance of a large but cohesive military establishment. Hence these systems gave exceptional emphasis to military preparedness, acquisition of a desirable base, expansion of the military force, mobilization of all financial and economic resources and procurement of arms and ammunitions. Within the structured systems themselves, the primary concerns were distribution of power, allocation of bases and resources to various semi-autonomous sub-units, effectiveness of the concept of loyalty which integrated sub-units together, and relationships among leaders within the military organization. As each separate militarist system tended to maximize its own power, rival systems found themselves constantly in conflict in many areas. Each system either adopted a more militaristic policy and concluded alliances in anticipation of armed conflict, or sought peace through negotiations. As a result, inter-system relationships is one of the significant features of Chinese militarism.

In the 1920s in China, there were many militarist systems large and small. The Anfu clique of Tuan Ch'i-jui, the Fengtien clique of Chang Tso-lin, the Kuominchün of Feng Yü-hsiang, the Kueihsi of Li Tsung-jen, the Nationalist regime of Chiang Kai-shek and the Chihli clique of Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei fu are examples. These systems and groupings possessed common characteristics and yet each was distinctive. But it is not my purpose in this study to compare these regional systems, for we must await further research and closer analysis by scholars on other

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militarist groupings before a comparison becomes meaningful.⁴ My objective here is to relate Wu's political career to the specific military system – the Chihli military organization – over which he presided during the 1920s.

A number of analytic problems can be raised regarding Wu P'ei-fu's operation within the Chihli militarist system. These concern his basis of power – that is, resources – his use of power, and the relationships within and between militarist systems. An enduring military system had to have adequate military supplies and financial resources. To ensure an uninterrupted flow of tax revenues from his base area, Wu needed an elaborate and efficient civil-military administrative body which was responsible for securing adequate funds by tapping every possible financial resource in his base area, and for procuring enough military supplies to enable him to pursue his warfare. Therefore it is of great interest to find out what form of administrative organ Wu created, what revenues were considered by him most lucrative, how he expanded his army and from where he procured his arms and munitions, and from which group in the local society he extracted most of his military funds, the merchants or the peasants.

Efficient collection of funds depended upon the effective use of power in his domain. This required capturing and exercising tight control over important financial institutions in his region. It also implied that Wu had to put his own men in key positions in these institutions and back them by military power if their appointment should encounter local resistance. As a result, his area was under tight military control. Later we will consider the extent and depth of his control, whether he ruled the entire government operation, subordinating the civilian authority, and whether his rule was repressive and authoritarian.

An analysis of intra- and inter-system relationships is crucial to our knowledge of Chinese militarism. Problems of distribution of power, allocation of resources, loyalty and insubordination, cohesion and conflict were closely related to the structure of the system and the relationships between its leaders. The Chihli military organization, the system under analysis in this study, had a distinctly Chinese characteristic. A close look at the organization reveals that structurally the Chihli clique resembled a Chinese clan. Kinship in the system developed through provincial ties and tutor-student relationships. Militarists within the establishment assumed a status similar to the status of kinsmen within a Chinese lineage.⁵ Since Wu ultimately came to preside over this system, he must have assumed a very high position. It is important to consider what his status was in this clan-structured

hierarchy, how he operated in such a system, in what way he shared his resources with his kinsmen and how intra-organizational conflict affected his public career.

Inter-system relationships and politics, on the other hand, were dominated by personal gain, individual interest, desire for power and fear of the enemy's encroachment. As a result, militarists calculated, predicted and evaluated before they made a move in their chess game of politics. This resulted in the practice of secret negotiations and the formation of military coalitions in an attempt to achieve a power balance. After having been stripped not only of his power in the second Chihli-Fengtien War, but also of his vision of uniting China, Wu fell victim to the inter-organizational conflicts and alliance systems. He seems to have become motivated purely by a desire to regain power, willing to mortgage everything under his control for additional revenue.

The ways in which Wu persuaded, cajoled, bickered and bargained with his former subordinates such as Hsiao Yao-nan, Sun Ch'u-an-fang, Feng Yü-hsiang and settled his disputes with his erstwhile enemy, Chang Tso-lin, still remains a fascinating aspect of Chinese militarism.

From Humble Origin to National Prominence

The Confucian Background

Shantung, the birthplace of Wu P'ei-fu, is a peninsula that protrudes into the Yellow Sea. The province is so named because it is located east of the famous Tai-hang mountains. The western part of the province is mostly alluvial plain while the eastern part is mountainous. The Yellow River runs through the province into the ocean. It has an area of 55,000 square miles and had a population of approximately 30 millions in the 1920s.

Shantung was an early centre of Chinese civilization. Chüfu, a district in Shantung, was the home of Confucius. It is also the native province of Mencius, and the great military theorist, Sun Tzu. Chu-ko Liang, a strategist of the Three Kingdoms, Wang Hsi-chih, the well-known calligrapher and Fang Hsüan-ling, the Prime Minister of the T'ang dynasty, also came from this province. Shantung was the seedbed of the An Lu-shan Rebellion. With such an historical heritage, it is no wonder that Shantung natives are proud of being Shantungese.

In 1874, Wu P'ei-fu (t. Tzu-yü) was born in P'englai, into a poor family which depended entirely upon the income from a small shop owned by Wu's father, Wu K'o-cheng. The family financial situation diminished with the death of Wu's father, when Wu was only fourteen. In the same year, his family engaged him to be married, although the girl died before the marriage could take place. After their father's death, Wu and his brother, Wu Wen-fu, were brought up by their mother, who

earned her living by engaging in some domestic industry. In order to eke out their living, Wu was sent to the naval barracks of Tengchou Prefecture to serve as a sailor, a position from which he could draw a monthly stipend.¹

At Tengchou, Wu applied himself vigorously to his study. As they met only twice a week for their studies in the naval barracks, he was able to devote much of his time privately preparing for the district examination.² He studied under a scholar, Li P'i-shen (t. Han-ch'ing) who gave lessons in the traditional classics of Confucius, Mencius, Shao Yung and Lao Tzu. Wu absorbed the concepts of morality, benevolence, righteousness and propriety. He was particularly impressed by the loyalty of Yüeh Fei and Kuan Yü.³ Following the traditional path to success, Wu took the district examination in 1897 and obtained the *sheng-yüan* degree at the age of twenty-three.⁴

Thus, from his youth, Wu was greatly influenced by classical literature, which extolled the virtues of loyalty, filial piety, selflessness and, to a certain extent, patriotism. Jacob G. Schurman, the American Minister in China, gives a very appropriate description of Wu, when in a letter to the President of the United States, he states that Wu was very 'Chinese'.⁵ What he meant was that Wu was very 'Confucian'. The traditional virtues of loyalty, selflessness and patriotism that Wu acquired from the classics were further strengthened after he enlisted in the Peiyang army.

Motivation for Choosing a Military Career

With his classical education and *sheng-yüan* degree, Wu might have been expected to take the provincial examination and follow the established path of upward mobility through the civil service ranks. Different theories have been given to explain why he decided to join the army in 1898 rather than follow the traditional social path through examinations. T'ao Chü-yin and Chu Chi maintain that Wu was addicted to opium smoking and that it was in an opium den that he quarrelled with a member of the local gentry and was thereby forced to leave his native province. Thereafter he enlisted in the army.⁶ On the other hand, Okano Masujiro, a Japanese biographer of Wu, states that Wu was motivated by a sense of nationalistic feeling when he decided to join the military academy. Okano asserts that Wu witnessed the Japanese attack on Shantung, his native province, in 1895 and hence was moved by a nationalistic feeling to save his country.⁷ Okano was

later, in the 1920s, Wu's adviser in Loyang. He might, therefore, have exaggerated Wu's nationalistic feeling. However, both interpretations are, to a certain extent, correct. Wu was indeed an unruly type of youth and his decision to join the army was made after he had left his native province. On the other hand, the dramatic attack by the Japanese on P'eng-lai in 1895 probably had some influence on Wu P'ei-fu.⁸ However, Okano, T'ao Chü-yin and Chu Chi miss one important point. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, examination degrees became less attractive to the younger generation as an avenue of upward mobility while a military career was looked upon more and more as a quick way of climbing the social ladder.

At this time, during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, China was undergoing change. The traditional society which focused on stability and integration, was passing through a transitional phase of change with the introduction of modern technology and Western ideas. Western arms and warships were being introduced to strengthen the nation against foreign aggression and gradually there emerged an enthusiasm among some of the scholar-gentry to reform and modernize the government within the framework of a constitutional monarchy.

The introduction of Western ideas and technology in China had affected the life not only of the intellectuals but also of the poor. The construction of telegraph lines, railroads and modern factories made them very much aware of the presence of foreign technology in China. They saw the impotence of the imperial government in defending their nation against foreign encroachment when China was defeated again and again in wars, and many of them rose up in rebellions. The Boxers even armed themselves against foreign attack. But what actually affected the growth of militarism among the poor was the constant formation and expansion of the Chinese army in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The militia and the rank-and-file soldiers of the armies created in the late Ch'ing – whether the regional armies of governors Tseng Kuo-fan, Li Hung-chang and Tso Tsung tang or the new self-strengthening army and the Peiyang army of the two army modernizers, Chang Chih-tung and Yüan Shih-k'ai respectively – were recruited from the lower strata of Chinese society.

The military also became a channel of upward social mobility. The lower strata of society began to provide the essential manpower for the rank and file soldiers, and for the officer corp many were recruited from a broader and relatively lower base, mostly men of modest social background. Jerome Ch'en has given us a rough figure. Out of the 1,300 biographical sketches of the warlords that he has analysed, only 30 per

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Table 1 Warlords of Humble Origin

Name	Social Origin
Meng En-yüan, <i>tuchün</i> of Kirin	an acrobat
Wang Chan-yüan, Inspecting Commissioner of Hupeh and Hunan	a water-carrier in Feng Kuo-chang's family
Ts'ao K'un, President of the Republic	a hawker selling cloths
Chang Tsung-ch'ang, <i>tupan</i> of Shantung	a mine-labourer in Kirin and later a vagabond
Chang Hsün, <i>tuchün</i> of Anhwei	a page boy, later a cook of Su Yüan ch'un, the Kwangsi governor
Chang Ching-hui, Commander of 1st Division of the Fengtien army	bean-curd seller and later a bandit
Wu Chun-sheng, <i>tuchün</i> of Heilungkiang	illiterate, from a poor family selling horses in Inner Mongolia, later a bandit
Chin Yün-p'eng, Premier	Tuan Ch'i-jui's horse-keeper
Chang Huai-chih, Chief-of-Staff	from a poor family, once had to seek shelter in a temple
Hsiao Yao-nan, <i>tupan</i> of Hupeh	from a poor family
Feng Yü-hsiang, Northwest Frontier Commissioner	from a poor family
Chang Tso-lin, Inspecting Commissioner of Manchuria	received no education, later a bandit
Lu Yung-ting, Inspecting Commissioner of Kwangsi	a leader of bandits
T'ang Yü-lin, <i>tut'ung</i> of Jehol	a bandit
Chang Tso-hsiang, <i>tuchün</i> of Kirin	a bandit
Chang Lieh-ch'en, <i>tuchün</i> of Kirin	a bandit
Chi Chin-shun, <i>tut'ung</i> of Jehol	a bandit
Chin Yün-e, Civil Governor of Honan and Commander of 14th Division	from a poor family
Sun Ch'u-an-fang, Commander-in-Chief of Kiangsu, Chekiang, Anhwei, Kiangsi and Fukien	from a poor family

Note: The above table is drawn up from the following sources: Chang Chun-ku, *Wu Pei-fu ch'u'an*, Chuan-chi wen-hsueh tsa chih she, Vols 1 and 2, Taipei 1968. T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vols 1-6, San lien shu tien, Peking 1968. Ch'ih Sung-tzu, *Min-kuo ch'un ch'iu*, Hai-tien wen-hua fu-wu she, Hong Kong 1961. Hsü Chin-ch'eng, *Min-kuo wai-shih*. Shih-yung ch'u-pan-she, Hong Kong 1955. Sonoda Kazukki, *Hsin Chung-kuo jen-wu chih*, Liang-yu, Shanghai, 1930. Yü Ming, *Chang Tso-lin wai chuan*, Yü chou ch'u-pan-she, Hong Kong 1967. James E. Sheridan, *op. cit.* The terms *tuchün*, *tupan* and *tut'ung* mean military governor.

cent of them were 'educated', the rest being either illiterate or semi-literate people.⁹ A number of the well known warlords came from very humble social origin. These include a president, a premier, a chief-of-staff, a few inspecting commissioners, commanders-in-chief of armies and a host of military governors.

With the constant decline in prestige of the civil service examination

system and the rapid expansion of the army, the military profession became more attractive to young men of relatively humble origin. As a student in a military academy, a young man was given a stipend. The material reward would be much more once he was enlisted. The army offered better security and greater opportunity as it was in a process of rapid expansion. Moreover, the army represented part of the modern structure that China was building at that time. It was modelled upon the German and the Japanese military forces. Soldiers were trained by foreign instructors to fight with modern weapons. The government also sent students to Japan to study in the Japanese Military Officers Academy and the returned students were later recruited into the new army as officers. All these must have had a tremendous effect on a young man making his career decision.¹⁰

To the poor, the more visible part of the military prestige might have a greater influence. Military officers wore embroidered official robes with red tassels. They wore hats with the peacock tail. They had music played at meals. Horns and symbols announced their coming. They lived luxuriously in grand mansions with large courts. They had maids, carpenters and masons working for them. Every year they participated with other government officials in the sacrificial ceremonies in the temple. These were the privileges normally associated with the scholar-gentry.¹¹

In contrast to the military, the *sheng-yüan* degree did not represent such an advancement, at least materialistically. Chang Chung-li classifies *sheng-yüan* degree holders in the category of lower gentry, almost equivalent to a commoner.¹² A *sheng-yüan* was barred from participation in a number of official ceremonies. He was not accorded the privilege of wearing official buttons designating rank. He had to take an examination every three years if he wanted to keep his degree. No wonder the list of personnel in the New Army reveals quite a number of degree-holders, who apparently had forsaken the examination path for the military profession.¹³ Especially for those of humble origin such as Wu P'ei-fu, a military career might appear a secure and promising profession.

There is no conclusive evidence to say that Wu chose a military career because he was ambitious for advancement. However there is evidence to say that because of circumstances he was forced from his native province to live in Peking where he met his cousin Wu Liang-fu who persuaded Wu to join the army.¹⁴

For any young man such as Wu there were four possible ways to make a career in the army.¹⁵ (1) Join the army and rise through the

ranks, *hang-wu*, for example Chang Huai-chih, Chin Yün-e, Yen Hsiang-wen and Ma Lung-piao. (2) Join the Peiyang Military Academy in Tientsin or Paoting, for example Chin Yün-p'eng, Wang Chan-yüan, Ho Feng-lin, Hsiung Ping-ch'i and Wu P'ai-fu. (3) Enlist in the army in Manchuria or join the Shanhakuan Military Academy, for example Lu Yung-hsiang, Wu Chun-sheng, Chang Tsung-ch'ang. (Most of these militarists later became staff officers of the Fengtien clique.) (4) Go abroad and study in the Military Staff Officers Academy in Tokyo, the *Nippon Shikan Gakko*, for example Sun Ch'uan-fang, Chang Shu-yüan, Chü Tung-feng, Kung Pang-to, Chang Huai-pin, Kung Fan-lin and Li Ch'eng-lin. (These men were comparatively younger in age, and had the ambition and vision to go abroad to take up military study.)

Wu could not afford to go to Japan unless he received a government grant. Unfortunately such a scheme was not established until much later, in 1902. Wu, therefore had three options. He chose the first one, the one recommended to him by his cousin, and joined the *Wu wei chün*, the *Wu wei* army, in Tientsin. Later he was fortunate to be able to choose the second way and become part of the Peiyang military system, a necessary qualification for his later success.

Military Education

Wu became a guard in a company of the *Wu wei chün* and later was transferred to be in charge of official documents under Kuo Hsü-tung, a secretary of the company, who later became Wu's chief secretary in the 1920s. The *Wu wei chün* was broken up during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900; its commander, Nieh Shih-cheng, died in action on the outskirts of Tientsin when the city fell to the foreigners. With the collapse of the *Wu wei chün*, Wu, now about twenty-six years old, drifted to a small town named K'aip'ing, northeast of Chihli, where he entered the K'aip'ing Military Preparatory School.

Previously, the K'aip'ing Military Preparatory School was called the Tientsin Military Preparatory School, commonly known as the Tientsin Military Academy. The Tientsin Academy was established in 1885 by Li Hung-chang, who enlisted the aid of Germans as instructors. In 1900 this academy was transferred to K'aip'ing and renamed K'aip'ing Military Preparatory School. Sun Pao-ch'i was then the director. Under Sun's leadership, the School expanded.

Immediately after the Military Preparatory School was transferred to K'aip'ing in 1900 Wu sent in his application. Although he passed the

written examination, he failed the physical, being underweight. He persevered and was finally admitted.

In September 1901, Yüan Shih-k'ai, the future 'father of the warlords', was by imperial edict appointed Peiyang Commissioner. He was ordered to proceed to Hsiaochan near Tientsin to train a new army. In addition to the formation of a new *Ch'ang-pei chün*, Regular Standing Army, Yüan moved the K'aip'ing Military Preparatory School to Paoting and reorganized it into the Paoting Military Academy or Peiyang Military Academy, *Pei-yang wu-pei hsüeh-t'ang*, as it was commonly called. The students at K'aip'ing were subsequently transferred to Paoting. Since the training of the Peiyang Military Academy took three years, Wu might have thought that he would climb the ladder faster by joining the Tientsin Gendarmerie, a regiment also formed by Yüan. He applied and was appointed a senior sergeant. In a few months time, he was promoted to be the master sergeant and the following year in 1902, he became a first lieutenant.¹⁶

In that year Yüan Shih-k'ai established in Paoting the School for Military Officers with abridged courses, *Lu-chün su-ch'eng hsüeh-t'ang*, a branch of the Peiyang Military Academy. The purpose of the school was to train more lower rank officers in the army. Two courses were given, a second course which lasted over two and a half years, and a first course which lasted only a year and a half. Students in the first course were only required to make a special study of military sciences. Wu joined this course and took lessons in surveying and cartography.

Military education exposed Wu, for the first time, to foreign technology and specialists. In a way, it made him aware of the relative technological backwardness of his own country; instructions in surveying and cartography were at that time given by Japanese. They taught Wu to draw sketches and to map out areas in detail, with the appropriate signs and symbols necessary for military operation. He not only had to handle but also had to familiarize himself with the structure of instruments such as compass, theodolite, surveying and cartographic lenses and scale rulers.¹⁷ Such lessons must have been very different from those he had from his scholarly teacher while preparing for the district examination. Army training was, therefore, a process of acculturation for some members of the traditional society. To a small degree, it turned Wu from a man tied to the sheltered world of tradition into a 'modernized man'. It provided him with an opportunity to acquire technical skills valuable to the modernization of his country.

In addition to the technological aspect, military training moulded Wu's character and outlook. It completely changed his style of life from

one of unruliness to one of discipline. The regulations, which had to be learned by heart, were basic spiritual training for all soldiers. Military life stressed group solidarity, cultivated a 'fighting spirit' and prepared him with an uncritical willingness to face danger.

Military education reinforced Wu's earlier conditioning towards hierarchical subordination, and prepared him to accept military authority. Yüan Shih-k'ai's military rules placed heavy emphasis on loyalty and propriety. Those rules specified that since soldiers were supported by their nation (here the character *kuo* and not *t'ien hsia* was used), they had the obligation to defend it to the very last. A soldier should therefore be 'loyal to the dynasty and proprietous to the nation, *kuo*.' Other regulations touched upon Confucian ideas of sense of shame, honesty and protection of the people. The basic concept of the five cardinal virtues permeated the whole body of martial law. The martial song, *Ch'üan ping ko* (A song exhorting soldiers), which all the soldiers sang, was saturated with Confucian philosophy.¹⁸ These Confucian concepts were not unfamiliar to Wu; they embodied the very ideas he had learned in his earlier education.

The experience was also a politicizing experience. It made Wu aware of the political dimension of the society. The army often intruded upon national politics, and as a part of that organization, Wu could not but be aware of what was happening both within his own country and between it and other nations. Moreover, Yüan's military regulations contained a tone of xenophobia; he described China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War 1894–95 as a 'national humiliation' and demanded that it be avenged. By giving them a common national enemy, Yüan provided the soldiers with a sense of national identity, thus enlarging their political selves.¹⁹

With the 3rd Division of the Peiyang Army

Wu graduated in 1903 and was recruited as an officer by the Peiyang Committee for Drilling Troops, the director of which was Tuan Chih-kuei. His first assignment was to assist the Japanese in espionage work.

The Russo-Japanese War broke out in 1904. China declared her neutrality but could not prevent the Russians and Japanese from fighting their war in Manchuria. Secretly, China co-operated with Japan. On one occasion Yüan Shih-k'ai chose a group of sixteen students, including Wu P'ei-fu, and placed them under a Japanese officer, Major Morita Rien. They first had to take a course in espionage work in Chefoo before being

despatched to the field. Wu was instructed by Morita to carry out espionage activities in Shantung, Korea and Manchuria and to send all pertinent information directly to Yüan.²⁰ For his faithful and active work, and upon the recommendation of Morita, Wu was recalled to Tientsin by Yüan and promoted captain. During his short stay at home, Wu married the niece of a local gentryman of P'englai. Soon after the wedding, he returned to Manchuria, was caught by a Russian army unit and sent to Mukden. Two months later, he was found guilty of espionage and sentenced to be executed but during transit from Mukden to Harbin, he managed to escape his Russian captors. When the war ended he was awarded a medal by the Meiji Emperor.²¹

After the war Wu served temporarily under Tuan Ch'i-jui in the 3rd Division.²² Later he was promoted to second in command and then in October 1906 became the Commander of the First Battalion of the 11th Regiment of the 3rd Division. It was when Yüan Shih-k'ai memorialized the throne that the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 6th divisions be placed directly under the control of the Ministry of War, that Wu began to serve under his new master, Ts'ao K'un, who replaced Tuan as commander of the 3rd Division. From then on, Wu was closely connected to the 3rd Division and to his new superior, Ts'ao K'un.

In the winter of 1907, under the commands of Tuan and Ts'ao, the 3rd Division was transferred outside Shanhaikuan to Changchun on a mission of 'bandit suppression.' During his stay at Changchun, Wu continued privately his study of Shao Yung's Neo-Confucianism, at the same time conducting a survey of the Sino-Russian border in Manchuria. The following year in Changchun, he married his second wife, Chang P'ei-lan, the daughter of a local gentryman. Chang was to be Wu's life-long companion. She had an unusually forceful personality. She would accompany her husband into the war zone. She was completely at home on troop trains, never complained because of war rations, heat and cramped quarters – very unusual for a Chinese woman of her standing. She even cheered up the wounded soldiers in military and missionary hospitals.²³ Soon after their marriage, Wu was transferred to the post of Commander of the 1st division of the 3rd Artillery Regiment.²⁴

Wu might have been just an ordinary commander like the others, gradually rising through the ranks, had there not been a chance for him to save his army from captivity. It came during the Revolution of 1911. Since her defeat by the British in the Opium War in 1840, the Ch'ing dynasty began to decline. During the latter part of the nineteenth century the nation was beset by internal rebellion and external foreign threat.

Efforts had been made to restore and reform the country but to no avail. The Ch'ing government became more and more inefficient and faced a dwindling inflow of revenues. Since 1894, a group of revolutionaries under the leadership of Sun Yat-sen,²⁵ had formed a revolutionary organisation called the Society to Restore China's Prosperity, with branches in Hawaii, Macao, Hong Kong and Canton. A similar organization called the Society for the Revival of China was founded by Huang Hsing in Hunan in 1913. These two societies later merged to form the Revolutionary Alliance in Japan in 1905. The revolutionaries sought to overthrow the Manchus and form a republic. Since 1895 ten attempted insurrections had been made by the revolutionaries and all ended in failure.

On 10 October 1911, as a result of an accidental bomb explosion and the subsequent execution of several revolutionaries by the Ch'ing officials at Hankow, the republicans at Wuchang revolted. In a very short while, Hankow, Hanyang and Wuchang, the three important cities on the Yangtze River, fell into the hands of the revolutionaries. Szechwan declared its independence from the central government and was followed by Hunan and Shansi. The flame of revolt spread to other provinces. Very soon, the military leaders of Yunnan, Kiangsi and Chekiang declared themselves sympathetic to the revolutionaries. Unable to cope with the situation, the Manchu government recalled Yüan Shih-k'ai on 15 October and installed him as Premier, with supreme command of the army and navy. By this move, the Manchus hoped to save the Ch'ing regime.

On 15 October, Ts'ao K'un received an instruction from Yüan to mobilize the 3rd Division at Chinghsing, a town facing the Niang-tze Pass on the Chihli border and be prepared to assault the Pass in the morning. On that evening, in the train, Commander Liu, Wu's immediate superior, who had worked out a plan with the revolutionaries, was to deliver the 3rd Division to the revolutionary camp. The plan was discovered by Wu and Liu was immediately arrested. Since then Wu was taken into the confidence of Ts'ao K'un.

After the Manchus abdicated, Yüan Shih-k'ai, in order to strengthen his position vis-a-vis the revolutionaries, transferred the 3rd Division to Peking. By this action, the 3rd Division was able to play a significant role in Yüan's bargain with the revolutionaries.

Since the outbreak of the Wuchang Revolution, Yüan had been 'sitting on the fence and turning with the favourable wind'. In November 1911, Sun Yat-sen, titular leader of the revolutionaries, offered Yüan the Presidency of the Republic in return for his support for

the revolutionary cause. Yüan accepted. He then arranged for the abdication of the Emperor. The terms of settlement were finally agreed upon and the Manchus abdicated on 12 February 1912. A final edict issued by the Emperor transferred the power of government to Yüan. The Manchu rule finally came to an end.

After the abdication of the Manchus, Yüan objected to the transfer of the capital to Nanking, which was demanded by the provisional government in the south. As an excuse for remaining in Peking, he ordered the 3rd Division to mutiny at Nan Yüan on 29 February 1912.²⁶

Wu P'ei-fu played the role of suppressor in this riot. Following Ts'ao K'un's orders, he commanded his troops to 'quell the rebels and to bring the 3rd Division back to Yüan allegiance'. As a reward, Wu was decorated by Yüan.²⁷ By instigating the so-called Nan Yüan riot, Yüan Shih-k'ai obtained what he wanted. He took up the Presidential office in Peking. Wu P'ei-fu, the actor, was promoted to the rank of Chief Adjutant of the 3rd Division.

Yüan came to have confidence in the leaders of the 3rd Division. In the routing of the Kuomintang²⁸ after the Second Revolution 1913,²⁹ Yüan assigned the task to Ts'ao K'un, appointing him at the same time Commander-in-Chief of the Upper Yangtze. He also sent the 3rd Division to Yüehchow, a strategic point in Hunan. As a subordinate of Ts'ao, Wu followed his superior south. A year later, upon the recommendation of Ts'ao, Wu was promoted to the rank of Commander of the 6th Brigade of the 3rd Division.

Both Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu served Yüan Shih-k'ai up to the very end. They never openly challenged Yüan's monarchical plan.³⁰ When Ts'ai Ao and T'ang Chi-yao, two Yunnan generals, led their National Protection Army in December 1915 in an expedition against Peking as a protest against the imperial movement, the 3rd Division faithfully carried out Yüan's instruction of obstructing the advance of the Yunnan army in Szechwan. Wu commanded the 6th Brigade in the fight, which came to an end only after Yüan died on 6 June 1916, and the 3rd Division was recalled from the south and stationed at Paoting. Hence Wu followed Ts'ao back to Chihli.³¹

Wu's role in these operations was crucial for his career as a militarist. By joining the 3rd Division, he gained entrance *into* the Peiyang military system, since the 3rd Division was the main fighting unit of the Peiyang army. Thus he later became one of the Peiyang warlords, *Peiyang chün-fa*. Moreover, the 3rd Division was the very channel through which Wu found his way to success. In the ten years between 1906 and 1916, he rose from Battalion Commander to Brigade Commander within the 3rd

Division. By 1916, at the age of forty-three, Wu was immediately below Ts'ao K'un, the Division Commander. Such rapid advancement was achieved partly by chance, as a result of the Shansi Incident, when Wu was taken into Ts'ao's confidence. But since the 3rd Division was so important to Yüan Shih-k'ai there was actually more opportunity for advancement in it than in other divisions. With the death of Yüan Shih-k'ai, the stage was set for a period of warfare and turmoil. Rapid rise to power almost became the order of the day.

Disintegration within the Peiyang Army

By virtue of his position as founder of the Peiyang military system, Yüan Shih-k'ai was able to hold his subordinates together for a time. An authoritarian leader such as Yüan could act as a centripetal force. The sociometric picture of an authoritarian group is described by Krech, Crutchfield and Ballachey using a star-shaped diagram, with the leader at the centre of the radial strands and with few circumferential relationships among the followers (see Figure 1).³²

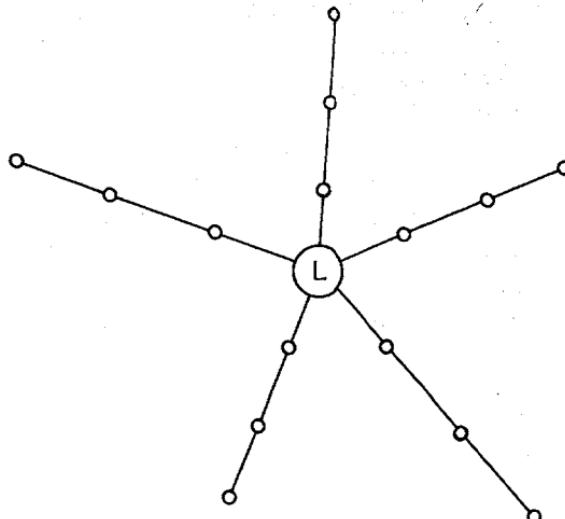


Figure 1.

Within such a group, the main avenues of intercommunication are through the leader, while intercommunication between the members is held to a minimum. The institutional structure places strong emphasis on the vertical axis rather than on horizontal ties; it is held together largely through ties of loyalty between superiors and subordinates. As

the structure grows, the leader can only contact his second-rank leaders, they in turn their immediate subordinates. Orders thus pass down through a chain of command. The consequence of the withdrawal of the leader (either due to death or incompetence) may be chaos in the group. This can be illustrated by the turbulent situation of the Peiyang army after the death of Yüan Shih-k'ai. For lack of a keystone, the Peiyang army went through a perpetual splitting process.

A tendency for conflict was always present in the Peiyang army. Division between Yüan's 'students', *hsüeh-sheng*, such as Feng Kuo-chang, Tuan Ch'i-jui, Wang Shih-chen and Wang Ying-kai, and the 'generals rising through the ranks', *hang-wu*, such as Ts'ao K'un, Chang Kuei-chi and Ma Lung-piao, existed as early as 1904 when the six divisions of the Newly-Founded Army were organized. Even though Yüan Shih-k'ai was the founder of the army, he was by no means in complete control of all his troops. His position weakened when he was forced to retire in 1908 and had to transfer the command to Feng Kuo-chang and Tuan Ch'i-jui. As time went on these two generals became more and more powerful. Because of the experiences of the Revolution in 1911, Yüan no longer trusted the Japanese-trained officers.³³ He placed his hope instead upon his own 'students' and protégé. This provided a chance for his subordinates to further enhance their power. Yüan himself sensed the growing strength of his officers. He took steps to prevent them from becoming too powerful. In May 1915, he appointed Wang Shih-chen Minister of the Army, replacing Tuan Ch'i-jui. In order to counterbalance the military strength of both Tuan Ch'i-jui and Feng Kuo-chang, Yüan in October 1914 organized a new army called the Standard Regiments which was recruited from the non-commissioned officers of the Peiyang army and of new units from the military academies.³⁴ With the infiltration of new officers, the Peiyang army was turned into a heterogeneous group with divergent segments each attaining a certain degree of power. By forming one new army to counterbalance the old and by playing one group of officers against the others, Yüan had sown the seeds of dissension within his army.

Thus when Yüan Shih-k'ai disappeared from the scene, the Peiyang army immediately broke down into military groupings. Separatism reigned over China.

Now let us examine the various Peiyang generals and assess their status within the military organization. The chief rivals in 1916 were Feng Kuo-chang and Tuan Ch'i-jui, both very powerful generals and 'students' of Yüan Shih-k'ai. Feng Kuo-chang's group, later known as the Chihli clique in 1918 was controlling the Yangtze Valley. Feng

himself was the Military Governor, *tutuh*, of Kiangsu. His subordinates, Wang Chan-yüan and Li Hsun, were military governors of Hupeh and Kiangsi respectively. Tuan Ch'i-jui's faction, later known as the Anfu clique, occupied a base in Fukien.³⁵ Tuan had held the post of Minister of Army from 1912 to 1915 and was the main agent for the training of the Peiyang troops. Thus many of the warlords who later became well known in the 1920s were actually Tuan's 'students.'

Another group was that mainly composed of 'generals rising through the ranks,' or commanders of the old style army which had been reorganized by Yüan as part of the new Peiyang army. This group included Ts'ao K'un, Chang Hsün and Chang Tso-lin. Ts'ao K'un and Chang Hsün came to power as a counterweight to Feng Kuo-chang and Tuan Ch'i-jui. In 1916, Ts'ao became the Military Governor of Chihli, having a territorial base of his own. Though Ts'ao later became the head of the Chihli clique, he was still uncommitted to any faction at this point in 1916. He was a native of Chihli and one naturally would expect him to gravitate towards Feng Kuo-chang's Chihli group. However, this was not the case. Ts'ao was competing with Feng for leadership of the clique. Tuan Ch'i-jui, the Minister of the Army, won him over with the tuchünship of Chihli in September 1916. Ts'ao K'un therefore leaned more towards the Anfu group than toward his fellow Chihli militarists.

Chang Hsün was the Military Governor of Anhwei at the time of Yüan's death. He was a rising star. Chang Tso-lin, a former leader of bandits, who was taken into the national army by Yüan, was exercising hegemony over the three eastern provinces of Fengtien, Kirin and Heilungkiang. Other division commanders, such as Chang Ching-yao, Lu Yung-hsiang and brigade commanders such as Wu P'ei-fu and Feng Yü-hsiang, whom Yüan had elevated during the expansion of the army after the Second Revolution of 1913, were to play more and more important roles in the chaotic politics of the 1920s.

Elimination of Li Yüan-hung and Chang Hsün

For the time being, the Chihli and Anfu parties were trying to control the Peking government. After the death of Yüan Shih-k'ai, Li Yüan-hung, the then Vice-President, succeeded him as President.³⁶ Feng Kuo-chang was promoted to the Vice-Presidency and Tuan Ch'i-jui took up the Premiership. The Chihli and Anfu cliques, for a short while, seemed to be coordinated in action. The important issue confronting them, the issue that bound them together, was the task of eliminating any non-

Peiyang element from power. Li Yüan-hung became the common object. President Li was not the 'legitimate child' of the Peiyang army system. He rose to prominence simply by virtue of his merit as a leader of the anti-Manchu revolutionaries during the Wuchang Revolution. Besides he was neither a subordinate of Yüan Shih-k'ai nor a general with sufficient military backing. He was merely a figurehead, powerless and irresolute. Government policies therefore were completely under Premier Tuan's control.

The first indication of conflict between Li and Tuan was over the problems of the appointment of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the limitation of the power of the Premier. Direct confrontation did not occur until the question of China's participation in World War I was brought before the parliament.

After Germany declared 'unlimited submarine warfare' to blockade the Allies, China was invited by the United States to join in a protest. On 14 March 1917, China severed her diplomatic relations with Germany and denounced German submarine warfare. Tuan then tried to introduce into the parliament a bill declaring war on Germany. The bill was objected to by President Li Yüan-hung. Tuan succeeded in getting the bill through only by dispatching a citizens' corp to intimidate the members of the House of Representatives on the day the bill was introduced. Li retaliated by issuing a mandate dismissing Tuan from both offices of Premier and Minister of War on 29 May 1917.³⁷

The Chihli and Anfu cliques replied to this dismissal by a concerted action. Li's mandate was immediately denounced by some provinces whose military governors declared themselves independent of the central government.³⁸ Without enough military support against the Premier, Li summoned an outsider, Chang Hsün, Military Governor of Anhwei, to his aid. Chang, a 'general rising through the ranks', seemed glad to grab the chance of rising to power. Instead of mediating between the President and the Premier, Chang played the monarchist for a few weeks in the summer of 1917. He pressed President Li to dissolve the parliament, and made an unsuccessful attempt to restore the boy emperor, P'u Yi, to the throne.³⁹

His action was disapproved by both the Chihli and Anfu commanders, who regarded this as a challenge of a junior member, and outsider, in their power struggle. To restore the Republic they launched an expedition from Mach'ang, near Tientsin, under the leadership of Tuan. Ts'ao K'un was instructed to attack the monarchists on the western flank. Accordingly, Wu brought his 6th Brigade to attack the capital.⁴⁰ Finding it impossible to withstand the combined force of both

Anfu and Chihli, Chang sought refuge in the Dutch Legation. Thus ended the Imperial Restoration of 1917.

The Anfu-Chihli Confrontation over the Hunan Campaign

The immediate outcome of the monarchical movement was two-fold. (1) It divided the country politically into two realms. As a protest against the illegal dissolution of parliament in Peking, Sun Yat-sen moved southward in 1917 and launched a 'Constitution Protecting Movement' in the south. Sun formed a southern government in August 1917. In May 1918 the southern government was reorganized under a seven-man directorate and Sun, whose power was greatly diminished as a result of this change, left Canton for Shanghai. (2) With the removal of the common foe, the two rival leaders of the Chihli and Anfu cliques, Feng Kuo-chang and Tuan Ch'i-jui, confronted one another in a struggle for supremacy.

After Li Yüan-hung's flight to the Japanese Legation and his subsequent refusal to fulfill his responsibilities as President, Feng became President.⁴¹ He reinstated Tuan as Premier. Unlike Li Yüan-hung, Feng was a powerful militarist exercising authority over a vast area in the Yangtze Valley. He would not accept an Anfu expansion of power without a struggle. Even before taking up his office, Feng had come to an agreement with the Premier as to the extent of his territorial base.

A look at the military governorships after 12 July 1917, that is at the end of the monarchical movement, illuminates the cause of conflict between the Chihli and the Anfu cliques. The Chihli clique was only partially entrenched in the Yangtze Valley. Among the members, Li Shun, Ch'en Kuang-yüan and Wang Chan-yüan, commonly known as the three *tuchün* of the Yangtze Valley, were military governors of Kiangsu, Kiangsi and Hupeh respectively. Chang Huai-chih and later Chang Shu-yüan, both Shantung men, were successively governors of Shantung province. Ts'ao K'un, who was neutral, remained the *tuchün* of Chihli.

The territorial expansion of the Anfu clique however was phenomenal. Besides taking over Anhwei from Chang Hsün, who was replaced by Ni Szu-ch'ung, the Anfu clique extended its power into a number of provinces. Szechwan, Anhwei and Chekiang came under men of Anhwei, the native province of Tuan Ch'i-jui - Wu Kuang-hsin was made Commander-in-Chief of the Upper Yangtze Valley and Inspecting Commissioner of Szechwan; Ni Szu-ch'ung, besides being the *tuchün* of Anhwei, was concurrently Inspecting Commissioner of the

Yangtze Valley; Yang Shan-te ruled Chekiang. Heilungkiang was under Tuan's adopted son, *i-tzu*, Pao Kuei-ch'ing. Hunan was Fu Liang-tso's area; Fu was Tuan's right-hand man. Fukien and Kirin were under Li Hou-chi and T'ien Chung-yü respectively, both Tuan's allies. One fact should be noted: after the monarchical movement, the Anfu clique had extended its influence into the Upper and Lower Yangtze Valley, an area considered to be the Chihli sphere of influence.⁴²

Direct conflict between the two parties rose out of Tuan's policy of southward expansion. Sun Yat-sen's establishment of the military government as a repudiation of Peking authority, provided the opportunity for the Anfu leader to advocate a 'military unification' policy against the southern provinces. At the time he became Premier again Tuan foresaw the strategic importance of Hunan and Szechwan in the ultimate control of the south. He insisted on an outright military conquest of the south and a suppression of Sun's southern military government.

On the other hand, an expansion of Anfu influence in the south would upset the balance of power between the two factions. Feng therefore opposed the war issue on the ground that the maintenance of the existing status quo in the south would constitute a gesture of goodwill, in return for the allegiance of the southern rebels to Peking authority. He favoured peaceful measures in dealing with the Canton government.⁴³

The fact that Szechwan and Hunan were vital to the northern militarists in their attack on the southern government induced Canton to struggle for the control of these provinces. With the support of Kwangsi and Kweichow, leaders in Hunan and Szechwan declared their provinces autonomous, and Tuan's representatives were driven out of the provinces. If Tuan desired to maintain control of these areas, an expedition against the southern government was indispensable. However, President Feng strongly objected to this measure and was joined by the *tuchün* of Kiangsu, Kiangsi and Hupeh, all of the Chihli faction, in a concerted effort to oppose the war against the south. In order to push through his policy, Tuan resigned on 15 November 1917. On 3 December, he summoned the Association of *Tuchün* to a conference at Tientsin to decide upon the issue. Both Ts'ao K'un and Chang Tso-lin participated in this conference.

For the purpose of strengthening his position in the struggle, Tuan tried to buy the support of the two generals, Ts'ao K'un and Chang Tso-lin. Chang was offered ammunition if he mobilized his forces inside the Great Wall and applied pressure on Feng.⁴⁴ Secretly both were promised the Vice-Presidency if they supported Tuan.

We might pause here to analyse Ts'ao K'un's motive for supporting Tuan in an Anfu-Chihli conflict. Apparently, this was a good opportunity for Ts'ao to build up his power, and at the same time cut down his Chihli opponent, Feng Kuo-chang. In addition to fulfilling his ambition to acquire the position of Vice-President, Ts'ao would be able to extend his influence southward, if he backed up Tuan's war policy in Hunan. The Anfu leader would have to furnish him with adequate military funds and ammunition in this campaign.

In September 1917, Wu P'ei-fu received an order from Ts'ao to mobilize his units. In accordance with instructions Wu proceeded with his troops to Hankow. The actual offensive did not take place until President Feng was forced by the 'war party' at Tientsin to issue a mandate calling for a punitive expedition against the southerners.

On 31 January 1918, Tuan was recalled to the Premiership. Ts'ao was appointed Pacification Commissioner of Hunan and Hupeh. Tuan's subordinate Chang Ching-yao was ordered to command his troops in an attack on Hunan. Wu P'ei-fu and Feng Yü-hsiang were instructed by Ts'ao to bring the 5th, 6th and three other mixed brigades to Chang's assistance. In March, Wu's troops actually encountered the combined force of Hunan, Kweichow and Kwangsi. It was Wu P'ei-fu's army and not Chang's which recaptured the two important cities of Yüehchow and Changsha on 17 March. On the following day, Wu recaptured Hengyang. He then took up the advance line confronting the southerners.⁴⁵ At this juncture, Tuan appointed Wu, Associate Commander-in-Chief of the Kwangtung expedition and ordered him to advance towards Kwangtung and Kwangsi to bring the southern government to its knees. Chang Ching-yao, however, was made *tuchün* of Hunan.⁴⁶

The reason why Tuan Ch'i-jui appointed Chang Ching-yao, instead of Wu, *tuchün* of Hunan was simply because he had to control that province. Hunan was important in two ways. First it was rich commercially, in that Changsha and Yüehyang were important centres of trade. Secondly, Hunan was a key province for any military operation against the south. It was a stepping stone from which Tuan could attack the Canton government in Kwangtung and Kwangsi. It was a stronghold from which he could check invasion from the south. Hence it was natural that Tuan should entrust this province to one of his own men.

On the other hand, Tuan wanted to eliminate the Kuomintang in Kwangtung and Kwangsi. In order to achieve this, he had to induce Wu to push southward. He therefore appointed Ts'ao K'un Special Commissioner of Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Hunan and Szechwan. Wu was

promoted Commander of the 3rd Division and awarded the prestigious title *fu-wei chiang-chün*, the awe-inspiring general. Tuan also promised Wu the tuchünship of Kwangtung if Wu could bring both Kwangtung and Kwangsi back to the northern fold.

Wu understood that suppressing the Hunanese was one thing, conquering Kwangtung and Kwangsi another. Since the Canton government was more powerful than that of Hunan, it might take a long time to bring it back under Peking's control. The tuchünship of Kwangtung, which Tuan had promised him, would not materialize in a short time. His men had fought bravely and had recaptured the three important cities Yüehchow, Changsha and Hengyang in Hunan. He considered himself to be the conqueror of the province and therefore meriting the Hunan tuchünship. When Tuan appointed Chang Ching-yao, Military Governor of Hunan, Wu refused to continue fighting the south. He declined Tuan's offer of the future tuchünship of Kwangtung and on 15 June 1918, he even signed a peace agreement with the southerners. He held his position at Hengyang.

The chaotic politics, the monarchical movement and the Anfu-Chihli conflict had thus offered Wu the opportunity to rise in power. He was now commander of a powerful division, the force of which was a determinant factor in the success of the southern expedition. Wu was in a position to defy the order of the central government when his personal interest was challenged by that faction. He had to act independently if he wanted to advance his own power and obtain a territorial base in the Yangtze Valley.

Tuan Ch'i-jui's Japanese Orientation

By October 1918, Feng Kuo-chang's term of office was completed. Hsü Shih-ch'ang, one of the Peiyang leaders, became President; at the same time, Tuan was succeeded by Chien Neng-hsün as Premier. Despite the loss of his premiership, Tuan's influence in both the central government and the army was never interrupted. Feng Kuo-chang, on the other hand, actually retired and then died in December 1919. He was succeeded by Ts'ao K'un as leader of the Chihli clique and therefore, as the opponent of Tuan Ch'i-jui of the Anfu clique.

Ever since China's declaration of war on Germany on 14 August 1917, Tuan had attempted to negotiate loans with one of the foreign nations. He first turned to the United States for help. Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, Minister of Finance and leader of the Progressive Party, *Chin-pu tang*,

was dispatched by Tuan to talk over the matter with Paul Reinsch, the American Minister to China. The financial resources of Britain and France were tied up in the European war, and the United States was unwilling to act independently. She therefore declined to forward a loan to the Anfu government.⁴⁷

Having failed in this negotiation, Tuan turned to Japan for assistance. As a result, a reorganization loan of Y 10 million and another industrial loan of Y 20 million were concluded, pledging as security the profit from the reorganization of currency, mining, maritime customs, and salt gabelle of the country. Tuan jumped at the opportunity provided by the invitation of the United States and Japan to China to participate in the World War, and he set up a War Participation Bureau in August 1917. The main task of this Bureau was to equip three full divisions and two mixed brigades of a War Participation Army, which would vitally strengthen the Anfu power. On 16 May 1918, a Sino-Japanese Joint Military Pact was signed, by which both parties pledged military co-operation against their common enemies. Under an arms agreement concluded with Japan, a steady supply of field-guns, rifles and ammunition flowed into China and was used to build up Tuan's power.⁴⁸ On 1 October 1918, the Japanese Minister announced the conclusion of a Nishihara Loan with China, which amounted to Y 246,400,000 secured on national assets such as the railroads in Manchuria and Mongolia, mines, forestry, telegraph, stamp and custom duties.

Having secured support from Japan in the form of loans and ammunition, Tuan began to extend his territorial base to the northwest. In June 1919, he appointed Hsü Shu-cheng, his protégé, Northwest Commissioner of Inner Mongolia, Sinkiang, Kansu and Shensi. The War Participation Army was reorganized into the Northwest Frontier Defence Army under Hsü's command. At the same time Hsü was entrusted with the establishment of an Anfu Recreation Club which later served as the Anfu party headquarters.⁴⁹

Tuan's Japanese policy soon had national repercussions. Popular sentiment was hostile to the extension of Japanese influence in China. The Anfu government's popularity was declining daily. Tuan's policy aroused a surge of anti-Japanese sentiment, which climaxed in the May Fourth Incident in 1919. The award of German holdings in China to Japan, as decided at the Paris Conference in April 1919, aroused the Chinese intellectuals and merchants in a series of demonstrations. Parades and strikes were organized as gestures to oppose the Anfu government's alleged policy of 'selling out the interests of the nation to another country'. The immediate outcome of the incident was that the

three 'pro-Japanese traitors', Ts'ao Ju-lin, Lu Tsung-yü and Chang Tsung-hsiang, were beaten up by a group of students, and eventually were removed from office.⁵⁰

Wu P'ei-fu might have been motivated to a certain extent by the patriotic feelings, which the May Fourth Incident awakened among many segments of the Chinese population. After all, the Versailles Agreement had a direct bearing on his native province, Shantung.⁵¹ Being a Shantungese, Wu had good reason to resent the government's decision on his province. Moreover, Wu now seized his opportunity to rise to power. He began to follow the political current. On 7 August he attacked the Anfu leader for taking advantage of the European War to conclude 'traitorous agreements' with Japan. He also denounced Tuan's policy of strengthening the Anfu party.⁵² On 13 September, in his telegram to President Hsü Shih-ch'ang, Wu discredited the members of the parliament, calling it an 'unwholesome parliament' whose incompetent members obtained their office through sheer bribery. He advocated a cessation of hostility between Peking and Canton, and an immediate reunification of the country.⁵³

Because of his telegrams denouncing Tuan's Japanese policy, Wu was particularly popular with the Chinese students. The Association of the Students in Japan for the Salvation of the Country sent the three Chihli militarists, Wu P'ei-fu, Li Hsün and Wang Chan-yüan, each a telegram, pleading with them to fight for China's national rights in the Shantung Question. In their telegram to Wu, they called him a 'loyal general, loving his own country'. They said they placed their hope in him.⁵⁴

Going along with the popular current, Wu denounced the decision on Shantung and called for the cancellation of the Sino-Japanese loans and arms agreement. He advocated that a National Assembly be immediately convened for the purpose of opposing the signing of the Versailles Agreement. In a circular telegram, he expressed the necessity for the representatives of Peking and Canton to come immediately to an agreement in the face of foreign aggression.⁵⁵ Wu was in an extremely advantageous position. If the Anfu militarists were the villains in the eyes of the people, the Chihli militarists, their opponents, would be the heroes. By such denunciations, Wu could display an act of love towards his native province, Shantung, and also a sense of nationalism.⁵⁶

As the prestige of the Anfu government declined, Wu grew bolder in his denunciation. He put the blame on the Anfu government for failing to negotiate with Canton. In this respect he was supported by the three *tuchün* of the Yangtze Valley. In another circular telegram, he accused Tuan and his associates of exacting exorbitant taxes from the people for

the purpose of increasing their own war funds and strengthening their power.⁵⁷

Wu's 'Strategic Retreat' and the Chihli-Anfu War, July 1920

The Chihli 'telegraphic assault' on the Anfu government apparently stemmed from two basic strategic conflicts between the two factions. First, after the recapture of Hunan from the southern government, and as a result of appointing Hsü Shu-cheng Northwest Commissioner, Tuan exercised a quasi-authority over Inner Mongolia in the north, Sinkiang, Kansu and Shensi in the west, Szechwan and Hunan in the southwest and Anhwei, Chekiang, Fukien in the east, thereby practically encircling the Chihli territorial base in mid-China. He further attempted to break up the Chihli 'strong centre' by replacing the *tuchün* of Honan with his brother-in-law. Though this attempt failed, the Chihli generals had now become aware of the imminent threat of the Anfu expansion.

Secondly, the Chihli militarists expected Tuan to appoint Wu P'ei-fu *tuchün* of Hunan after Wu's successful campaign in that area. This would have enabled the Chihli faction to extend its influence southwards. But when this was not granted to Wu, there was no sense in using a Chihli division to fight for an Anfu cause in Hengyang. A retreat of the 3rd Division back to the Chihli territorial base would strengthen the faction against future Anfu encroachment. Moreover, Wu's army was underpaid in Hunan; the monthly ration of his troops was controlled by his rival, Chang Ching-yao.

Wu had been on friendly terms with the Hunan and Kweichow troops of the south ever since the conclusion of the peace agreement. He now decided to commence a 'strategic retreat'. The southern government agreed to provide him with a loan of Y\$ 600,000 before he pulled his troops out of the province.⁵⁸

In order to legitimize his action, Wu explained to the nation in a telegram that his retreat from Hunan was necessary in order to stop hostilities between the northern and southern authorities. He further indicated that in view of the imminence of foreign aggression, that is, the Japanese design on Shantung, national troops should not engage in civil strife between north and south, but should be usefully employed in a strategic defence of the national interests.⁵⁹

To make sure that Hunan would not fall into Anfu control, Wu made an arrangement with Canton for an immediate takeover as soon as he

withdrew his force from the province. On 25 May 1920, Wu pulled out of Hengyang. Since the 3rd Division was the strongest army in Hunan, in equipment as well as morale, Chang Ching-yao was unable to stop Wu from retreating. Nor was Chang able to face the southerners alone. Once Wu was out of the province, Hunan was overwhelmed by southern troops. Hengyang fell on 29 June. In less than half a month Chang Ching-yao was driven out of Hunan.⁶⁰

Wu moved his troops via Hankow in Hupeh northward to Honan, simultaneously occupying the Peking-Hankow railway. He was hailed by the people as a national hero and champion of the reunification of China because of his open defiance of the unpopular Anfu government. In a speech in Honan on 12 June, Wu again assailed the Anfuites in the Peking government.⁶¹ He proposed a revival of the old constitution. He called upon the students' unions and other associations in Honan to support his anti-Anfu, anti-Japanese policy. He came to be known as the Revolutionary General, *Ke-ming chiang chün*, in Honan province.

A 'strategic retreat' in defiance of Tuan's order to check the southern advance in Hunan amounted to a declaration of war on the Anfu government. But if the Chihli faction wanted to go to war with the Anfu party, they needed a strong ally. Chang Tso-lin served this purpose. Tuan's expansion into Inner Mongolia posed a threat to Chang's control of Manchuria. A powerful defence army of the Anfu government was standing beside him in the northwest. Chang would undoubtedly have liked to see Tuan's influence in this area eliminated.

On 23 June 1920, Ts'ao K'un, Wu P'ai-fu and Chang Tso-lin held a secret conference in Paoting, in which they worked out a program for the overthrow of the Anfu government.⁶² Chihli and Fengtien troops were mobilized to guard all strategic points along the Peking-Hankow and Peking-Tientsin railroads. Ts'ao and Chang then wired Peking demanding the dismissal of Hsü Shu-cheng from his duties as both Marshal of the Northwest Frontier Defence Army and Frontier Commissioner. On 10 July, the Manchurian warlord mobilized his troops inside the Great Wall. Wu again wired his denunciation of Tuan's 'traitorous Japanese policy'.⁶³

The Anfu leader retaliated by forcing President Hsü Shih-ch'ang to issue a mandate depriving Wu of his duty as commander of the 3rd Division. Ts'ao was stripped of all his titles, but allowed to remain in office. Tuan then summoned a military conference at T'uanho to make preparation for the war. As a result the Frontier Defence Army was reorganized into the National Pacification Army directly under his own

command. Then he tried to prevent the war at the eleventh hour by sending an envoy to Paoting to negotiate with Ts'ao. The negotiation failed.

In order to attack Tuan from both sides, Ts'ao ordered Wu to send troops up the Peking-Hankow railway towards Peking, while Ts'ao K'un and Chang Tso-lin pressed the capital with their forces from the southeast along the Peking-Tientsin railway. Actual fighting broke out on 14 July. A few days later, the National Pacification Army was crushed by Wu P'ei-fu at Chochou along the Peking-Hankow line. Peking was occupied by the Chihli and Fengtien troops on 23 July 1920. The Anfu-Chihli War thereby came to an end after a mere ten days.⁶⁴

Tuan's resignation from all offices was accepted by President Hsü Shih-ch'ang on 28 July. On the following day a mandate was issued for the arrest of Hsü Shu-cheng and nine other Anfuites. The Anfu faction was thus greatly reduced in power.

Wu P'ei-Fu's Political and Military Ideas and his Realpolitik, 1920-22

The warlord period was a time of political experiment in China. Western democratic institutions were introduced to China before 1912 but were never fully understood by the Chinese people. Democratic parliamentary constitutionalism was discarded by Yüan Shih-k'ai at the time of Sung Chiao-jen's assassination¹ and after Yüan reorganized the parliament to his own liking. Constitutionalism was further ridiculed by Chang Hsün who attempted to restore the boy emperor to the throne. Although the Anfu parliament had drafted a constitution, it had never been put into practice. Thus even though the Chinese had already adopted a Western institutional government ever since the Revolution of 1911, they hardly had a government really founded on a constitutional basis. It is not surprising, therefore, that constitutionalism should fail in China. The introduction of Western institutions could only have been successful given a profound understanding of Western democracy by both the rulers and the people. It was precisely a lack of such understanding, especially in the case of the rulers, that determined the fate of constitutionalism in China.

Since the formation of the Republic, both central and local governments were, for most of the time, under the rule of militarists. Some of them did not care what type of government existed in China, as long as they were in complete control of Peking. Some of them were traditional scholar-militarists such as Wu P'ei-fu and Chang Hsün, whose acceptance of Western ideas was limited by their traditional background, the basic reason being that Western ideas differed greatly from the established customs of traditional China. Therefore, they either

discarded these Western ideas entirely, as did Chang Hsün, or reinterpreted them according to the traditional doctrine, as did Wu P'ei-fu. Furthermore, even when an ideological compromise had been achieved, the militarists were often forced by civil strife to abandon the pseudo-Western or pseudo-democratic ideas and take complete control of the government and all resources necessary for conducting warfare. The failure of Western constitutional ideas during the warlord period is significant if we regard the warlords, as did many scholars of the time, as a group of unconstitutional and anachronistic militarists, who had only their personal interests at heart; they, as scholars, looked more to the Kuomintang, the Nationalist Party, for their salvation.

The National Citizens' Convention

The experience Wu P'ei-fu acquired during the two monarchical movements of 1915 and 1917 made him understand that the form of government desired by the Chinese people was not one of a despotic monarchy but one based on democratic ideals. The anti-Japanese sentiments of the May Fourth Movement also demonstrated that a genuine and powerful public opinion should not be overlooked. Such hard facts convinced him that whatever his policies might be, they had to be dressed in conventional Western ideas. During and after the Anfu-Chihli War, Wu learned to use propaganda as a way to legitimize his actions as being in the interests of the people. Meanwhile, he promised the nation that an era of democracy would be inaugurated, if he could drive the dominant Anfu militarists out of the central government. Hence, after the fall of Tuan in July 1920, he advocated that a National Citizens' Convention be convened, and that the reconstruction of the government be placed in the hands of the representatives of the people.²

On 1 August 1920, Wu published his plan of the National Citizens' Convention in the newspapers. It stipulated that a convention should be formed by representatives of civic groups such as agricultural and educational associations, chambers of commerce and craftsmen's guilds. Each association in the district should elect one candidate, who should proceed to the provincial capital for a final election. The elected representatives of the provinces should then assemble in Shanghai or Tientsin to discuss the reorganization of the government, the drafting of a constitution and the amending of the election laws.

Wu demanded that the parliaments in both Peking and Canton be dissolved and China's representatives at the Paris Peace Conference be

recalled. All the outstanding questions regarding foreign affairs and internal politics should be settled by the representatives at this Convention. The presiding officers of the various organizations, according to Wu, should be the sole persons responsible for holding the election and the supervision of the Convention itself. No paid government officials would be permitted to interfere in these matters. The Convention ideally should take three months to organize and six months to settle all the problems.³

Wu's proposal for a National Citizens' Convention made him appear as a champion for the rights of the people, a leader who believed that government should be controlled by the people and for the people. Telegrams poured in from various local bodies and associations in his support. Various associations and students' unions sent him a joint telegram addressing him as a hero and approving his scheme of a National Citizens' Convention.⁴ Preparatory meetings were then held by the Society for the Advancement of the National Citizens' Convention. Shanghai was suggested as the location for the Convention. As an initial step to bring the north and south together, an Assembly for the Unification of China, which consisted of fifteen representatives from each province, was first to be formed at Peking.⁵

However, the success of the National Citizens' Convention depended entirely on the approval of other militarists. Chang Tso-lin was the first one to show his displeasure and would have openly denounced the scheme had he not been restrained by Ts'ao K'un.⁶ Nor did the southern *tuchün* agree to Wu's method of settling the differences between north and south in a convention. In a joint telegram, they stated that the problem of the reconstruction of the government could only be solved in a proper assembly.⁷ Wu's National Citizens' Convention thus remained popular for only a very short time.

A number of questions may be raised concerning Wu's National Citizens' Convention. To what extent did he believe that public opinion would help statesmen and politicians to settle outstanding issues of the nation and to reorganize the government in a proper way? A more fundamental question is, to what extent was Wu able to understand the ideas of Western democracy? Was the National Citizens' Convention only a show, a plan to make himself popular? We can pursue these questions further by asking whether a militarist like Wu would accept ideas and values imported from the West. If yes, to what extent and in what way?

Wu doubtlessly reckoned that a powerful force of public opinion was indispensable to popularizing and legitimizing his actions. We know he

learned this from the May Fourth Incident. Public opinion apparently could topple a government. To go against public opinion would simply be 'rowing a boat upstream'. That is why so many militarists in the warlord period publicized their programs and policies, and denounced their opponents by sending open letters and telegrams to the press. It was by appeal to public opinion regarding the Shantung Question that Wu was able to endow his ousting of the Anfu clique with legitimacy. The subsequent proposal for a National Citizens' Convention was an attempt to gain popularity by following the opinion of the time.

Wu must have accepted the idea that a republic and not a monarchy would be the form of government for China. The records show that he never indicated in his writing or conversation a belief that China should be ruled by a monarch again. However, basically, he still held the idea that Chinese government should be a government by men instead of by law. Such a traditional concept can be traced from the conversation he had with a visitor to Loyang in the 1920s. From his conversation, we know that Wu took the government of ancient Chou as a model. He envisaged a government with a moral and humanistic foundation. The Mandate of Heaven, or the right to rule, depended upon the ruler's adherence to moral law. *Tao-te chih kuo*, 'to govern a country by morality', was the motto. Humanism was the prime value. Wu singled out three features of the Chou political system as the main aspects of good government, namely emphasis on agriculture, equalization of agricultural property by means of the well-field system, and the sponsoring of charitable works by the government. Hence a good ruler would not only observe established customs but would also work for the welfare of the people. Such a moral and humanistic ruler would naturally bring chaos to an end and the people to submission. This was the so-called *wang cheng*, the kingly politics, the ideal type of government for Wu.⁸

Concerning the rule of law, Wu was very sceptical of the constitution promulgated by Yüan Shih-k'ai. He said in 1924 that China should not adopt a constitution ready-made for her by other countries. He maintained that China differed from other nations and hence should have a political system of her own, which, as he pointed out, was embodied in the *Chou li*, the Rites of Chou.⁹ Even though he did not spell it out clearly, his ideal political structure was an oligarchical system. The term he used was *fu-lao cheng-chih*, government by the elders. He proposed that every village and every province be governed by elderly men of morality. Upon this foundation, one could build a nation with senior people as heads of the central government.¹⁰

Such a concept of government was apparently influenced by his traditional and military background. Traditional Confucian classics emphasized that a ruler should be an exemplar, a man of superior moral virtues. They exhorted the ruler to work for the betterment of the life of the people. Both traditional civil and military education placed heavy stress on seniority. Senior people knowledgeable in public affairs had always been held in high respect. Such veneration stemmed from the Confucian virtue of filial piety and the military concept of loyalty to one's superior.

Therefore, in order to bring China out of the chaotic situation, Wu proposed that authority should go to an upright man, who would be assisted by a number of virtuous senior officials. It was not very different from the way the Duke of Chou was believed to have persuaded the people of his time that the legitimacy of Chou rule rested upon the observation of *li*, the established customs of the time. In the twentieth century, Wu was using the *Chou li* and the Confucian idea of an upright man, to convince others that he and his group of moralists should be the legitimate rulers of China.

Chinese Values and Western Values and Technology

The dichotomy of Chinese values¹¹ and Western values and technology with which some of the Ch'ing and Republican scholars had to struggle also confronted militarists like Wu P'ei-fu. From the time he took up his military education in the Peiyang Academy, he was confronted with an inescapable challenge of Western skill and technology, and to a lesser extent, of Western values. However, because of his educational background, Wu always perceived that Confucian tradition was something distinctive and unique. He regarded Confucian tradition and customs as the components of the Chinese nation. This pride in the indigenous Chinese culture and the identification of the Chinese tradition with the Chinese nation was actually a manifestation of his nationalistic feeling. When faced with the challenge of the West, he had to consider whether Chinese values should accede to Western values and technology, whether there should be an outright rejection of the 'materialistic West' or only a conditional acceptance of some elements of Western culture and technology. If there was to be a fusion of cultures he would have to decide what form it would take.

Wu had his own solution to these problems. He did not accept unconditionally the Western values and technology. This may have been

because he was afraid of the Confucian tradition being fragmented and discredited even more than it had been the attacks upon it by the May Fourth scholars. In 1923 he said he distrusted Western values such as the co-educational system and constitutional government.¹² When it came to Western skill, he tried to ease the apprehension of Western materialistic superiority by tracing the technology of the West back to Chinese origins. In most cases, his answers about the origins of Western values and technology seemed to be very naive on the surface. For example, in a conversation with Dr Lanton, a British scholar who visited Loyang in 1924, Wu asserted that the high social status of women in the West was derived from China. He supported his statement by citing the legend of Nu Kua, a mystical sister of the legendary emperor, Fu Hsi (mythical dates 2852–2738 B.C.). Nu Kua supposedly led a couple of females to reclaim barren lands in the 'West'. Because of her work there, according to Wu, the women in the West gained a high social status. He tried to prove to Dr Lanton that this was not a mere legend since the tomb of Nu Kua still existed in Turkey.¹³ On another occasion, Wu drew an analogy between the invention of the aeroplane and the legendary story of Huang Ti (mythological date 2698 B.C.), who was said to have flown on a dragon and landed in Greece.¹⁴ The stories may be ridiculous to us, but perhaps by tracing Western values and technology back to Chinese origins Wu eased the tension that arose from the inevitable acceptance of some elements of Western culture and technology. The arguments may be artificial, incoherent and anarchronistic; nonetheless, it smoothed the sudden change in values and technology.

Wu was very proud of Chinese civilization. As reported by Okano Masujiro, Wu often brought this topic up in conversation when he was dining with guests at Loyang.¹⁵ He told his visitors that China had a civilization of 48,000 years, a history of 5,000 years, a territory of 5 million square miles and supported a population of 400 millions. Taking these into account, China was a *ta kuo*, 'a big country'. A 'big country,' according to Wu, should be accorded a high status in international politics. He opposed international management of Chinese affairs, an idea much discussed at that time among foreigners. He admitted that China was in a state of turmoil, but he maintained that 'a big country had its own method of governing a big country'. The 'small countries', *hsiao kuo* (here he referred to foreign nations) should not 'measure a big country by their own yardstick'.¹⁶

Wu's pride in Chinese civilization cannot simply be equated with ethnocentrism or culturalism. He saw China as a political unit, a *kuo* or country (in contrast to the vague idea of *t'ien hsia*, Chinese empire) with

a boundary, a distinctive heritage and its political integrity. Confucianism was the core of the nation. By identifying Chinese culture as its essence and by asserting that this culture surpassed that of other nations, Wu actually displayed symptoms of what we call 'modern nationalism'.

Military Science

Problems were bound to emerge from the differences between traditional Chinese military art and Western military science. Wu's task was to decide what emphasis to give to each. Did he defend traditional Chinese military art in an endeavour to save Chinese culture from acculturation? Was there any cultural tension? Take, for example, the criteria for a good soldier. Confucianism and traditional military art dealt at length with hierarchical authority, loyalty and humanity. A good officer was regarded as a moralist and a generalist. Though Western military education contained concepts such as loyalty and submission, nevertheless, it taught military tactics, military planning, arms supply etc., training men to be particularists. How did Wu P'ei-fu then resolve this clash of generalist versus particularist?

To obtain the answers, we may look to Wu's writings and in particular his work on the military of 1922 entitled *Wu P'ei-fu cheng shu* (Political Writings of Wu P'ei-fu).¹⁷ The work was completed by Wu in mid-autumn 1920 when he was stationed at Loyang. It is difficult to assess how far Wu was influenced by the ideas of Tseng Kuo-fan and Yüan Shih-k'ai. However, it is clear from Wu's writing that he was under the influence of Yüeh Fei, Kuan Yü and the traditional military theorists, Sun Tzu and Hsü Tung.

Wu attached great importance to concepts such as loyalty, patriotism, filial piety and selflessness, which were exemplified by the two warriors, Yüeh Fei and Kuan Yü. When he was in Honan in 1921, he ordered the repair of the temples of Yüeh Fei and Kuan Yü.¹⁸

Wu was well-versed in traditional military theory. He referred to Sun Tzu many times in his writings. Moreover, he was greatly affected by Hsü Tung, the military theorist of the Sung dynasty. Hsü wrote a work of military strategy entitled *Hu ch'ien ching* (Classic of the Tiger Seal) a work in 20 *chüan* with a heavy tone of Taoist philosophy. He used the interplay of the *yin* and *yang*, the passive and active cosmic forces, to explain the timing for troop mobilization. It is also a work of astrology, traditional medicine, divination and physiognomics.¹⁹ Wu placed great

importance on the *Hu ch'ien ching*. In the preface to the *Wu P'ei-fu cheng shu*, he stated that the *Hu ch'ien ching* was as important a 'life-time companion' to the militarist as the Analects to the politician.

The emphasis of the *Wu P'ei-fu cheng shu* was on the militarist's personality, moral character, intelligence and methods of dealing with his subordinates. The work is in two sections: (1) the ability of a good general, *chiang lüeh*, and (2) military tactics, *chan shu*. One would therefore expect a difference in the treatment of these two topics. However, throughout both sections, one only discovers that Wu was harping on the same theme, the morality and character of the general. He maintained that a moral, proprietous, righteous, selfless, loyal, brave and just general could easily overcome any deficiency in numerical strength in the army and any inadequacy in the supply of war material. Such a general could hold the troops together, train an efficient army, be a good leader and save the country. In short, a good general should be like Yüeh Fei and Kuan Yü, an exemplar of the Confucian virtues, a generalist and a moralist.

The way Wu paralleled his writings to Hsü Tung's *Hu ch'ien ching* is an indication of his love for the traditional military art. He took Hsü's model in his classification of the generals.²⁰ He also took the physiognomy, the behaviour, and the action of a person as criteria to judge a good general. He stressed repeatedly the importance of medicine. But he did not go so deeply into astrology and the tactical position of the troops as did Hsü in his military writings. Wu's work displayed a heavier overtone of Confucian humanism than Taoist mysticism, though Taoist influence is definitely present.

Despite his traditional and moralistic orientation, Wu could not completely ignore Western military science, for he was living in the twentieth century. He was forced to take into account modern methods of conducting warfare. Yet, he justified his acceptance of Western military art with Sun Tzu's famous saying 'To know oneself and to know one's enemies, in a hundred battles one wins a hundred victories'. In order to 'know one's enemy', Wu pointed out in a short passage, a militarist should pay special attention to the following fields.²¹

- (1) Politics
- (2) The numerical strength of the army of the nation (one's own nation, the enemy nation and other nations)
- (3) Military strategy, *chan lüeh*, and military tactics, *chan shu*.
- (4) Military topography (inside and outside the theatre of war, the topography of one's enemy nation).

- (5) Organization of the army (one's own nation, enemy nation and other nations).
- (6) Mobilization.
- (7) Centralization.
- (8) Transportation of troops by railroads.
- (9) Transportation of troops by steam vessel and by junks.
- (10) Army supply (ammunition, food, clothing, instruments, telegraph and other).
- (11) Study of histories of warfare (the reasons for the success and failure in the wars both in China and in foreign nations).
- (12) The general's skilfullness in conducting warfare (one's own nation, enemy nation and other nations).
- (13) Estimated and actual military expenditure.
- (14) Diplomatic policies towards foreign nations after the conclusion of a war (policy after winning, and the policy after losing, a war).

Wu specified these fourteen fields as the basic knowledge a militarist should acquire. Even though this discussion constituted only a short passage within his work, and he did not elaborate on any of the points, it nevertheless illustrates that he was not entirely immune to the influence of modern methods of conducting warfare. Particularly interesting is his repeated stress upon learning many aspects not only of the enemy nation but also of other foreign nations. It is significant too that he paid so much attention to diplomatic policies, even making a clear distinction between policies after winning or losing a war.

On the whole, Wu still remained a traditionalist, who emphasized the moral virtues rather than technical knowledge of a general. He treasured the traditional military art, even some anachronistic aspects of it such as body divination and physiognomics. He was therefore a military moralist and a generalist rather than a particularist. Yet, being a militarist of the 1920s, he could not but be influenced to a certain degree by Western military technology and methods of warfare. Such knowledge might only be a thin layer superimposed upon his traditional thinking. Nonetheless, the significance lies in the way he tried to blend the East and West together, the method of learning of a man of the transitional period.

The Movement for Provincial Self-Government, 1920-21

Hunan Federal Movement

If Wu had little faith in Western constitutional government, he had less faith in the American type of federal government advocated by many of the provinces in the 1920s. One outstanding issue among the militarists and scholars at that time was whether China should be a federal state or a unitary state. The provincial governors wanted a federal system so as to free themselves from the interference of the central government. Liang Ch'i-ch'ao was a strong supporter of the federal idea. The demand for provincial autonomy was further popularized by many scholars who published articles on the federal system in journals such as *Nu-li chou-kan* (Effort Weekly), *Min-pao* (People's Tribune) and *T'ai-p'ing-yang tsa-chih*, (Pacific Magazine).²²

The federalists proposed that provinces should have the right to decide upon their own constitution and government. The nation should be unified under a federal constitution, worked out by representatives of various provinces in a joint assembly. There should be a demarcation between the national and provincial expenditure.

Hunan, a province which suffered heavily from the civil strife between the north and the south, pioneered the campaign for self-government. On 22 July 1920 the federalists in Hunan declared provincial autonomy. Under Chao Heng-t'i, the Commander-in-Chief of the province, the Hunanese seriously undertook to draft a provincial constitution. In this process, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao was a consultant.²³ Yet it was Chekiang, which in June 1921 first published a draft constitution in an attempt to make the province independent of the central government. The Hunan constitution was not promulgated till half a year later on 1 January 1922. It contained provisions concerning the people's rights of election, initiative, referendum and recall.²⁴ Taking this as an example, federalists in other provinces, Hupeh, Szechwan, Yunnan, Shensi, Kiangsu, Kwangtung and Kwangsi, announced their intention to have their own government.

Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the federalists of his *Chin-pu tang*, Progressive Party, cleverly made use of Wu's idea of the National Citizens' Convention to propagandize their federal principle. Although Wu had consulted Liang on the matter of the National Citizens' Convention, he was unable to obtain Liang's support. Instead, the Progressive Party members made use of the popular sentiment which supported the call for a convention to encourage the people to organize provincial associations

and popular assemblies to discuss federal ideas.²⁵ Liang Ch'i-ch'ao asserted that the Convention proposed by Wu was supposed to be an organ through which the people could voice their opinion for a desired form of government. Since the people clamoured for a federal state, Liang pointed out that the federal idea should therefore be discussed and the federal form of government be instituted. If Wu should follow the popular idea of federalism, he said, the people would surely come to his support.²⁶ Sun Hung-i, another Progressive Party leader, echoed Liang's statement, saying: 'The National Citizens' Convention was a council in which the wishes of the people could be consulted. Since the people had already decided in favour of self-government, National Citizens' Convention meant federalism.'²⁷ Here the Progressive Party was using the same tactics which Wu had utilized to legitimize his actions, hoping to force Wu's hand.

Wu bitterly denounced the idea of local self-government. The establishment of a great nation, according to him, was a slow process of evolution from tribalism to centralization. Although China had been recurrently disrupted, she was historically a unitary state. Thus after going through such a painful process of development, it was necessary for a country to retain her centralized character. Federalism, as he described it, would divide a country into 'chieftain tribes' with tyrants ruling various provinces very similar to the ancient Chinese feudal lords. 'If every province should be allowed to have their own independent government'. Wu told a Reuter's representative on 12 November 1921, 'China will be divided into eighteen countries; and if the districts should declare self-government, the number of countries will multiply'.²⁸ And if the central government let parties and factions set up their own governments, China would be broken up into hundreds of little states. He therefore denounced federalism on the ground that it spelled retrogression from centralization back into separate individual states. He maintained that local self-government could only spell disunion. The federal movement, he also stated, was not designed to give people a democratic participation in provincial government; it was simply a device by which the provincial governors could strengthen their own power.²⁹ Hence he stood firmly for centralization and a unitary system of government.

The Hupeh Federal Movement and the Rescue Hupeh War

Wu's fight against the federal idea is an example of how practical politics and personal interest could negate a warlord's acceptance of certain

aspects of Western values, in this case, the system of federal government. All these arguments have to be understood in terms of the political struggle of the time. Wu's refutation of the idea of local self-government was closely linked with his own ambition of trying to secure a territorial base, and to the use of the federal movement by the southerners to expand into Hunan and Hupeh.

Let us begin by examining Wu's ambition to consolidate his territorial base in mid-China. All that he acquired from the Chihli-Anfu War was the title of Assistant Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan, and a limited base in Shensi. At the conclusion of the war, Ts'ao K'un, Chang Tso-lin, Wang Chan-yüan and Premier Chin Yün-p'eng assembled at Peking on 2 May 1921 to share the spoils of victory. As a result, Ts'ao K'un was appointed Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan while Wu P'ei-fu became Assistant Inspecting Commissioner of these three provinces. Yen Hsiang-wen, a subordinate of Wu, was made *tuchün* of Shensi.³⁰ In addition to his rank as Inspecting Commissioner of Manchuria, Chang Tso-lin was made concurrently the Development Commissioner of Mongolia and Sinkiang, exercising control over three special zones, Chahar, Jehol, and Suiyuan.

Wu's title as Assistant Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan did not mean that he possessed these provinces as a territorial base. If he wanted the finances for the upkeep of his troops and if he wanted his voice to be heard by other militarists, he had to secure a base of his own. In warlord politics, every militarist had to make the best use of his chances to extend his power. The spread of the federal movement into Hupeh gave Wu a perfect opportunity to advance his own fortune.

If Wu knew that a territorial base in the mid-Yangtze would be valuable to him, he also realised that the military leaders of the south had their eyes on the same area. Despite the fact that some intellectuals such as Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, Chang Tung-sun, Chang Shih-chao, Hsiung Hsing-ling and Li Chien-nung were sincere in advocating a confederation in China, the struggle was by no means a fight purely for an ideal form of government. The whole question was a mixture of political ideals and political aggrandizement. Most of the federalists, who were also militarists, came from Szechwan, Yunnan, Kweichow, Kwangsi and Kwangtung, that is they were the 'out-group' of the south and southwest provinces. Moreover, the Anfuites, such as Ch'en Shu-fan and Wu Kuang-hsin, who had been ousted from their areas in the summer of 1920, were among the ardent supporters of a campaign for a federation. They went as far as to finance any province if only that province would

go to war with the Chihli clique. Federalism was thus used for a variety of purposes: a shield to keep one's province out of the political struggle, a guise for helping other provinces with a plan of aggression in mind, and a tool for revenge.³¹ Therefore, there was little difference between Wu's invasion of Hupeh province under the slogan 'unification of the nation' and the southerners' justification of their northward aggression under the term 'federalism'.

The Hupeh Incident commenced in mid-1921. After Hunan declared her autonomy, some politicians in Hupeh initiated a Hupeh federal movement. In order to achieve self-government, the federalists had to drive out their *tuchün*, Wang Chan-yüan. They began to seek assistance from Hunan and Szechwan, the two neighbouring 'federal' provinces. Meetings were held by Hupeh representatives. Chao Heng-t'i, *tuchün* of Hunan, assumed the title of Commander-in-Chief of the Rescue Hupeh Army. In July 1921, the Hupeh federalists proclaimed the province self-governing.

Professing his obligation to assist any province that tried to gain self-government, Chao Heng-t'i mobilized his troops and moved into Hupeh. Skirmishes were reported on 29 July. Unable to withstand the forces of Hunan, Wang Chan-yüan telegraphed his fellow Chihli members, Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu, for help. Wu P'ei-fu then instructed his subordinate Hsiao Yao-nan to lead his troops to Hankow. However Wu was more interested in advancing his own fortune in Hupeh than rendering assistance to Wang Chan-yüan. As soon as his troops reached Hankow, he ordered Hsiao to refrain from saving the province. Wang's rule therefore collapsed under the Hunan army and he was relieved of his office on 6 August 1921. With the disappearance of Wang, Peking then tried to induce Wu to withstand the southern invasion by appointing him Inspecting Commissioner of Hupeh and Hunan. His subordinate, Hsiao Yao-nan, was made *tuchün* of Hupeh. Wu was then ordered to attack Hupeh and Hunan.

Fighting occurred between Wu and the Hunanese on 22 August. Wu inflicted a series of crushing defeats upon the Hunan troops and his army recaptured Yüehchow on 27 August. A truce with Chao Heng-t'i was agreed on 1 September. After the defeat of the Hunanese, the federalists of Szechwan dispatched an army to help. Nevertheless, Wu's troops proved to be more powerful. The Szechwan army was defeated and retreated hastily out of the province. A treaty was signed between Wu and the Szechwanese on 22 December.³²

By participating in the Rescue Hupeh War, Wu gained a geographical base in Hupeh but lost the public support of the province. There was

intense indignation against Wu's pretended assistance to Wang at first and his own adventure in Hupeh and Hunan later. This indignation culminated in an outright denunciation from the Hupeh literary circle, particularly the federalists. They demanded that Wu's assistance to the 'bandit' Hupeh *tuchün* be withdrawn immediately. The Hupeh Provincial Association in Shanghai protested against Wu's opposition to self-government and accused him of trying to seize the *tuchünship* of the province. On 16 August 1921, a Joint Assembly of All Associations of Hupeh was convened at Hankow. At the meeting, the leaders of these Associations decided to uphold the federal system. Two representatives were dispatched to negotiate with Wu on this matter, but to no avail. Opposition to Wu was particularly strong from the members of the Progressive Party.³³ They denounced Wu's suppression of the federalism in Hunan and Hupeh as 'an action against the will of the people'.³⁴ These denunciations had the effect of discrediting Wu in the eyes of the people and in the literary circle.

The Rescue Hupeh War clearly marked a stage in Wu's political life. He now became a powerful warlord. In addition to Shensi and Honan, which had been partially under his control since the Chihli-Anfu War of 1920, Hupeh became an important base where he obtained most of his financial resources. Since Hupeh was such a prize, he did not hesitate to take it away from his fellow Chihli member, Wang Chan-yüan. He was also willing to go against public opinion when it came into direct conflict with his personal interest. From then on, Wu lost public support and was looked upon as virtually a warlord, not very different from the others.

The National Convention at Lushan

After the Rescue Hupeh War, Wu P'ei-fu once again took up the question of reconstruction of the government by means of a national convention. With the experience acquired in the abortive National Citizens' Convention, he had come to realise that in an important matter such as the reorganization of a government he had to obtain the sanction of the other militarists. Therefore he changed his plan. In the proposal for a National Convention at Lushan in September 1921, he suggested that the Convention should be divided into two sections: the People's Conference and the National Troops' Conference.

First, the People's Conference should be formed by the provincial assembly and legal bodies of the various provinces. Each province

should select three delegates, but Mongolia, Tibet and Chinghai should each send one delegate. The most considerable task of these delegates was to solve all legal questions, to reorganize a central government, and to work out the relationship between central and local powers.

Secondly, the National Troops' Conference should be comprised of delegates from the army as well as the navy. They should discuss questions such as the size of the army, their equipment, troop demobilization and the regulations governing the employment and discharge of soldiers and officers. The decision of the National Troops' Conference had to be approved by the People's Conference. In case the People's Conference vetoed the decision, the former might reaffirm it, stating their reason, but should it be rejected a second time, it had to be amended.³⁵

The Lushan Convention was designed to win the support of the *tuchün* and inspecting commissioners, at the same time showing that Wu was following public opinion. Most of the militarists remained lukewarm to the suggestion. Chang Tso-lin declined to accept this idea on the pretext that the National Troops' Conference might be looked upon by the people as a council where the *tuchün* assembled for a discussion of the distribution of individual power. The other *tuchün* remained non-committal.³⁶

This time the people and the literati were silent about it. The extreme enthusiasm for the reconstruction of the government through convention subsided after Wu's suppression of the principle of federalism in Hupeh and Hunan. Instead of participating in the Lushan Convention, the Joint Association of Commerce and the Joint Association of Education in Shanghai convened another national convention of their own for the purpose of drafting a constitution for the nation. Thus Wu's proposal was neither accepted nor implemented.

Wu's convention scheme was bound to fail. The idea of convention came from Chang Shao-tseng, one of Wu's subordinates.³⁷ Wu simply gave his sanction. How much Wu understood this idea is hard to say. He was basically a traditional scholar-militarist, who had very limited faith in Western values. Furthermore, contemporary scholars, themselves serious students of Western ideas, naturally hesitated to accept the proposal of a questionable amateur. The Progressive Party in particular was suspicious of Wu's true intentions. Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, for example, was doubtful about Wu's sincerity.³⁸ Wu's personal motives were dubious, as he continued to advance his own designs in Hupeh and Hunan throughout the discussion. Even if Wu could have obtained the support of scholars, he could never have received approval from the

militarists for such a scheme. Chang Tso-lin would surely have intervened. Thus at the end Wu had to abandon this project in the face of existing antagonism, and he turned to independent action.

System of Alliances

Warlord politics required a Machiavellian approach. A militarist had to secure a territorial base from which he could appropriate the revenues. He had to modernize and equip a standing army and maintain a stable balance of power by making alliances with other militarists.

After the failure of the conventions, Wu Pei-fu embarked on a crusade to 'reunify the nation by force' instead of by negotiation in assemblies. After the conclusion of the Chihli-Anfu War in 1920, he established his base of operation at Loyang in Honan. Loyang was an important centre of communications. The Peking-Hankow and the Lunhai railroads which ran through the province were important for the transportation of coal, iron, timber, wheat, rice, silk and cotton. The Peking-Hankow railway yielded an earning of roughly Y\$ 30 million per annum, and was a vital line for troop movements in times of civil strife. It was at Loyang in 1921 that Wu commenced his full-scale military programme by recruiting additional soldiers and establishing a military academy.³⁹

With the conquest of Hupeh, Wu had secured control of the trade centres of Hankow and Wuchang. He also gained direct access to the ammunition supply at the Hanyang arsenal in Hupeh. He now exercised a hegemony over Hupeh, Honan and Shensi provinces and was extending his influence into the Kiangsi-Anhwei area. With Ts'a K'un's provincial base in Chihli and Shantung and Wu's territorial power in the mid-Yangtze, the Chihli faction had become powerful in the middle of China.

Wu's expansion into Hupeh and Hunan had upset the power balance because the Chihli clique had grown in strength. The southern provinces were the first to combine in a defensive alliance. Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Yunnan and Kweichow thus formed themselves into a Joint Alliances of the Southwest Federation. Sun Yat-sen proposed a punitive expedition against the northern militarists to challenge the expansion of the Chihli faction. In order to counteract this alliance, Wu called a meeting and suggested that the Yangtze provinces should stand together in view of southern aggression. The *tuchün* of Hupeh, Hunan and Kiangsu, the Commander of the Second Naval Squadron of the Yangtze and Wu himself participated in the meeting. They came to an agreement that the

provinces of Hupeh, Hunan, Kiangsi, Anhwei and Kiangsu should form an offensive and defensive alliance against 'any aggression of outsiders and internal troubles'.⁴⁰ The alliance was known as the Joint Defence of the Yangtze Region.

An alliance of the Yangtze militarists naturally disturbed the Manchurian warlord Chang Tso-lin in the north. A consolidation of Wu's power in the Yangtze Valley destroyed the power equilibrium between different factions. Chang retaliated to this by extending his control towards Peking. Premier Chin Yün-p'eng had resigned in December 1921 because the central government was bankrupt. Chang came to the capital and organized a cabinet to his own liking. Liang Shih-i, Chang's follower and a leader of the Communications clique, was made Premier on 24 December. The new cabinet was under the dominance of Chang and the Communications clique.⁴¹

In addition, a triple entente, or 'unholy alliance' as it was called at that time, was formed between Fengtien, Anfu and the south in order to encircle the Chihli militarists in mid-China. Wu Chao-shu, Sun Yet-sen's representative, was dispatched from Canton to negotiate with Chang in the south in late 1921. A conference was convened at Tientsin in which the Fengtien, Anfu and Kuomintang representatives agreed that: (1) Sun Yat-sen should be elected President. Tuan Ch'i-jui, Vice-President and Liang Shih-i, Premier; (2) Wu P'ei-fu should be dismissed from the office of Assistant Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan but allowed to remain as Inspecting Commissioner of Hupeh and Hunan; (3) a general pardon for the Anfu party should be given; (4) Chang Hsün should be appointed Inspecting Commissioner of Kiangsu, Kiangsi and Anhwei, and Tuan Chih-kwei, Tuan Ch'i-jui's protégé, should be made *tuchün* of Chihli, and (5) the old parliament should be restored and the constitution be revived. Ts'ao K'un would be permitted to remain in office; but if the agreement should be opposed by Wu and any of his adherents, a joint punitive force would be dispatched to enforce the agreement.⁴²

Making alliances and counter-alliances was one feature of warlord politics. A warlord could not stand in isolation in the face of a threat of war from his enemies. He therefore strengthened his power by allying with others, even coming to terms with his former enemies if the situation should dictate such a move. The triple entente was an example. Chang Tso-lin came to an agreement with Tuan Ch'i-jui and Sun Yat-sen simply because they had a common desire to suppress the Chihli clique and to restore the former power balance. But the divergence in interests and ideology among the parties still remained. Such an

alignment was therefore temporary and precarious. Very often the understanding would dissolve and differences would emerge again as soon as the immediate objective had been achieved.

Liang Shih-i and the Shantung Question

With enemies united around him, Wu had to break through the encirclement if he wanted to stay in power. He took up the Shantung Question and waged a telegraphic campaign against the Peking government, then under Chang Tso-lin's immediate patronage.

The question concerning the entire future of the German leasehold in Shantung took a long time to settle. The Versailles Peace Conference's decision of awarding the German rights and concessions in Shantung to Japan instead of restoring them to China aroused bitter opposition, extensive boycotts and other anti-Japanese manifestations among the Chinese people. Despite all this agitation and the outbreak of the May Fourth Incident, the Shantung problem had not been solved. The Question dragged on until it was finally settled on 4 February 1922 at the Washington Conference. The Shantung Agreement reached at Washington provided a complete reversal of the terms of the Versailles Treaty. The former German leased territories and the Shantung railway were to be restored to China.

Yet the final settlement of the Shantung controversy was not achieved without additional difficulty. Trouble began with Liang Shih-i's desire to negotiate a loan from Japan pledging the Shantung railway as security. As the Shantung problem was under discussion between the Chinese delegates and the foreign powers, Liang cabled instructions to the Chinese delegates in Washington to drop the Shantung negotiations with the Japanese delegation so that the Shantung Question might be disposed of to Japan's satisfaction in Peking. Furthermore, on the occasion of the Japanese diplomat's official call, the Premier had a long discussion with Mr Obata on the Shantung Question. It was rumoured that Liang had accepted a proposal of a Japanese railway loan for the redemption of the Kiaochow-Tsinan railway and promised to employ Japanese as chief engineers, chief accountants and chief traffic managers of the Shantung railway.⁴³

Liang's Japanese policy was a heaven-sent opportunity for Wu P'ei-fu to launch a violent attack against the Premier, and indirectly against Chang Tso-lin. In a circular telegram to the nation on 5 January 1922, Wu accused the Premier of 'selling the interests of the nation and

currying favour with foreigners'. He vigorously denounced Liang's 'traitorous action' of attempting to secure loans from Japan.⁴⁴ In order to confirm his accusation, Wu released a telegram sent to him by the people's delegates, Yü Jih-chang and Chiang Meng-lin, at Washington. It reported Liang's negotiations with Japan and his instruction to the official delegates to yield some ground to Japan at the Conference.⁴⁵ Wu further threatened that if the Premier did not resign immediately, he would bring forces to the capital to eject him from office.⁴⁶ Other Chihli *tuchün*, of Kiangsu, Hupeh, Honan, Kiangsi, Shantung and Shensi, also wired the President, and demanded Liang's dismissal.⁴⁷

Wu's violent denunciation was followed by many accusations against the Premier from various local bodies and associations. Most of the telegrams condemned Liang's action of 'courting favouritism from Japan and selling the nation's sovereign rights for his own benefit'. They urged the President to dismiss the Premier immediately.⁴⁸

The accusations were vigorously denied by Liang Shih-i. He stated that his interview with Mr Obata was strictly an official call and had nothing to do whatsoever with the Shantung Question. He denied that he had sent instructions to the Chinese delegates at Washington for a transference of negotiation from Washington to Peking. Instead he appealed to the Chinese people to unite and raise funds for an early redemption of the railway.⁴⁹ Since Liang Shih-i was a protégé of Chang Tso-lin, a telegraphic campaign against the Premier would naturally bring the Manchurian warlord to his support. Moreover, the main object of Wu's denunciation of Liang was to eliminate the Manchurian warlord's influence in the capital.

As denunciations became more and more violent, relations between Chihli and Mukden became more and more strained. Finally, Chang Tso-lin came out in open support of the Premier. In a message to the Chinese people, Chang pointed out that Liang had already revealed the real conditions of the Shantung Question in his telegrams. Wu P'ei-fu had misunderstood the problem and misled the people in his blind attack on the cabinet in Peking. He then requested the President to maintain justice and announced to the nation the real situation.⁵⁰ Although Premier Liang was publicly whitewashed by President Hsü Shih-ch'ang, he had to go on sick leave and was finally dismissed on 6 February by the President under the continued pressure of public opinion.⁵¹

The First Chihli-Fengtien War, April–May 1922

The situation was very tense. Wu P'ei-fu began to mobilize his troops along the Peking–Hankow railway while Chang sent his 27th Division inside the Great Wall. In cooperation with Mukden's southward drive, Sun Yat-sen launched his northern expedition from Canton into Kiangsi. The warfare by telegrams between Chihli and Fengtien had started in January but fighting did not break out until 28 April. During these four months a great deal of mediation had been going on between the two factions.

Ts'ao K'un tried to remain neutral during the Shantung controversy since his friendship with Chang had been cemented by a marriage between the two families.⁵² Ts'ao Jui, Ts'ao K'un's brother, was sent to negotiate with the Manchurian warlord. Other old Peiyang statesmen such as Wang Shih-chen and Wang Chan-yüan also acted as peacemakers.

At the beginning the allied powers were masters of the situation. The Chihli centre was encircled. In order to break through the encirclement, Wu secretly negotiated with Ch'en Chiung-ming, Governor of Kwangtung, to overthrow Sun Yat-sen at Canton.⁵³ The Chihli faction was then able to offset the advance of the southern armies. Once the news of the Wu–Ch'en agreement leaked out, the Anfu remnants began to hesitate over their pledge of support to Chang Tso-lin. By this time, Ts'ao Jui's negotiation with Mukden had failed as Ts'ao K'un could not accept the terms proposed by Chang Tso-lin. The Chihli faction then became united in a firm stand against the Fengtien encroachment.⁵⁴

Telegraphic warfare revived once again before the two leading factions committed themselves to actual fighting. Wu started off at the end of April with a circular telegram attacking the Mukden warlord for protecting 'the treacherous thief and traitor in his auction of the nation's property'. By this, Wu clearly accused Chang of protecting Liang Shih-i. He also denounced Chang's mobilization of troops inside Shanhaikuan as 'disturbing the tranquillity of the nation'.⁵⁵ The Fengtien militarist retaliated by openly calling Wu 'the greatest obstacle to the unification of China, the thief who seized state funds in order to further his own ambition'. The denunciation was followed by a telegram from the Chihli *tuchün* listing the crimes of Chang Tso-lin.⁵⁶

War was imminent. Despite an order issued by the President demanding the retreat of both armies, fighting was reported near Tientsin, and along the Peking–Hankow railway.

Chang was superior in ammunition and the number of soldiers he

could muster. He had an army of 84,000 men. Together with the 25,000 soldiers of Chao Ti, who came out to support him in the war, the number totalled 109,000. Chang also had virtually unlimited military funds derived from Manchuria and the three special zones of Chahar, Jehol and Suiyuan. His troops were trained and equipped by the Japanese. The Chihli force numbered only 64,000 and depended mainly upon the revenue of the Yangtze provinces and the Peking-Hankow railway.⁵⁷ Ammunition was either supplied by the Hanyang arsenal or purchased from some foreigners.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the Chihli army was well-trained; the generals had gained a great deal of fighting experience when, a year before, they had fought against the federalists in Hupeh and Hunan. Wu realized that his ammunition could not last long. He therefore decided on a swift war.

Actual fighting lasted only seven days. Chang was successful in the initial encounters. However, on 4 May Wu launched a successful attack on the Fengtien army at Mach'ang near Tientsin. On the same day, Changhsintien, an important town near Peking on the Peking-Hankow railway, was captured by the Chihli troops. Chang came half way to Peking to make a final stand against the Chihli army, but was defeated. He had to make a hasty retreat outside the Great Wall. In this flight, Chang carried off the bulk of locomotives and rolling-stock of the Peking-Mukden railway. When he reached Mukden he proclaimed Manchuria independent of the central authority. On 10 May a Presidential mandate was issued dismissing Chang from the tuchünship of Manchuria and his concurrent office of Development Commissioner of Mongolia and Sinkiang. Nevertheless, Chang had already created a separate area in Manchuria under his own exclusive control.⁵⁹

Chang's ally at Canton met with the same fate. In accordance with the agreement, Sun Yat-sen dispatched his troops in a northern expedition against Wu P'ei-fu once the Chihli-Fengtien War had started. But on 16 June, Ch'en Chiung-ming staged a *coup d'état*, and ordered his subordinate Yeh Chü to lead his troops in an attack on Sun's Presidential residence. Sun Yat-sen only just escaped in time and boarded a warship. Although Sun tried to recover Canton by bombarding the city, he could not bring it back under his control. Later on, when Ch'en attacked Sun's warship, Sun was forced to leave for Shanghai.⁶⁰

Wu's success in defeating the Manchurian warlord was due to a number of factors. Diplomatically he was able to break the encirclement by getting Ch'en Chiung-ming to be his ally. In the field, his troops showed more *morale* and *esprit de corps* even though Chang's army was vastly superior in clothing, commissariat and transportation. Wu knew

the value of flank movements and unexpected manoeuvres. He put his poorest troops in the front line to draw fire and then circled the enemy's unprotected flanks. Special credit should be given to one brigade of Feng Yü-hsiang's 11th Division, which played a spectacular role by turning Chang Tso-lin's right flank, thus precipitating the rout that followed.

3

Control and Finance

When a militarist had taken over a base area he would require an organization which could mobilize the resources needed to meet his goals, whatever they might be. Most of the time his subordinate military officers would be concerned, not with actual battlefield command, but with training and administration. Administration of a base area and of a military organization would require a complex establishment with a high proportion of staff officers to handle such tasks as preparation for combat, mobilization of public support, tapping of every possible financial resource, bargaining and conducting political communication with other military leaders, and, in times of war, directing military operations. This required a complex body of men with skills in scientific technology and in political relations. A major problem confronting every militarist was the need to adjust his organization to the demands of modern technology with personnel trained in specialized fields, and yet to fit the organization to a traditionally-oriented society, where human relations still played a major role in political behaviour. Military management thus required many and varied skills firmly coordinated and harnessed to the goals of the leader.

To ensure effective mobilization of all resources in time of crisis, a military leader had to make himself supreme within his base area. Military supremacy depended on the exercise of ultimate control over the entire base area; therefore the military approach to civilian political groups was very often repressive and authoritarian. The territory was army-dominated; militarists became the key decision-makers and civilian leaders remained in authority only with the consent of the military ruler. This unbalanced civilian-military relationship was a distinctive feature of the warlord period.

However, the essential questions remain: How did a warlord operate in his base area? To what extent and depth was his military control? What positions in the civil structure seemed most lucrative to him? Did he simply take over these positions by force, disregarding the opposition from the civilian authority? Where did he obtain his military funds? What kinds of tax did he levy in the provinces? How did he do it? Here we attempt to answer these questions.

Control

Wu P'ei-fu's rule of his area between 1920 and 1924 can be seen at three levels. At the apex was the Office of the Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan in Loyang. Wu then controlled his provinces through his *tuchün*. His control extended far down to the district (*hsien*) level, where his orders were carried out by the *hsien* magistrates. We shall examine these three levels of control.

The Office of the Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan.

Wu set up an office at Loyang on 2 September 1920. It was the headquarters from which he daily issued orders under his name, administering both the civil and military affairs of Honan, Hupeh and Shensi provinces.¹ Wu made decisions here with the assistance of a group of top officials. Because of the variety and the tremendous load of affairs that passed in and out of the office, Wu had to have a civil organisation of elaborate structure. He needed a bureaucracy staffed with specialists just to keep daily affairs running.

At the top was the Inspecting Commissioner, Wu P'ei-fu himself, the decision-maker. Immediately below him was a chief secretary, a position usually held by a person well-versed in classical Chinese and skilful in administration. He took care of correspondence and the issuing of orders. Kuo Hsü-tung, a *chü-jen* from Shantung and a former secretary of Yüan Shih-k'ai, was at the beginning the chief secretary. Later Chang Chi-huang succeeded him. Also at the top level were the advisers of the East and West Chambers. They included the sinologist Leng Fang-sheng, and the British subjects, O.M. Green and H.E. Morris, the director and the editor of the *North China Daily News* in Shanghai, who came to Loyang occasionally and acted as honorary advisers of Wu. Another important adviser was Okano Masujiro, the Japanese

biographer of Wu. His chief responsibility was public relations, in particular with the Japanese.²

Directly under the chief secretary were eight departments, those of staff officers, military supplies, arms and ammunition, administration, education, public relations, aides de camp and the military court of justice. We have little information about these departments except the three largest ones, the departments of staff officers, administration and public relations.

The Department of Staff Officers was the main organ that planned all the wars. It also looked after matters such as the navy, communications, printing, railways and river conservancy. Li Chi-ch'en, a Chihli native and a graduate of the Peiyang Military Academy, was the head of the department.³ The Department of Administration was a centre that carried on the administration of the daily affairs, its five branches being confidential matters, foreign relations, finance, law and correspondence. It had a special assignment of collecting and translating all foreign news of political matters for Wu to review. Pai Chien-wu was in charge of the department. He was a Chihli man, a graduate of the Peiyang School of Law and Administration, and previously had been a subordinate of Li Shun, the Kiangsu *tuchün*.⁴

The Department of Public Relations was under Hsia Lun-shu. His duty was to ensure that guests who visited Loyang were properly housed and entertained. This was by no means an easy task since the flow of visitors to Loyang was tremendous. Constant negotiation and the formation of alliances were characteristics of warlord politics. This involved the continuous sending of representatives to and receiving representatives from other warlords. Ministers from the capital, cabinet members, governors, politicians, local gentry, scholars, and engineers made their way to Loyang every year. Representatives of Wu's subordinates — *tuchün*, civil governors, garrison-commanders — came to present the opinion of their superiors, to negotiate, and to transmit Wu's decision back to their respective province. Such representatives stationed at Loyang numbered more than one thousand and they were to be taken care of by the Department of Public Relations.

Wu needed various kinds of talented men to manage his Office of the Inspecting Commissioner, or the Loyang *mu-fu*, (literary advisers and secretaries of high officials), as it was often called. Besides men performing administrative and technical tasks, Wu looked for those skilled in managing interpersonal relations and in political negotiations. He tended to draw his subordinates from the following groups: (1) those who had long been his subordinates and had under-

gone special training, for example his Chief-of-Staff, Li Chi-ch'en and his Chief-of-Staff of a division, Chang Tso-min; (2) those who happened to have an ideal similar to his, for example the head of the administrative department, Pai Chien-wu and his chief secretary, Chang Ch'i-huang; (3) scholars who were experienced in political affairs and negotiations, for example his first chief secretary, Kuo Hsü-tung and his advisers, Wu T'ao and Leng Fang-sheng.⁵ These were the criteria for recruitment that Wu spelled out himself. However, basically, they fall into two main groups: those in the first and second category were the relatively young, energetic, Western and Japanese trained staff members under Pai Chien-wu's leadership and those in the third category were the elderly classical scholars. Being a *sheng-yüan* himself, Wu held great respect for elderly Chinese scholars. He sought their opinions on political matters and discussed topics of Buddhism and Chinese classics with them. At the same time, Wu realized that modern political administration and military affairs could not be conducted smoothly without the aid of the Western and Japanese trained scholars. He had to rely on persons such as Pai Chien-wu for help. Fight for dominance in the Office naturally occurred between these two groups, and Pai was unable to extend his power until the death of his rival, Kuo Hsü-tung.⁶

A survey of the native provincial backgrounds of the staff members in Wu's highest office reveals no particular regional ties.⁷ Since Wu was in constant need of men skilled in various fields, he had to take in useful persons regardless of their provincial background. Nepotism, however, remained a feature of the Office. The Chang clique, relatives of Wu's second wife, Chang P'ei-lan, had extensive power and influence in the Office. Chang Po-ling, brother of Chang P'ei-lan, was the head of the communications section. The two brothers-in-law of Chang P'ei-lan, Chao Tsun-hsien and Liu Shao-tsang, were in control of the commercial and management sections. In Okano Masujiro's words, the Office consisted of three groups, *fudai*, *tozama* and *neutral*.⁸

Control at the provincial level

According to government regulations, appointments and dismissals of the high provincial officials had to be accompanied by a Presidential mandate. Appointments and dismissals of the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs and Superintendent of Customs at Hankow, or the director of the Peking-Hankow railway, had to go through the ministries of Foreign Affairs, of Finance and of Communications respectively. This remained true only on paper; militarists often acted independently and the central

government might be powerless in matters such as provincial appointment. Any appointment in his domain would be at once vetoed by Wu if it had not obtained his approval. Very often the appointee had to pay for his visit to Loyang in order to secure Wu's acquiescence in the appointment. Wu had the power, in the three provinces Honan, Hupeh and Shensi, to install his men in posts, directly contrary to the Presidential mandate. If an official should refuse to give up his position, Wu would use troops to compel him to give up his official seal and to evict him from his *yamen*.

In July and August 1922, there occurred in Hupeh a notable case in which the *tuchün* contested with the central government over the civil governorship of Hupeh. On 6 July 1922, President Li Yüan-hung dismissed Liu Ch'eng-en, then the Civil Governor of Hupeh, by a Presidential mandate and appointed Admiral Tang Hsiang-ming the successor. The situation became very complicated. In the first place, Liu refused to give up his position. Then, T'ang realized the necessity of obtaining the endorsement of Ts'ao K'un, but for some reason, failed to get the approval of Wu P'ei-fu. Hsiao Yao-nan, then the *tuchün* of Hupeh, had a strong desire to also be the civil governor of the province. A contest broke out among the pro-Liu, pro-T'ang and pro-Hsiao cliques. Hsiao Yao-nan, being a man of arms, naturally had the upper hand. He ordered his troops to force their way into the *yamen* and compel Liu to give up his seal. He then proclaimed himself the successor of Liu 'in obedience to the will of the people'. He must have done this with the sanction of Wu P'ei-fu because on 1 August Wu issued a telegram recommending Admiral T'ang for appointment as Minister of Navy.⁹

Provincial governments were under military domination. Wu's subordinates, Chao Ti (later Feng Yü-hsiang and Chang Fu-lai), Hsiao Yao-nan and Liu Ch'en-hua were lords of Honan, Hupeh and Shensi respectively. Theoretically, the authority of the *tuchün* extended only over military matters, except in times of disturbance when military law was proclaimed and they might interfere in civil affairs. Military governors were in theory directly subject to the orders of the President, the Minister of War, and the General Staff at Peking. The authority of the civil governor, *sheng-chang*, on the other hand, covered all governmental activities relating to foreign affairs, finance, education, industry and justice. He was supposed to exercise direct control over the appointment and dismissal of the prefects, *tao-yin*, and the district magistrates, *hsien chih-shih*. In fact, however, the civil governors of the 1920s were merely nominal figures in the province; the power of the

tuchün, in actual fact, extended practically over all provincial matters.

Provincial officials were of two types, military and civilian. Military officials consisted of garrison commanders and staffs of the *tuchün* office, such as staff officers, aide de camps, advisers, military judges and secretaries. The civil governor headed the provincial administrative structure which comprised departments of administration, finance, education, industry, police, and a high court of justice. There were also bureaux for the collection of stamp duty, salt tax, tobacco and wine taxes, *likin*, mining tax, cotton tax and coal tax. Several districts were usually grouped under one bureau which had responsibility for the collection of the taxes in those districts. An example was the tax-collecting bureau for Cheng, Hsin, Chung and Yung-fan *hsien* in Honan. There were special bureaux for the collection of taxes on freight along important railways such as the Peking-Hankow and Lunhai railways. Moreover, strange as it seems, the list of civilian officials in Honan included names of the directors of three important banks, giving an indication of the role banking played in warlord finance.¹⁰

Wu's appointees and subordinates filled many of these offices. A study of the job lists of Honan officials in the *Chung-chou t'ung-kuan lu*, 1923 [Record of Officials of Honan, 1923] shows that many important officials in the province had military affiliations. Liu Shao-tang, brother-in-law of Wu's second wife, was the head of the Department of Finance, and at the same time the director of the Department of Army Supplies in the Loyang Office. The director of the Honan Department of Police was Wu's adviser and an official of the 3rd Division. All directors of the Bureau for the Collection of Salt Tax and Stamp Duty, of one of the local banks, of the Mining Tax-Collecting Bureau, and of four of the District Tax-Collecting Bureaux, were either Wu's advisers or were officials of the 24th Division (that of Chang Fu-lai), or were judges in Feng Yü-hsiang's army. Furthermore, all the four directors of the Railway Tax-Collecting Bureaux were men of Chihli province, two had studied in military schools (Military Infantry School and the Military School of the 3rd Division), one had risen through the ranks and all were staff of Wu's Loyang Office.¹¹

Similarly, Wu filled the local offices in Hupeh with men amenable to his orders in late 1921. Wu ordered C.C. Hsia, director of the Land Department of the Peking-Hankow railway, to hand over the seal to his candidate, Feng Yün. He charged Hsia with the misuse of public funds and expelled him from office, although Hsia insisted on holding his position until he received an order from the Ministry of Communications in Peking.¹² Taking a strike in the Telephone Exchange

at Hankow as an excuse, Wu had the director of the Telephone Administration, Liu Shang-wen, dismissed from office and replaced him with his own man, who was willing to hand over promptly the daily receipts of the administration. The same fate happened to the director of the Hankow Telegraph Administration, the director of the Likin and Salt Gabelle Office, the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs and the Superintendent of Customs at Hsinti, Hupeh. They were all replaced by Wu's candidates. Moreover, these candidates, once in office, placed their friends and relatives in various positions.¹³

One can obtain a rough idea of Wu's influence in Hupeh simply by counting the number of Wu's favourites discharged by Hsiao Yao-nan after Wu's fall from power in 1924. They included the director of the Wuchang Mint, chief of the Hupeh Financial Bureau, director of Telegraphs in Hankow, director of Telegraphs at Wuchang, and Wu's representative, Sung Chi-tien, at the special Land Tax Department in Hankow.¹⁴

Control of the prefecture, tao, and the district, hsien.

A province was divided into prefectures, *tao*, and subdivided into districts, *hsien*. In Honan there were four prefectures and 108 districts, while Hupeh had four prefectures and sixty-nine districts, governed by prefects and magistrates respectively. But prefects and magistrates were not the sole rulers. The garrison commanders, usually four in a province, who occupied strategic points, could check their power. Besides remitting the land tax from his district, a magistrate was expected to collect money from the local gentry in times of need. At one time, for example, Hsiao Yao-nan dispatched a number of officials to different districts to borrow money from the people; the local magistrates had to provide the security.¹⁵

A change of local magistrates usually followed upon a change of a warlord in a province. At the end of 1921 when Wu P'ei-fu took over Hupeh, many magistrates lost their positions. In order to retain their offices, some magistrates entertained and attended upon Wu. One was forced to 'donate' Y\$ 50,000 to Wu's treasury; another requested the American Vice-Consul, J.C. Huston, to speak to Wu in his favour.¹⁶ Honan provides another example. Eight days after Feng Yü-hsiang became Civil Governor of Honan, he had more than ten magistrates replaced.¹⁷

Military control at the district level was very tight, if judged by the situation in Honan when Wu was in power at Loyang. The biographies

of 144 local magistrates and acting magistrates in Honan during 1923 indicate: 16 had been on the staff of Wu's Office of the Inspecting Commissioner; 8 had been officers in the 3rd Division; 37 had been on the staffs of Wu's subordinates (Chao Ti, Chang Fu-lai, Hu Ching-i, Chin Yün-e and Feng Yü-hsiang), acting as advisers or secretaries, military judges, or army teachers, or chief paymasters; 25 had been officials of other armies before (that is outside the Chihli clique).¹⁸ A large number of them had been educated at a normal provincial school or at a school of law and administration and were later recruited into the army as officials. Usually they were appointed concurrently military judge or adviser once they had taken up the post of magistrate. However, these figures do not reveal completely the warlord control over the magistrates, since many of them, as indicated above, obeyed Wu's orders and retained their position simply by making a 'donation'. Thus, although the biographies themselves give no indication that they had any military affiliation, the rest of the fifty-eight magistrates might indirectly have had some kind of connection with Wu and his subordinates.

Wu therefore had the three levels in his base area under tight control. At Loyang, he operated through a complex headquarters, where he had gathered a large number of military and civilian staff members. In this control centre, he made his decisions, planned his wars, negotiated with other militarists and ruled his provinces. In the provinces and districts, he exercised control indirectly through his subordinates, the *tuchün* of the area. In order to ensure that he would get as much money as he could out of the base area, he appointed, by force, his own followers to key positions as commissioners in the provinces and as magistrates in the districts. He ignored any objection raised either by Peking or by the provincial civilian authority. And it was only with the whole base area, down to the district level, under his firm control that he was able to mobilize all resources to achieve his goal of 'reunification of the country'.

Control of the army

Given that Wu's control of the province and district was so tight, we can consider whether he had the same kind of control over his army, which was supposed to be the life line of a militarist.

One of the major tasks of a militarist was to constantly expand his army. In addition he should develop his army so that it was professional and loyal to him. He should create new divisions and reorganize old ones and place them under his trusted officers. It was not until he had

controlled an army of considerable size that he could make his voice heard among the other commanders within the clique. In the case of Wu P'ei-fu, it was not until after 1920 that he was able to control a large part of the Chihli army.

The army of the Chihli clique went through a rapid expansion. By 1924 it had grown to a total of over 250,000 men.¹⁹ The core of the troops of the Chihli clique was the 3rd Division, which had been reorganized from the *Wu-wei* and *Tzu-chiang* armies by Yüan Shih-k'ai in 1904, at the time of the Russo-Japanese War. Tuan Ch'i-jui was the division commander at the time of its formation. Ts'ao K'un in 1912 and then Wu P'ei-fu in 1918 took up the command.²⁰ Throughout the period from the Russo-Japanese War to the Revolution of 1911, the Chihli clique had only the 3rd Division. It was not until 1913 that the troops of the Chihli clique began passing through several major phases of expansion. (See Table 2)

The incident that provided the Chihli clique with the first opportunity to increase its armed force was the Second Revolution of 1913. Yüan Shih-k'ai feared the growth of Kuomintang power, and therefore considerably increased the size of his army. He ordered Feng Kuo-chang to take over the command of the *Chin-wei chün*, the *Chin-wei* army. Two of the three *tuchün* of the Yangtze Valley, Li Shun and Wang Chan-yüan, became commanders of the newly-formed 6th and 2nd divisions. Later, in 1915, Yüan created the 12th Division and appointed Ch'en Kuang-yüan, the other *tuchün* of the Yangtze Valley, to be its commander. Consequently, Feng Kuo-chang's branch reached the peak of its power.

Ts'ao K'un's chance of increasing his military power only came after the death of Yüan in June 1916. Intense recruitment took place after Ts'ao K'un had been promoted to the position of Chihli *tuchün* on 16 September 1916. Within two years, his armed force tripled. In addition to replacing the casualties incurred by the 3rd Division during the fight in Szechwan in 1916, five new mixed brigades and one sentry force were formed. The task of reorganization fell upon Wu P'ei-fu's shoulders. Yet, despite the fact that he was in charge of recruitment, Wu was unable to have the new armies under his direct control.²¹ Only Hsiao Yao-nan and Sun Yo were his immediate subordinates. The rest, Wang Ch'eng-pin, Yen Hsiang-wen, Shang Teh-ch'u'an, though comrades of Wu in many battles, were in fact Ts'ao's men. On the other hand Ts'ao, simply by assigning the job of recruitment to Wu while he gave most of his attention to the government of the Chihli province, was paving the way for Wu to build up his own military power.

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Table 2 Growth of Units Under the Chihli Clique

Year of formation	Division and Brigade	Name of the commander	Reorganized from
1904	3rd Division	Tuan Ch'i-jui Ts'ao K'un (1912) Wu P'ai-fu (1918)	Wu-wei chün and Tzu-chiang chün
1913	2nd Division 6th Division Chin-wei chün 16th Mixed Brigade	Wang Chan-yüan Sun Ch'u-an-fang (1921) Li Shun Kung Pang-to Feng Kuo-chang Feng Yü-hsiang	
1914	1st Division	Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun	
1915	12th Division	Ch'en Kuang-yüan Chou Yin-jen (1922)	
1916	Chihli 1st Mixed Brigade Chihli 2nd Mixed Brigade Chihli 3rd Mixed Brigade Chihli 4th Mixed Brigade Chihli 5th Mixed Brigade Sentry force Chihli 1st Reserved Brigade	Wang Ch'eng-pin Yen Hsiang-wen Hsiao Yao-nan Ts'ao Ying Shang Teh-ch'uan Sun Yo Kung Han-chih	Ch'eng chün in Szechwan
1917	Chihli 2nd Reserved Brigade 21st Mixed Brigade 5th Brigade 6th Brigade 8th Division	Li Yung-tien Sun Ch'u-an-fang Tung Cheng-kuo Chang Fu-lai Wang Ju-chin	Patrol force
1918	Chihli 3rd Reserved Brigade Chihli 4th Reserved Brigade 9th Division	Peng Shou-hsin Wang Yung-chung Lu Chin Tung Cheng-kuo (1924)	
1919	11th Division 13th Division	Feng Yü-hsiang Wang Huai-ch'ing	16th Mixed Brigade Garrison troops in Peking
1920	14th Mixed Brigade 20th Division 23rd Division	Peng Shou-hsin Yen Hsiang-wen Wang Ch'eng-pin	Chihli 3rd Reserved Brigade Chihli 2nd Mixed Brigade Chihli 1st Mixed Brigade

Year of formation	Division and Brigade	Name of the commander	Reorganized from
1920	24th Division	Chang Fu-lai	
	25th Division	Hsiao Yao-nan	Chihli 3rd Mixed Brigade
	26th Division	Ts'ao Ying	Chihli 4th Mixed Brigade
	15th Mixed Brigade	Sun Yo	Sentry force
	12th Mixed Brigade	Ko Shu-p'ing	Chihli 1st Reserved Brigade
	13th Mixed Brigade	Tung Cheng-kuo	Chihli 2nd Reserved Brigade
1921	18th Division	Lu Chin-shan	
	14th Division	Chin Yun-e	8th Mixed Brigade
	15th Division	Peng Shou-hsin	14th Mixed Brigade
	Chihli 14th Mixed Brigade	Shih Chuan-sheng	
1922	Chihli 16th Mixed Brigade	Ts'ao Shih-chieh	Ts'ao K'un's sentry force
	Shensi 1st Division	Hu Ching-i	Shensi army
	Shensi 2nd Division	Chang Ch'ih-kung	Chen-kao chün

Note: The table is compiled from the following sources: *Lu-chün t'ung-chi chien-ming pao-kao shu*. Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.* Chang Chun-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu ch'uan*, Vol. 1. Kuo-shih pien-chi she, *Wu P'ei-fu cheng ch'uan*, Wen hai chu-pan she, Taipei 1966. Liu Feng-han, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1. Sonoda Kazukki, *op. cit.*

In 1918 and 1919, there was a slight increase in the size of Wu's army. Tung Cheng-kuo and Chang Fu-lai in 1918 and Peng Shou-hsin in 1919, all Wu's own subordinates, were made brigade commanders. With the defeat of the Anfu clique in 1920, Wu's hold on the army was secured. Within only one year, 1920, Wu had created eight divisions and three mixed brigades of which three divisions and three mixed brigades were under the command of his subordinates. The control was completed in 1922 when four more divisions were added to his camp.

Wu's ability to secure control of the bulk of the Chihli army was due to several factors. The death of Feng Kuo-chang sapped the vitality of his branch, that is the three *tuchün* of the Yangtze Valley. Ts'ao K'un might have made himself the commander of the army had he been more competent on the battlefield. Since he was a man of mediocre strategic abilities and since he was overly involved in getting himself elected President, Ts'ao left his army and campaigns to his trusted subordinate, Wu P'ei-fu. He relied on the tactic of playing off one subordinate against another. In a way this was very effective.

However, we should credit Wu for his ability to smash his enemies in

battles. The above table reveals that reorganization and expansion of the army went hand in hand with the defeat of his rivals – for example the Second Revolution of 1913, the war against the Imperial Restoration in 1916, the Hunan War of 1918, the elimination of the Anfu clique in 1920 and finally the First Chihli-Fengtien War of 1922. Loss of troops in these wars had to be made up. Moreover, defeat of the enemies provided an opportunity to incorporate and reorganize the enemy's force into his own army.²² Thus by recruitment drives, victories in battle and reorganization of defeated forces, Wu gradually became master of the ever-growing Chihli army.

Wu was a very hard worker. He was up every morning to watch the drill of his troops which started punctually at 6.30 a.m. He frequently addressed his soldiers for an hour or two.²³ He opened military schools and engaged the services of German military experts. The 3rd Division was constantly in training and was famous for its discipline.²⁴ However, not all of Wu's army was of the same standard. With the rapid pace of expansion, Wu was sometimes unscrupulous in his recruitment. He incorporated bandits of southwestern Hupeh under his flag and enlisted Mohammedans from Kansu. He even recruited boys under fifteen years old, put them in uniform and tried to inculcate them with a martial spirit.²⁵ Such practices diluted the quality of his army.

Control of arsenals

A warlord had to have available adequate numbers of machine guns, rifles, and rounds of ammunition to sustain his military operations. These might be manufactured in his base or be imported. Furthermore, he might have to consign and transport arms and ammunition to his allies if he wanted to retain their allegiance. Thus, he would be driven to control the arsenals within his territory and also might consider establishing arsenals elsewhere. Wu did not have time to put up arsenals elsewhere, but he was in control of the Hanyang, Tehchow and Kung-hsien arsenals once he became ruler of the Hupeh-Shantung area.

These three arsenals were originally under the Ministry of War. The Hanyang arsenal was officially placed under the authority of Hsiao Yao-nan in February 1922. The others, though nominally still under the War Ministry, were actually operated by Wu P'ei-fu. He replaced the director-generals of these arsenals with his own men. He engaged new hands and foreign experts, introduced a night shift, and doubled their output. Wu demanded money from the Ministry of War to expedite arms manufacture. He established a special Police Bureau for the

protection of the Hanyang arsenal in October 1924. Wu also contemplated manufacturing aeroplanes in the Hanyang arsenal. So much attention was paid to arms manufacture that other important industries were neglected. It is reported that the important Hanyang Iron and Steel Works was reduced to a mere skeleton, while the Hanyang arsenal was worked at full capacity.²⁶

Control of telegraph and telephone services

Both the telegraph and the telephone services were essential tools of a militarist. He had to send out telegrams to propagate his ideas, to appeal to the public, and to repudiate policies of rivals. A militarist might also realize handsome revenues from the telegraph and telephone administrations within his area of control, and in times of war, the telegraph and telephone were crucial for rapid communications.

Wu P'ei-fu realized that he must control these administrations. Once in power, he removed by force the director of the Telegraph Administration in Hankow, Ho Pin-chang, from office at the end of 1921, and, using the pretext of a strike in the telephone administration in Hankow in March 1922, he had the telephone director, Yao Sung-tseng, transferred to Peking.²⁷ He then embarked on a project of building wireless stations and long distance phones between Hankow and Loyang. He ordered a wireless outfit from Siemen & Company and installed it in Wuchang. He invested Y\$ 600,000 in building ten stations at Tsenchou, Hsiangyang, Yenchow, Tsumatiens, Kwanghsien, Hsik'ou, Liuchiamiao, and Hankow with headquarters at Wuchang and Loyang.²⁸

The most important station was the Loyang wireless station, constructed during 1924. The whole project began in the spring of 1923 with Wu's request for two engineers from the Ministry of Communications in Peking. Equipment was brought from England, Germany and the United States. The whole outfit cost Tls. 150,000. This station was the centre for communications between the three cities, Peking, Loyang and Canton.²⁹

Finance

Military expenses

A militarist required adequate finances. Funds had to be raised to operate

arsenals, to purchase arms, to conduct campaigns and to arrange for the surrender of enemies. The largest item, however, was the regular provisioning of troops and payment of wages and salaries. The following is a partial list of regular expenses that a prominent militarist, such as Wu, must concern himself with:

- (1) Expenses of offices – *tuchün* office, office of the military staffs, various offices of the garrison commanders, gendarmerie office, military administrative investigation office.
- (2) Payment of the national army.
- (3) Payment of the provincial and guest armies, bodyguards of the offices of *tuchün* and civil governors, military band, officers' servants and messengers.
- (4) Expenses of various bureaux – military survey bureau, bureau of the quartermaster, armoury, arsenal, military hospitals and the bureau of military reconstruction.
- (5) Expenses of garrison troops.
- (6) Expenses for military education.
- (7) Miscellaneous military expenses – salary of officers on reserve, pay department, fees for condolences.
- (8) Navy expenses.

Of the fourteen provinces and the Peking metropolitan area for which there are figures on the estimated income and estimated military expenditure, five provinces and one metropolitan area had a higher figure of estimated expenditure than their estimated total income. It is doubtful, even in the other cases, how much revenue of the other provinces was spent for civil purposes.³⁰ (See Table 3).

Wu supported his troops in three ways. First, part of his troops drew their payment directly out of Wu's own treasury. Second, a few divisions and brigades which were listed under the national army (*chung-yang lu-chün*) occasionally received support from the central government. Finally, part of the military funds came from his subordinates.

In the spring of 1924, the amount of money Wu paid to the troops directly supported by him amounted to Tls. 780,000 per month. The regular army, that is the 3rd, 8th, 14th, 20th and 25th divisions, each obtained Tls. 140,000 monthly, while the irregular troops, the Shensi 4th and 36th divisions, received a subsidy of Tls. 40,000 per month.³¹ In times of military operations, the amount of money spent procuring ammunition, for field expenses and for troop movements soared.

Table 3 The Estimated Income and Estimated Military Expenditure of Peking and 14 provinces in 1923

Province and city	Estimated income (Y\$)	Estimated military expenditure (Y\$)
Peking	1,010,680	4,980,889
Chihli	10,075,503	6,245,655
Shantung	10,506,954	8,550,446
Honan	10,215,346	6,117,637
Shansi	7,338,001	7,530,748
Kiangsu	17,471,031	3,800,308
Anhwei	6,419,775	4,096,903
Kiangsi	8,277,678	7,614,656
Hupeh	7,436,481	9,037,560
Shensi (1922)	5,624,692	265,558
Kansu	2,958,505	6,322,065
Sinkiang	2,546,044	unknown
Johol (1922)	1,441,007	1,346,431
Suiyuan	495,217	743,756
Chahar	522,361	932,125

During the Second Chihli-Fengtien War in 1924, the monthly military expenditure, according to Wu's collected works, was Y\$ 20 million.³² Payment of troops was often in arrears and they usually had to be paid before they could be mobilized for combat. Money was urgently needed to tide them over New Year and other festivals. Therefore Wu P'ei-fu had to keep his eyes constantly open for new methods of securing money.

Part of the money came from the central government, though the amount varied according to Wu's relations with the Peking authority. The part of Wu's army that was listed under the national army, *chung-yang lu-chün*, theoretically should have been supported by Peking; however, since the central government was always short of money, only a certain percentage (usually 60–80 per cent) of the amount due to him could be sent. There is no doubt that Wu did receive help from Peking, especially when the Chihli clique was in control of the central authority. In 1923 the central government allocated Y\$ 729,000 monthly to the army of the Chihli clique as a whole.³³ How much Wu got out of this amount is impossible to determine. Nevertheless, every month the central government paid the 23rd and 24th divisions and the 1st, 2nd and 3rd brigades over Y\$ 530,000, the Office of the Inspecting Commissioner of Hupeh and Hunan (Hsiao Yao-nan) Y\$ 350,000, Feng Yü-hsiang, Y\$ 320,000, the Office of the Vice-Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan (Wu P'ei-fu), over Y\$ 5,800 while Ts'aö K'un received over Y\$ 34,700.³⁴ Wu also occasionally obtained a share of the

loans contracted by the central government. In 1923 the central government issued a government bond secured on the customs revenue. The money thus obtained in the first four months was appropriated as follows: 23rd, 24th divisions Y\$ 500,000, Hsiao Yao-nan, Y\$ 200,000, Feng Yü-hsiang, Y\$ 256,000, Wu P'ei-fu Y\$ 3,500 and Ts'ao K'un Y\$ 20,800.³⁵ The reason why Wu only received so small a sum is probably because he was getting more money from other sources.

Wu also relied on his subordinates for money. He set a sum to be remitted by them to Loyang every month. When Feng Yü-hsiang was *tuchün* of Honan. Wu requested him to send Y\$ 200,000.³⁶ Wu often asked his subordinates to raise money to help defray military expenses. Before waging a war, the *tuchün* usually came together to estimate the military expenditure. The sum was then shared by the provinces and each *tuchün* was responsible for raising money in his domain to meet the quota.³⁷ Moreover, Wu had laid down the rule that troops stationed outside Honan province should draw their pay from the area they quartered. In this way his subordinates supported part of his force. Thus, the monthly payroll of the armies in Hupeh was Y\$ 960,000 out of which only Y\$ 300,000 was paid to the native Hupeh troops, the rest being used to support other armies (guest armies) stationed in Hupeh province.³⁸ It was reported that Chin Yün-e's 24th Division, which was in Honan, received Y\$ 420,000 per month from the Hupeh treasury.³⁹ Therefore, troops stationed in Honan also drew upon other provinces for revenue.

Provincial income and loans

Regular provincial income consisted of land tax, surtax, tax on leases, *likin*, tax on commodities, brokers' licenses and butchery taxes. The annual income was roughly Y\$ 8 million in Honan in 1923 and Y\$ 8,107,799 in Hupeh in 1919.⁴⁰ These small sums could not cover the huge expenditures of the warlord government. Consequently, the deficit had to be met by loans. One way of getting money was to force the central government to issue treasury notes. The Hanyang arsenal treasury notes of January 1921, issued by the Ministry of Finance to defray the expenditure of the Hanyang arsenal, is an example.⁴¹ On the other hand, a warlord himself could issue bonds for various purposes, for example short term bonds, military reconstruction bonds, monetary reform bonds, provincial industrial bonds and short term famine bonds. He could issue circulating notes, treasury notes, bills of exchange, and drafts.⁴² Usually they were issued under the name of the provincial

department of finance while the *hsien yamen* were responsible for their distribution in the districts.

Ling Wen-yüan tells us that the provincial loans of Honan contracted between 1914 and 1925 amounted to Y\$ 19,987,029, while the figure for Hupeh in the same period was Y\$ 13,124,153. According to his figures, during the period that Wu ruled Honan and Hupeh, that is from September 1920 to November 1924 in Honan and from August 1921 to November 1924 in Hupeh, the amount of money he had borrowed from Honan was Y\$ 4,195,498 and from Hupeh Y\$ 3,419,140 plus Tls 1,400,000.⁴³ Borrowing was particularly noticeable before actual fighting broke out. Within the three months before the Second Chihli-Fengtien War of 1924 (July to November), Wu had obtained seven loans from Honan and ten loans from the Hupeh province.⁴⁴ The creditors, in most cases, were bankers, merchants and local gentry.

Earnings from railways

Apart from being the means for transporting troops and shipping arms, railways were an important source of revenue. They helped Wu pay his troops and finance his expeditions. He had a number of railways under his control. Much of his military expenses came from the southern section of the Peking-Hankow line (from Hankow to Chengchow) and from the Lunghai railroad. He had indirect control over the Tsingtao-Tsinan railway in Shantung, and he allocated part of the receipts of the Hunan section of the Canton-Hankow railway for the maintenance of his troops in Yochow, Hunan.⁴⁵

Annual incomes from the Peking-Hankow and Lunghai railways were roughly Y\$ 28 million and Y\$ 3,800,000 respectively.⁴⁶ After deducting the expenditures required to run the line and for repayment of loans, the remainder was forwarded to the Loyang warlord. During the six years between 1919 and 1926, the sum taken by Wu from the Peking-Hankow railway alone totalled Tls 6,800,000.⁴⁷ No wonder Wu had his favourite, Feng Yün, appointed the managing director of the southern section of the Peking-Hankow railway and had a special administrative office established in Hankow to take charge of this railroad.

Such receipts were by no means the only money Wu got out of the railroads. He raised funds by increasing the surtax on all goods transported by the lines, by mortgaging the lands along the line, the railway sidings and the land in Hankow suburbs, and also by negotiating a loan with banking circles pledging the lands of the Peking-Hankow

railway as security. These were the functions of the two organs, the Hankow Reconstruction Bureau and the Peking—Hankow Railway Land Development Office, both of which were under the management of Wu's men. Wu established the Land Development Office for the purpose of developing the lands of the Peking—Hankow railway around the Hankow terminal. At first, C.C. Hsia was the head. At the end of 1921, Wu expelled him from office, although the Ministry of Communications at Peking instructed him to stay on. Instead Wu P'ei-fu put Feng Yün in his place. Endorsed by Wu, the Hankow Reconstruction Bureau and the Land Development Office then launched a 'reconstruction plan' in 1922. They floated a loan of Y\$ 5 million with a Shanghai bank, offering the land along the railway as security. With this cash, they opened a Hankow Citizens' Bank which could then issue the Hankow Citizens' bonds to the amount of Y\$ 20 million.⁴⁸ Thus Wu was able to multiply his Y\$ 5 million fourfold.

Banking and currency manipulation

Bankers were a rich source to be tapped by Wu. He often forced the Chinese Bankers Association of Hankow to contribute to his military funds. Individual bank managers were no exception. Wu had the sub-agent of the Bank of China at Chengchow, Honan arrested, and demanded from him a sum of Y\$ 50,000.⁴⁹ In another incident, he forced the director of the Hupeh Provincial Bank, Kuo Kan-ching, to sell all the by-products of the Hanyang Iron and Steel Works for him.⁵⁰ Wu occasionally made demands of cash from the provincial banks in Hupeh. He ordered the Hupeh Government Bank at Wuchang to furnish him with 100,000 copper coins; he told the Hupeh authorities to hand over Y\$ 1,600,000 from the Hupeth Government Mint; and in another case, demanded 10 million copper cents from the Government Mint at Hanyang for the use of military exchange shops.⁵¹

Wu P'ei-fu promoted a number of new banks in both Honan and Hupeh provinces. Between 1923 and 1925, he had established three banks, the Honan Provincial Bank in October 1923, the Railway Bank at Loyang in May 1924 and the China Industrial Bank at Hankow in January 1925. The capital of these banks came from various sources. Take the capital of the Railway Bank at Loyang for example, half of the Y\$ 5 million came from the five railways, Peking—Hankow, Tientsin—Pukow, Peking—Mukden, Peking—Suiyuan and Chiao Choutsinan. The rest was obtained from popular subscription. The Y\$ 20

million of the China Industrial Bank at Hankow was a subscription from the military commanders of various provinces.⁵²

Wu also reorganized the Ch'üan-kuan Bank in Honan. This was an important banking corporation which issued bank notes and paid the troops. The bank was on the verge of collapse under the presidencies of Cheng Chao, Wang Kuang-ti and Ch'en I. It was only partly revived by Hsüeh Ti-pi, the director of the Finance Department of Honan. This bank was turned into a Honan provincial bank under Liu Shao-tseng, brother-in-law of Wu's second wife, Chang P'ei-lan, who asked the government to put into the bank Y\$ 1 million as capital and expanded it simultaneously by selling another Y\$ 1 million worth of shares.⁵³ The Ch'üan-kuan Bank thus came under Wu's control.

Another method of raising money was to issue cash notes or to float a paper currency called exchange notes through the support of a bank. Such notes were issued on a short term basis, but, with the influence of a warlord, they could be circulated as local currency in many provinces. The mintings of large amounts of copper coins was another means. Frequently, however, the coins were of debased quality, resulting in a decline in the value of copper currency. For example, in August 1924 Wu established a mint at Loyang to obtain copper coins for payment of troops. At the end of 1924, he had to issue orders to fix the exchange rate between the dollar and the copper to save the situation.⁵⁴ The issue of promissory notes did much damage in commercial circles. Hankow commerce came to a standstill because of the rumour that promissory notes were about to be issued in Hankow in December 1925. Normal conditions were not restored until Hsiao Yao-nan stated publicly that these notes would not be used in Hupeh.⁵⁵

'Contributions' from commercial circles

A militarist was always in need of money, and to tide him over any crisis, he had to obtain it quickly. Military assessments levied upon peasants took time to collect and, furthermore, the amount that could be extracted from them was limited. Sidney Gamble's study of north China villages in Hopeh, Shantung and Honan shows that payments to the military by the villages did not exceed Y\$ 100 per village before 1924.⁵⁶

To get a large amount of cash quickly, a militarist had to go to the merchants. The Hankow and Wuchang Chamber of Commerce, the Chinese Bankers' Association and the Native Banks Association were frequently called to a general meeting held at the *yamen* of the *tuchün* to

discuss means of advancing a short term loan to Wu. These associations would in turn hold their own meetings. Then they sent out to various trade guilds to collect money. In other cases, Wu negotiated his loans over banquets to which merchants, bankers, officials and politicians were invited. The loan was often paid in instalments and shared by different parties. For example Wu presented his demands to the following establishments in May 1922: the British-American Tobacco Company Y\$ 10,000, the Nanyang Brothers Tobacco Company Y\$ 10,000, the Chung Ho Egg Factory Y\$ 10,000, four transportation companies at Y\$ 5,000 each and the Hsuchow Chamber of Commerce. Y\$ 50,000.⁵⁷

Such demands for money and the excessive taxation imposed upon trade did not go unprotested. The merchants brought pressure upon Wu to cancel the loans forced on them; they addressed petitions to Wu urging him to abolish some of the taxes; they held general conventions at Hankow to air these problems. Sometimes their petitions were effective if supported by the general public and the press. At one time, the Provincial Assembly sent out despatches and telegrams to the local chambers of commerce and bankers' associations telling them not to lend money for military purposes. Several local municipal organizations made similar declarations.⁵⁸ Nevertheless merchants usually complied with Wu's requests for funds. They wanted peace and had no desire to see their own province invaded by other militarists whom they looked upon as enemies.

Salt surplus

Salt surplus was the revenue collected that was surplus to the amount which had to be reserved for repayment of foreign loans. There was an inspectorate, like the Customs Inspectorate, to collect salt revenues and to see that first payments from salt revenues were used to repay the 1913 Reorganization Loan. The surplus was supposed to go to the central government in Peking. But from 1916 the Szechwan provincial authority began to detain the surplus. Afterwards, in the 1920s, many militarists followed this example. By 1924, the tax was never remitted to the central government by the following provinces: Szechwan, Yunnan, Kwangtung, Hunan, Hupeh, Kiangsi, Fengtien, Fukien, Kansu and Chekiang.⁵⁹ Others remitted only occasionally. Not only division commanders, but also brigade and regiment commanders took upon themselves the power of detaining the surplus salt revenue of the area under their control. They then contracted foreign and internal loans pledging the salt surplus as security.

Wu was no exception to the rule. He had the director of the Salt Transportation Office of Hupeh arrested and tried by a special court for having profiteered in the salt business. Wu did not let him free until the director agreed to pay a sum of Y\$ 50,000.⁶⁰ From January to September 1922 Wu detained Y\$ 547,212 of salt revenue.⁶¹ He also imposed a surtax of Y\$ 1 per picul on salt and later in 1926 raised it to Y\$ 1.50 per picul. Then he issued provincial bonds to the amount of Y\$ 8 million, pledging the salt surtax to be collected in the future as security.⁶²

The salt of Hupeh came from two areas, Szechwan and Huai-nan, that is the area of Honan immediately south of the Huai River. The tax on salt was roughly Y\$ 4.50 per picul. The salt of Szechwan was first transported to Ichang and Shashih in Hupeh from which it was distributed to other parts of the province. The revenues derived annually in 1918 from these two stations were approximately Y\$ 1,808,358 and Y\$ 57,521.⁶³ The Szechwan salt was transported by native junks. In mid-1923, obviously under Wu's instructions, an agreement was reached among officials and shipping circles that salt transportation should be divided equally between native junks and steamers. The merchants in Szechwan could do nothing but protest to Wu.⁶⁴ Wu not only took over half of the salt transportation, that is half of the steam vessels that were local-government owned, he also demanded that the Szechwan Salt District Inspectorate issue a monthly subsidy to his troops; otherwise he would interfere with the salt administration in that province.⁶⁵ Such claims were often backed by force.

Likin

In the 1920s various forms of taxes on goods in transit were collected, each masquerading under the general term *likin*. Some of them were entirely new taxes, others substitutions for earlier *likin*, others supplementary. There were 735 tax barriers in China in 1921, many of which had a number of substations. The total number of taxing points thus ran into thousands. Honan had 32 barriers, Hupeh 25 and Shensi 30.⁶⁶ Sometimes as many as 15 *likin* stations existed within a distance of 100 *li*. The merchandize was inspected and the only way to avoid this was to bribe the officials. Receipts from these barriers could be used as security for loans. The Hupeh authority was said to have contracted a loan of Y\$ 3 million from a firm in Hankow pledging the revenue of the four *likin* barriers at Partanchow, Hankow, Tsaitien and Wushi as security. This loan bore interest at 10 per cent and was to be redeemed in

ten years.⁶⁷ Wu had taken over the *likin* office in Hankow and had appointed his man Tou Ti-yu, as director.

Opium taxation

Wu and his subordinates could not resist the temptation of the lucrative opium revenues. It was well-known that the poppy was widely grown in Honan and that opium smuggling went on across the border into Shansi. Li Chi-ch'en, the Civil Governor of Honan and concurrently aide-in-chief to Wu, admitted in one of his telegrams to members of parliament that Honan had grown opium for years.⁶⁸ The Opium Suppression Bureau in Honan acted as a tax-collection centre. The Opium Inspector, Hai Tien-tung, who purchased his position for Y\$ 100,000 made it compulsory for each village to devote at least 100 *mou* to poppy cultivation, with a tax of Y\$ 8 per *mou*.⁶⁹

Two bureaux, the Joint Transportation Company and the Joint Investigation Bureau were centres formed by officers of the 3rd, 5th and 18th mixed brigades and of the 8th and 18th divisions at Ichang in Hupeh to ensure for themselves a monopoly of the opium traffic. They guaranteed protection of opium transportation to Ichang for Y\$ 200 per 1000 *liang* and would see it through to Shansi for another Y\$ 150 per 1000 or to Hankow for Y\$ 250. A smoker could obtain a license for Y\$ 1; divan keepers paid Y\$ 1 per lamp. Those who were in doubt about the legality of the trade were told that both Wu P'ei-fu and Hsiao Yao-nan had given it their blessing.⁷⁰ In 1925, a special opium tax was masqueraded under the name of Cigarette Smokers' Special Tax in Hupeh. It was collected by a special organization called the Supervisory Bureau of the Military and Police, which enjoyed a complete monopoly over the transportation and sale of the drug.⁷¹

Hsiao Yao-nan openly imposed an opium tax on Hupeh in the autumn of 1924 in order to furnish Wu with a large sum of money when the Second Chihli-Fengtien War broke out. It was estimated to yield Y\$ 30 million monthly. Once sanction had been given to the drug, no one had the power to stop it. The container was stamped on payment of a fee. As a result, balls of opium, opium pipes and other paraphernalia were displayed in the shop windows and sold openly. The yield was so large that the matter was brought up at the conference of the Hupeh military leaders held at Wuchang on 25–28 July 1925. A military commander was appointed to the post of Commissioner of Finance to take care of it.

Wine and tobacco taxes

Wine and tobacco taxes were central government revenue. They consisted of public sales tax, wine and tobacco taxes, license fees, cigarette tax and foreign wine tax. For the year 1922, the return of these taxes was Y\$ 386,405 in Honan, Y\$ 642,249 in Hupeh and Y\$ 352,892 in Shensi.⁷² But in that year, Honan and Hupeh remitted respectively Y\$ 3,375 and Y\$ 4,259 to the central government; but Shensi remitted nothing.⁷³

The Hupeh Cigarette Taxes Collecting Bureau alone had eleven branches throughout the province. The director of the Wine and Tobacco Revenue Bureau of Hupeh was Wang Yung-hsi. He got the post in May 1922 through the recommendation of Wu P'ei-fu; he was recommended because he was able to raise Y\$ 800,000 from the wine and tobacco revenue for Wu.⁷⁴ In order to have a close connection with the personnel in the tobacco industry, Hsiao Yao-nan appointed the manager of the British-American Tobacco Company of Hankow, Marc T.W. Tseng, as adviser for foreign affairs to the Hupeh military government. Consequently, the Hupeh authority and the British-American Tobacco Company agreed in 1926 that the company would pay the provincial cigarette tax in a lump sum direct to the government. In return the Hupeh authority would exempt the stamp duty from the sale of cigarettes on the street.⁷⁵

Excessive taxation sometimes brought about strong opposition from the native tobacco and wine trade guilds. They petitioned the government authority. If it was unheeded, members of the wine and tobacco guilds would unite in a strike. As a protest against the highhanded taxation by Wu P'ei-fu, a strike was organized in January 1922. Some fifty Chinese breweries and wholesale wine merchants closed down their trade in the Chinese New Year, running the risk of heavy loss.⁷⁶ But the strike was not effective; the new tariff that Wu imposed remained in force.

Profit from industry

The three cities of Hankow, Wuchang and Hanyang were national industrial centres. Profit derived from the big industrial concerns in these centres was very attractive. Wu P'ei-fu, therefore, tried to get them under his control. In early 1922 he took over control of the Chinese River Steamship Administration at Hankow and the Four Factories of Wuchang.

The Chinese River Steamship Administration took charge of all the ex-German shipping properties at Hankow. In April 1922 Wu had Wang Chun-shan, the secretary in charge of the administration, arrested, and only released him upon an agreement that Wang would hand over the administration to Wu. Later Wu appointed his own protégé, Sung Tse-lien, of the General Staff, as secretary of that organization.⁷⁷

The Hupeh cotton, silk, cloth and hemp factories, formed an industrial centre first started by Li Hung-chang. They were generally known as the Four Factories of Wuchang. The annual profit of these factories was Tls. 4 million in 1920. It was leased and operated by the Tso Hsin Corporation. But the term of lease was about to expire at the beginning of 1922. Taking the pretext of having to give work to disbanded soldiers Wu took back the factories and put them under government management.⁷⁸

Stamp duty

Provincial stamp duty normally went into the national treasury. However, warlords seldom followed this practice. The average annual return of stamp duty for the years 1919, 1920 and 1921 was Y\$ 185,000 in Hupeh.⁷⁹ After deducting the administrative expenses, half of the surplus went into troop payment, the other half to the Wuchang High Normal School as educational funds.⁸⁰ Occasionally, Wu imposed additional stamp duty on the merchants in his territory. In January 1922 he allocated a quantity of duty stamps valued at Y\$ 100,000 to the Chamber of Commerce of Hankow and Wuchang, asking them to sell them to the trade guilds.⁸¹ Frequently, he imposed stamp duty on lottery tickets and other articles in Honan and Hupeh. Forced subscription from the merchants to his revenue stamp was not infrequent.

Miscellaneous taxes

Wu also obtained revenues from various additional taxes imposed on the provinces. They were called *tsa shui*, miscellaneous taxes or *tsa chüan*, miscellaneous subscriptions. These miscellaneous taxes and subscriptions very often formed a long list. They varied from province to province and from district to district. In 1923 in Honan, for example, these taxes fell into two categories.⁸²

- (1) Subscriptions that were passed down from the Ch'ing dynasty:

surtax on rice, subscriptions from towns and associations, subscriptions on clothes, seed-oil and animals.

(2) Various taxes collected in the district.

theatre	coal cart
peanut	oil
car	stone
melon seed	surtax on land
date	persimmon cake
pig	petrol
sheep	matches
wattle	cotton
shop	book
transportation of grain	temple
a string of cash on individual	sesame
stove	salt shop
transportation of food	ferry
	door
	donkey cart
	rice cart

Such miscellaneous taxes sometimes yielded a handsome sum. In Hupeh, for example, the new property tax and the special house tax each yielded Y\$ 1 million per annum. These taxes increased year after year sometimes to as high as 70 per cent per year.⁸³

Wu P'ei-fu, therefore, worked out a very tight control system after he became an Inspecting Commissioner governing several provinces. While delegating part of the control to his provincial *tuchün*, he appointed, at the same time, his own men directly from the control centre at Loyang to important posts in both the provincial and district levels. In this way, he also exercised a direct control in his base area. Wu realized that power grew out of a large army and an adequate supply of guns and ammunition from his arsenals. He also realized that fast communication came from an efficient telegraph and telephone service. Thus, he successfully secured all these assets under his firm control between 1920-4. Above all, he knew that no militarist could sustain his wars without adequate finance. Hence, he controlled all important financial positions and put his hands on every possible revenue that he could get out of the provinces. And since he always needed money badly he had to find a method to raise a large amount of money quickly. That is why he turned to the merchants who usually had more cash in hand than the peasants.

Wu Chih-hui was correct in saying that a warlord had no concern for civilian authority. In the case of Wu P'ei-fu, his authority, based on a threat of force, was paramount in his base area. Neither did he follow the instructions from Peking, if they happened to be in conflict with his policy, nor did he concern himself with the authority of the civil governors. He acted independently evicting any person he disliked from a post and replacing him with his own followers.

Wu P'ei-fu and the Chihli Clique¹

There are a number of biographies of individual warlords but no study in the Western language which deals with one of the larger military cliques. Yet the civil wars which plagued China during this period are incomprehensible unless one understands them as wars between cliques. This chapter analyses one of the most powerful of these Chinese military groupings in order to explain its structure and dynamics.

If one makes a thorough analysis of the divisions that actually participated in the Chihli-Anfu War and the two Chihli-Fengtien wars, one discovers that the estimated military strength and the actual fighting force differed immensely. For example, the estimated strength of the Chihli clique before the first Chihli-Fengtien War of 1922 was approximately 370,000 troops but the number of soldiers that could actually be mobilized was only 130,000.²

In order to understand Wu P'ei-fu's position and his relations with other militarists within the Chihli clique, and to understand how militarists behaved in times of conflict, we may trace the interpersonal relations of this group. The Chihli clique consisted of commanders amalgamated into a military group in order to defend their common interests. Yet within the group the interpersonal relations and the spoils obtained by the individual commanders both varied, causing conflicts between the leaders. These conflicts were especially detrimental at times of war as they would discourage some militarists from giving complete allegiance to the group and participating whole-heartedly in subsequent wars. Therefore, a study of the goals, the structure, the reward system and the conflicts inside the Chihli military clique is of great pertinence.

After the death in 1919 of Feng Kuo-chang, the founder of the Chihli clique, Ts'ao K'un, the most senior member, succeeded as head of the

clique. Wu P'ei-fu, the strongest of the Chihli militarists was commonly recognized in the 1920s as the probable successor of Ts'ao. In practically all the interprovincial wars that involved the Chihli clique, it was Ts'ao and Wu who led the other commanders in battle. Therefore, I use Ts'ao and Wu here as the centre of analysis and examine the relationship of the other militarists to them in an attempt to learn the pattern of behaviour within this group and to understand the wavering of some of the Chihli militarists in wartime.³

What was the Chihli Clique?

The term Chihli clique has a dual connotation. First, it denotes the territorial base of the clique: Chihli, the province around the national capital of Peking. The largest territorial base of the clique always lay in the Yangtze Valley: under Feng Kuo-chang, it consisted of Kiangsu, Hupeh and Kiangsi; later under Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu, it expanded to include Honan, Hupeh, Kiangsu, Hunan, Kiangsi, Fukien and Szechwan. But Chihli was always in their possession. Feng Kuo-chang was given the position *tutuh* (Military Governor) of Chihli in September 1911, and later his successor, Ts'ao K'un, became the High Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan.⁴ Wu P'ei-fu was also appointed Assistant Inspecting Commissioner of these provinces.

The term further denotes a military grouping, most of whose members were natives of Chihli. Of the twenty-four division commanders listed by Wen Kung-chih, the military historian, as belonging to the Chihli clique, twelve were from Chihli, six from Shantung, and one each from Anhwei, Fengtien, Hupeh, Shensi, Honan, and one of unknown origin.⁵ Other military leaders in the clique also came either from Chihli or Shantung.⁶ Thus the group had a regional tie.

It is generally believed that the Chihli clique consisted of the followers of Feng Kuo-chang, the founder of the clique. Further investigation reveals that it had two distinct segments: the *Wu-li p'ai*, military faction, and the *Wen-ch'ih p'ai*, civilian faction.

Wu-li p'ai (military faction)

The military faction, which will be dealt with in greater detail later, included militarists such as Feng Kuo-chang, Ts'ao K'un, the three *tuchün* of the Yangtze Valley – Ch'en Kuang-yüan, Li Shun and Wang Chan-yüan – Wu P'ei-fu, Wang Ch'eng-pin, and as the Chihli clique

expanded, Hsiao Yao-nan, Ch'i Hsieh-yüan, Feng Yü-hsiang and Sun Ch'u-an-fang.

Wen-ch'ih p'ai (civilian faction)

The civilian faction represented by Wang Shih-chen, Hsü Shih-ch'ang and their civilian associates who had risen in the ranks of the government, is seldom noted by historians. However, the origin of the civilian faction went back to the late Ch'ing period. The four outstanding political figures in the Peiyang clique then, were Feng Kuo-chang, Ts'ao K'un, Hsü Shih-ch'ang and Wang Shih-chen, all of whom came from Chihli province, as opposed to the other two prominent militarists, Tuan Ch'i-jui and Tuan Chih-kuei, men from Anhwei. Hsü held such offices as Minister of the Government Council, and Grand Councillor during the Ch'ing dynasty, and as a 'sworn brother' of Yüan Shih-k'ai, he was appointed Secretary of State in the early Republican government.⁷ Wang Shih-chen, although a product of the Peiyang Military Preparatory School at Tientsin, had no ambition for a territorial base, but held such semi-military and semi-civilian offices as Chief of General Staff for Yüan when the latter was Viceroy of Shantung in 1899, proctor of Yüan's military academy, Minister of War and Premier.⁸

The maintenance of a complex governmental system in Peking necessitated the formation of a civilian grouping to carry on daily governmental matters. With the advance of Hsü Shih-ch'ang and Wang Shih-chen in the civilian ranks, there grew up with them a host of civilian associates.⁹ After 1922, when the Chihli clique came to power, civilian officials with a Chihli affiliation became prominent in the government.¹⁰

The Military Organization Goal

The Chihli military clique originated in 1918 with the objective of self-protection against the Anfu clique, headed by Tuan Ch'i-jui. For the sake of security, the Chihli militarists gradually gravitated together to form an organization. Unlike the Anfu clique, which was formed by Anfu politicians in order to strengthen themselves in voting, the Chihli clique was not deliberately organized for such a special purpose.¹¹ They did so only when the threat posed by the opposing Anfu clique became imminent. But once formed, the Chihli clique, similar to many other social units, was orientated towards the attainment of a special goal; this

was the maximization of power.¹² Yet within this diversified group, individual members pursued their specific personal goals, which might at times differ from the organization's goal. The individuals tried to enhance their own power, thereby setting up a complicated power play. So long as an external threat was imminent, the Chihli militarists stayed together to realize the main organizational goal; once the threat disappeared, disintegration occurred. Maximization of power, however, could be pursued in two ways: through material and status advancements.

Material advancement

Material advancement meant the enhancement of the organization materially, for example maintaining control of territory and expanding it, procurement of arms and munitions, and the expansion of ground forces.

One of the primary objectives of every warlord was to control and extend his territorial base. Control of an extensive territory ensured a steady revenue – from taxes – which, ordinarily, should have been remitted by the provinces to the central government in Peking. The most important single tax was the *likin*. The militarists could also collect land tax years in advance, and the compulsory cultivation of the poppy enabled them to obtain money from a great variety of taxes. Taxes from railways and taxes on rice, boats, lumber and other products also helped to finance the troops.

A body of well-trained and well-equipped troops was essential not only to maintain control of the base but also to extend possession of territory. It is difficult to accurately determine the numerical strength of each military grouping, as in many cases lists of armies published just before a battle were either highly exaggerated, or regarded as military secrets.

The *chung-yang lu-chün* or *kuo-chün*, national army, as recognized by the Ministry of War, consisted of twenty-six divisions and seventy-six mixed brigades in 1924.¹³ The great bulk of the army was made up of soldiers recruited by the *tuchün*, military governors, in their respective provinces. These troops were called *sheng-chün*, provincial army. Very often, after giving shelter to defectors from other provinces, a militarist incorporated the troops of the defector into his own army. Such an army can be recognized by the fact that it retained the name of the original province, for example the Fukien 1st Division in Chekiang. Alternatively one militarist might seek help from another, asking him to send an army

to be stationed in some strategically important place. Troops who came from other provinces were commonly known as *k'e-chün*, guest army. The military force of the Chihli clique, besides nineteen central divisions and sixteen central brigades in 1924, (the *kuo-chün*), also included *sheng-chün* such as the Honan and Shantung mixed brigades, and *k'e-chün* such as the Shensi Temporary 1st Division in Chihli and the Shensi Temporary 2nd Division in Honan. The Chihli army numbered approximately 250,000 by the time of the second Chihli-Fengtien conflict in the Autumn of 1924.¹⁴

The procurement of arms and munitions was important in the process of material advancement. By 1924, the Chihli clique was in direct control of four arsenals, the Hanyang arsenal and the Hanyang branch arsenal in Hupeh, the Kunghsien arsenal in Honan and the Tehchow arsenal in Shantung. The Nanyang arsenal in Shanghai, one of the most important in China, equipped with steel furnace and rolling mills, became a bone of contention between the Chihli warlord, Ch'i Hsieh-yüan, and the Anfuite, Lu Yung-hsiang. These arsenals, equipped with machines imported from Britain, Germany, and the United States, produced rifles, bayonets, pistols, machine guns, rifle ammunition, field and mountain guns.¹⁵ The Chihli militarists also secured supplies of arms and munitions from foreigners. Although the major arms producing countries had signed an embargo in 1919 forbidding the importation of war materials into China, some foreign nationals, most notably Italians, occasionally supplied the Chihli warlords with arms and war materials under the label of 'commerical use'.¹⁶ However, the Chihli clique was not the only party which attempted to obtain materials from foreigners. It was widely known that the Japanese constantly supplied Chang Tso-lin, the Manchurian leader, with arms and munitions to fight against his opponents.

Status advancement

Maximization of power included the seeking of status advancement. By status advancement, I mean building up the prestige of the military organization either by securing offices or by obtaining prestigious titles for its members. Some of the titles, for example the Presidency of the Republic, that Ts'ao K'un acquired in 1923 ensured an increase in prestige, power and monetary returns simultaneously. Other titles such as Assistant Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan, bestowed on Wu P'ei-fu in September 1920, did not necessarily bring material rewards. It was simply a vague honorary title. Other titles such

as Minister of War, Inspecting General of the Army (a post held by Feng Yü-hsiang in 1924), Chief of the College of Marshals, Commander of Metropolitan Defence Force, Commander of Gendarmes, and Chief Justice of the High Military Court were prestigious titles which did not grant much power. On the other hand, posts such as Inspecting Commissioner of the province, *tuchün*, and Civil Governor of one or several provinces, were lucrative posts through which a military leader could control a base, recruit an army and milk the province of revenue.

Other honourable titles were *Shang chiang-chün* (Super-General), *Chiang-chün* (General) and *Ts'an-chün* (Assistant General). These titles admitted the holders into the College of Marshals and were published every year in the *Chih-yüan lu* [Record of Officials] during the republican period.¹⁷ The College of Marshals was originally a council of high military officials, modelled upon the Japanese *Genro*. In theory the members acted as an advisory body to the government, but the Chinese College of Marshals consisted merely of names of high military officials, who never met to direct government policies. With the expansion of the Chihli military establishment, more and more titles were bestowed upon the Chihli generals. At the end of March 1921, there were sixty-eight super-generals and generals in the College; but after Ts'ao K'un was 'elected' to the office of President in October 1923, the list grew to 308 and included many of the brigade commanders.¹⁸ Of the twenty-four division commanders and two allied division commanders of the Chihli clique, only eight were made general in 1922. By mid-1924, twenty of them were listed either as super-general or general.¹⁹ Every year the full title of every general was published. For example Wu P'ei-fu was entered as Super-General with the special title of *fu-wei* (trust-inspiring), Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan, 3rd Division Commander of the National Army and concurrently *tu-pan* (Commissioner) of the motor roads of Chihli, Shantung and Honan. Wang Shih-chen, the ex-Premier and senior Chihli militarist, was elected Chief of the College of Marshals. These ranks would make a particular militarist more distinguished in the public eye and hence extend the prestige of the whole organization.

Legitimation

The greater the material and status power, the greater the legitimation of actions. The Presidential office that Ts'ao K'un sought by bribery in October 1923 illustrates this tendency. In addition to an automatic return

of the surplus maritime customs revenue and other taxes, the Presidential office held a number of powers. The Peking government was recognized by the foreign powers. Ts'ao K'un was in a position to conduct diplomatic relations with foreign countries, declare wars, negotiate treaties and contract foreign loans.

All provincial offices, whether military or civilian, were appointed by the President, and the appointment was later published in the *Cheng-fu kung-pao* (The Gazette of the Central Government) as well as in the *Chih-yüan lu*. At a time when warlords contended for big or small offices at the provincial level, the one who held the Presidential position was the legitimate ruler, though not necessarily the effective one. It was not uncommon, therefore, for a militarist to press the central government for appointment before mobilizing his troops to occupy a province. Sun Ch'uan-fang's appointment as *tuli* (a title equivalent to *tuchün*) of Fukien, and Shen Hung-ying's appointment as *tuli* of Kwangtung on 20 March 1923 by the central authority are examples.²⁰ It was also within the jurisdiction of the central government to declare a certain militarist as *tse* (bandit) and to appoint an anti-bandit commander for his elimination. As a war became imminent, the President, usually on the side of one of the military cliques, could decree the stripping of all titles from his political opponents. Prior to the commencement of the Chihli-Anfu War of 1920, Hsü Shih-ch'ang, then a puppet President of the Anfu clique, was forced by Tuan Ch'i-jui, the Anfu leader, to issue a mandate on 15 July 1921, to deprive Wu P'ei-fu of his duty as Commander of the 3rd Division, Ts'ao Ying of all his offices, and to strip Ts'ao K'un of all titles. Soon after the defeat of Tuan Ch'i-jui, Hsü was again coerced, now by the Chihli leaders, to cancel his former order and decree the arrest of Tuan's associates.

Another means of legitimizing military action during this period was by symbolic attack upon one's enemy. As the relations between militarists became strained, a symbolic attack began by using publicity such as government decrees, the press and public address. Frequently, attacks upon the enemy, denouncing his action, emphasizing his satanism and urging his destruction were exposed in telegrams from one warlord to another; eventually these telegrams were published in the press. Official and unofficial utterances and denunciations by militarists in the form of published letters were very common. These symbolic attacks were known as *tien-chan*, or telegraphic warfare, and were a means of legitimizing a forthcoming war. Telegrams that appeared in the newspapers usually contained the names and titles of the warlords. An example is the telegram issued by eight *tuchün* of the Chihli clique just

before the First Chihli-Fengtien War of 1922, exposing Chang Tso-lin's 'ten crimes against the country and the people'.²¹ Militarists might take joint action to endorse or reject certain policies advocated by other militarists. In December 1922, thirty commanders and civil governors, including Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu, answered T'ang Chi-yao and Liu Hsien-shih on the matter of the legitimacy of using the old legislation for the election of a national parliament.²² The greater the number of names and titles attached to such telegrams, the greater the legitimization would be. Hence, the increase of offices held by members of a clique and the number of allies secured were ways of legitimizing the clique's policies and actions.

Structure

A military organization is essentially a large body of officers and soldiers joined in a hierarchical order. Within this body of armed men, there exist groupings for subordination and co-ordination. Military historians and sociologists usually categorize modern military organizations into horizontal groupings, for example into upper echelon, middle echelon and lower echelon. They may classify them according to such ranks as general, colonel, major etc., or according to their occupational specialization, for example technical, scientific, administrative clerical, skilled mechanics etc. Or they may simply divide them into two groups, the officer corps and the common soldiers.²³ This scheme of analyzing the structure is appropriate to modern national armies, if they are rationalized and mechanized. It would be unrevealing if we applied the same scheme to the analysis of the Chinese military establishment of the 1920s. The Chihli military clique, for example, was quite different. It may be more revealing to analyze its structure by analogy with the Chinese *tsu*, that is lineage organization or clan.

It was common for a wealthy family in China to expand into a *tsu* or clan; this was particularly true of wealthy families in central and south China.²⁴ Some Chinese maintained an extended family of five generations, living under the same roof. Gradually this multi-generation family developed into a clan. Families stayed together partly because it gave them prestige and power and partly because it provided the members with security through mutual protection and financial assistance. The more wealthy and prominent lineages were called *wang tsu*, esteemed clans. Honours and public distinctions gained by individuals gave the whole clan prestige.

A distinct structure can be seen in the Chinese clan. The family was its fundamental unit. Several families made up a branch; several branches made up a sub-lineage and several sub-lineages a lineage. Each unit had its own head. Male members within the clan were ranked by generation and seniority rather than by age. At the head of the clan were the elders, usually senior members of the clan, holding great prestige and authority. The direct line of descent from the first ancestors through the eldest son in each generation was the stem, while collateral lines were considered branches. The size and power of branches varied as they individually attained wealth and social prominence. Strained relations and friction constantly occurred among the branches over the division of property. Once branch might take advantage of the others, despite the stress on harmony and solidarity in the clan rules. Sibling rivalry, in extreme cases, resulted in intra-clan quarrelling and fighting.²⁵

Originally, the Chihli military clique had only a few divisions and brigades. In the process of expansion, there was an uneven distribution of power and territories among the many branches in the organization.

Feng Kuo-chang, the most senior of the group became the head of the clique in 1918. His followers began to multiply. By 1924, the clique consisted of a great many commanders and a structure very similar to a Chinese clan. It would be incorrect to assume that this organization was in fact a clan, yet the Chihli clique used some of the terminology of the Chinese clan and the relationship between the militarists bore a resemblance to that between clan members. It is therefore instructive to examine the Chihli clique as though it were a clan system.

Ta yüan-lao (senior elders) and yüan-lao or chang-lao (elders)

Chinese society places great emphasis on age and generation. As a man increases in age and moves up in generation, there is a corresponding increase in status. The *chang-lao* or *yüan-lao* (elders) in a traditional Chinese clan assumed positions of authority. They often regulated affairs of the clan and settled disputes among the members. Elders of the military clique could not hold as much power as did elders in the clan, since real power in the military organization rested upon the numbers of troops, the size of the territorial base and the amount of financial resources under command. Nevertheless, the leaders of the military organization did assume functions very similar to those of an elder in a lineage.

The elders in the Chihli clique were senior militarists but they differed in power and ambition. Some like Feng Kuo-chang and Ts'ao K'un were

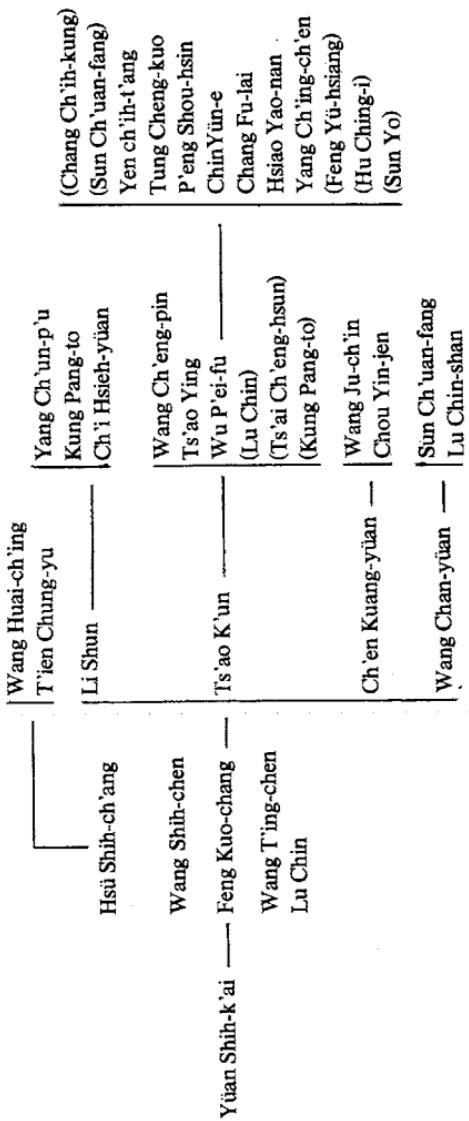
highly ambitious; others such as Wang Shih-chen and Hsü Shih-ch'ang had no ambition to control the organization, while others such as Wang Chan-yüan had fallen from power in the provincial wars. Originally Feng Kuo-chang, Wang Shih-chen, Hsü Shih-ch'ang and Ts'ao K'un were called *yüan-lao*. However, as the organization expanded in size, more and more militarists moved up to the rank of elders. The above four were then named *ta yüan-lao* in order to distinguish them from the others.

By virtue of their seniority and prestige within the organization and because of their friendship with the leaders of other cliques, the senior elders and elders frequently acted as mediators in times of disputes. Preceding the outbreak of the First Chihli-Fengtien War in 1922, a number of senior elders and elders such as Wang Shih-chen, Wang Chan-yüan and Chang Shao-tseng, in the capacity of mediators (*tiao-jen*), despatched a joint telegram to both Wu P'ei-fu and Chang Tso-lin, entreating them to come to the conference table at Tientsin.²⁶ Sometimes when two powerful leaders were deadlocked in competition for a position, they might agree to nominate an elder, who was not powerful enough to affect the power structure but prestigious enough to assume the post, for that particular position. The Presidency of Hsü Shih-ch'ang was essentially the product of the rivalry between Ts'ao K'un and Chang Tso-lin. When a provincial leader was deposed, an elder might be asked to take up the tuchünship temporarily or elders might be asked to form a transitional cabinet until a formal cabinet was elected. Wang Shih-chen was often requested to act in that capacity.²⁷ Chinese internal politics in the 1920s was like a chess game and a militarist who had newly attained power might not have the knowledge to deal with all the intrigues in the web of military alliances. He very often would engage an elder to be his adviser. Wang Chan-yüan, who had been defeated by Wu P'ei-fu in the Rescue Hupeh War, later served his own subordinate, Sun Ch'uan-fang, as an adviser, when Sun became the head of five provinces.

Ti hsi (stem).

As the sons in a Chinese family get married, one of them, usually the eldest, remains in the household to procreate a new generation, so continuing the family line. This is called a stem family. Thus, the stem includes the one who remains in the household as well as his descendants. For a military organization, Chinese historians usually regard the most powerful militarist as the one in line of direct descent from the most powerful militarist to the next, that is as the stem. The term used by

GENEALOGY OF THE CHIHLI CLIQUE



Note: Names in parentheses are 'adopted sons'.

them to refer to the stem is *ti hsi*. Since Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu were the most powerful militarists in the Chihli clique and often led the others in battle, historians, for example, lumped all their followers together and named them 'the *ti hsi* of the Chihli army'.²⁸ For the sake of clarity, I shall try to differentiate this stem into its components. The stem of Ts'ao K'un was composed of Ts'ao himself, Wu P'ei-fu, Ts'ao Ying and Wang Ch'eng-pin. The stem of Wu P'ei-fu, however, consisted of Hsiao Yao-nan, Chang Fu-lai, Peng Shou-hsin, Tung Cheng-kuo, Yen Ch'ih-t'ang, Chin Yun-e and Yang Ch'ing-ch'en. The *ti hsi* of both Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu were of particular importance since they constituted the core of the fighting force when the Chihli clique faced its enemies in battles.

Branches

As the family expanded and junior males married, they formed new households, that is branches. They still belonged to the clan with cognatic ties to the ancestral head of the lineage. Similarly, we can find branches within the Chihli organization. To Ts'ao K'un's *ti hsi*, other militarists descending from Feng Kuo-chang were considered branches. To Wu P'ei-fu's *ti hsi*, other militarists descending from both Feng and Ts'ao would constitute branches. Let us take Wu's *ti hsi* and examine the relationship of the followers of Feng and Ts'ao to this stem.

Feng Kuo-chang had a number of followers besides Ts'ao K'un. The three *tuchün* of the Yangtze Valley, Ch'en Kuang-yüan, Li Shun and Wang Chan-yüan, had served under Feng and were very powerful. These branches of Ch'en, Li and Wang remained formidable rivals to Wu P'ei-fu in struggles for power within the organization. The death of Li Shun and the collapse of Wang Chan-yüan's rule in Hupeh, by no means eased the tension between these branches and the stem. Their subordinates, Ch'i Hsieh-yüan and Sun Ch'u'an-fang, in due time, emerged from internecine wars to revitalize the branch interests. Ts'ao K'un's subordinates, such as Wang Ch'eng-pin and Ts'ao Ying were also considered branches by Wu's stem. They were always on the alert to extend their power.

'*Adopted sons.*'

Chinese tradition makes it justifiable for adoption in case there is no heir to perform the ancestral rites and to continue the family line. The first preference of adoption is a selection from the sub-lineage closest to the

line requiring an heir. This stipulation is intended to preserve the property within the clan. However, some clan rules do permit adoption of very distant kinsmen or even an outsider if necessary. Once a person is adopted, he remains in the family as a legitimate child, performing the proper role and function of an heir.

In the Chihli military organization, 'adoption' was a frequent phenomenon, though no name was given to such an action. A rapidly expanding segment of the organization was in constant need of experienced officers, who could only be secured by two processes: by the rapid promotion of immediate subordinates, or by the takeover of subordinates from other branches.

Due to the success of his campaign, Wu P'ei-fu's army began to expand and he absorbed officers from other branches. The takeover of Sun Ch'u'an-fang was similar to an adoption from the sub-lineage. Sun was a member of Wang Chan-yüan's branch. By spring of 1921, he was an Acting Commander-in-Chief of the Upper Yangtze Valley under Wang. Upon the collapse of Wang's rule in Hupeh in August 1921, Sun was taken into Wu P'ei-fu's camp as 2nd Division Commander and thereafter participated in Wu's project for the military unification of China.²⁹ Feng Yü-hsiang, on the other hand, represents the adoption of an outsider. By 21 July 1917, in reward for his support to Tuan Ch'i-jui in the defeat of Chang Hsun's Imperial Restoration, Feng was made Commander of the 16th Mixed Brigade. When a dispute arose between Feng Kuo-chang and Tuan Ch'i-jui over the question of dispatching troops to conquer the south in the winter of 1917, Feng Yü-hsiang took the side of President Feng Kuo-chang. He not only refused to carry out Tuan's order to march towards Fukien but demanded a cession of civil war. Unfortunately for Feng Yü-hsiang, there was a reversal in the tide of the civil war; Chang Tso-lin, Chang Huai-chih and Ts'ao K'un came to the side of Tuan, upsetting the balance of power to the disadvantage of Feng Yü-hsiang and his subordinates. Under a Presidential mandate on 18 March 1918, Feng Yü-hsiang was deprived of his rank of Lieutenant-General and was to atone for his offence by serving under Ts'ao K'un, that is under Wu P'ei-fu. Feng Yü-hsiang was bound to the Chihli clique.³⁰ His 'adoption' provided him with means for survival. On the other hand, because Feng commanded a powerful brigade he was welcomed into Wu's stem.

Besides Sun Ch'u'an-fang and Feng Yü-hsiang, there were other 'adopted sons'. Hu Ching-i, Chang Ch'ih-kung and Sun Yo were also 'adopted sons' of Wu P'ei-fu, while Lu Chin, Kung Pang-to, and Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun were 'adopted sons' of Ts'ao K'un. All of them were taken

over by Wu and Ts'ao either from other branches of the Chihli clique or from other militarists outside the Chihli organization.³¹

Chun Chih-hsi (the Quasi-Chihli faction)

The Quasi-Chihli faction included militarists who 'descended' from neither Feng Kuo-chang nor Ts'ao K'un, but from Hsü Shih-ch'ang an elder and the head of the *wen-chih p'ai*, or civilian faction.³² During the later years of Yüan Shih-k'ai, Hsü had under him not only a host of civilian followers but also two militarists, Wang Huai-ch'ing and T'ien Chung-yü. When Hsü was Viceroy of the three eastern provinces, Wang Huai-ch'ing was co-director of the Department of Military Affairs and concurrently adviser to the Department of Military Institutions in Fengtien. Upon Hsü's assumption of the Presidency in September 1918, Wang was appointed High Adviser, and a year later, Wang became the Commander-in-Chief of Peking Gendarmerie. Thus far Wang had been working under Hsü Shih-ch'ang. It was not until May 1922, when Ts'ao's faction seemed likely to emerge powerful in the First Chihli-Fengtien War, that Wang joined Ts'ao in his attack on Manchuria. In return for this assistance Wang was later made High Inspecting Commissioner of Jehol, Chahar and Suiyuan. Henceforth Wang was classified as one of Ts'ao's protégés.³³ T'ien Chung-yü had also been an adviser to Hsü Shih-ch'ang when the latter was Viceroy of Manchuria. When Hsü became President and took a pro-Anfu orientation in his governmental policies, T'ien also went over to the Anfu side. Tuan gave him a title of *tuchün* of Jehol and later of Shantung. But after Tuan's defeat in 1920, T'ien had to shift his allegiance back to the Chihli clique in order to preserve his Shantung territorial base.³⁴

Wang Huai-ch'ing and T'ien Chung-yü should be classified as members of the Chihli clique, since they were subordinates of Hsü Shih-ch'ang. But they were wavering elements. Before 1922 Wang had been neutral and T'ien had for a time been an Anfu man. They only joined Ts'ao's faction out of necessity. Members of Ts'ao's faction considered them an out-group. Wang Huai-ch'ing was fortunate to be able to retain his posts, but these offices carried more prestige than power. T'ien, however, was in control of Shantung, a base of wealth and strategical importance sought after by the Chihli members. In October 1923, he was driven out of his province by other Chihli generals.

Ch'in Chih (pro-Chihli allies).

To maximize its base, it was necessary for the Chihli clique to create a

number of satellites along the border area. The direction of expansion was a line running along the provinces of Szechwan, Hunan, Kiangsi and Fukien, the boundary between the north and the south, and a constant theatre of war. It was in these provinces that the greatest factional struggle existed. The military governorships changed hands every year. Certain militarists in these provinces played a double role of allying with the north as well as the south. Some, by sheer necessity due to an attack from rivals, gravitated towards the Chihli clique, seeking military assistance in times of war and asylum in times of defeat. Relations between the allies and the Chihli clique were based largely on the common interests of preventing these provinces being captured by southerners.³⁵ Chao Heng-t'i and Yang Shen were the main allies of the Chihli clique.

Chao Heng-t'i, the Commander-in-Chief of Hunan, professed subordination to Wu P'ei-fu, while at the same time maintaining a vague alliance with the southern government. In 1923, Chao had to evacuate Changsha because of the invasion of Hunan by T'an Yen-k'ai, his former superior and his rival. He then decided to ask Wu P'ei-fu for help. With assistance from Wu, he later returned to the province; thereafter he remained nominally an adherent of Wu. The Chihli clique kept a garrison at Yochow, within the northern borders of Hunan.³⁶ Yang Shen, the *tupan* (equivalent to *tuchün*) of Szechwan, was in constant dispute with his superior, Liu Hsiang, over the question of controlling the province. It was only with the aid of Wu P'ei-fu that Yang could drive out his superior and assume position of *tupan* in the province.³⁷ The tie between the allies and the Chihli clique was particularly strong in times of military adversity in their province. The existence of a threat to their territorial base posed by rivals who were mostly from the southern camp, bound them closely to the Chihli militarists. To Wu P'ei-fu in particular they owed a debt since Wu had extended military assistance and supervision to these provinces.

A special case – Lu Yung-hsiang.

It is pertinent here to point out that the case of Lu Yung-hsiang is special. Lu was a follower of Ts'ao K'un and commanded the 5th Regiment in the late Ch'ing period. In terms of seniority, he may be classified as the elder of most other Chihli militarists. Wu P'ei-fu, Sun Yo and Wang Ch'eng-pin were his former subordinates. In 1915, Lu was transferred to be the Assistant Defence Commissioner of Shanghai and Woosung, working under Yang Shan-te, the Defence Commissioner and a pro-Anfuite.

Upon the death of Yang, Lu assumed the *tuchünship* of Chekiang and was then on the side of Tuan Ch'i-jui. After the defeat of Tuan in 1920, Lu remained the only pro-Anfu militarist, who stood against the Chihli clique in their bid for power. Later in 1924, when Tuan Ch'i-jui and Chang Tso-lin were in temporary alliance to oppose the Chihli clique, Lu is said to have shifted his allegiance to Chang in return for Chang's support to bolster his position in Chekiang province.³⁸

Reward System

Group solidarity and personal allegiance in an organization depends partly on a sound system of reward and punishment. Individual militarists were seeking opportunities for ascent. The most promising prospect of advancement lay in the control of a wealthy territorial base, that is a *tuchünship* or a civil governorship. Titles, other than those of President and Inspecting Commissioners, did not offer a great attraction, even though they gave a militarist prestige. If there was an opportunity to ascend, a militarist was usually willing to fight; on the other hand, if rewards were denied, he remained neutral or wavering in times of war, or in extreme cases, staged a *coup d'état* against his own superior.

The reward system of the Chihli organization varied in accordance with the relationship between the individual militarists on the one hand, and Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu on the other. By 1924, Ts'ao and Wu were the ones who handed out rewards. It should be noted that the Chihli clique did not rise to power until the defeat of Tuan Ch'i-jui in 1921, and that it was not at the peak of its power till 1923. Despite expansion, the territories directly under the control of Ts'ao and Wu were limited. It is logical therefore that only the senior subordinates of Ts'ao and Wu were assigned the control of a province. The *tuchünship* went to those who came from the 3rd Division, the most important division of Ts'ao and Wu. Hsiao Yao-nan and Chang Fu-lai, both belonged to Wu P'ei-fu's *ti hsi*, and men from the 3rd Division were appointed *tuchün* of Hupeh and Commissioner for Military Affairs (a rank equivalent to *tuchün*) of Honan, respectively. Other lesser militarists in Wu's stem, such as Tung Cheng-kuo, Peng Shou-hsin, Yang Ch'ing-ch'en (all from the 3rd Division) had risen to the rank of division commander. Ts'ao K'un's two subordinates, Wang Ch'eng-pin and Ts'ao Ying, received less powerful posts, because Ts'ao was only the nominal head of the Chihli clique. Wang who also came from the 3rd Division, was fortunate to be given the civil governorship of Chihli in

June 1922, a rather important post but less powerful than the tuchünship. Ts'ao Ying, although a brother of Ts'ao K'un, had to be content with command of the 26th Division, due to his incompetence on battlefield.

The base of the branches under Wang Chan-yüan, Li Shun and Ch'en Kuang-yüan changed hands rapidly within the period 1918–24. Most of their territories were absorbed by the expanding faction of Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu. Wang's Hupeh province was taken by Wu P'ei-fu in the Rescue Hupeh War in mid-1922. Ch'en Kuang-yüan was driven out of his province, Kiangsi, after an attack from the southern government; thereafter Kiangsi was a bone of contention between the north and the south. Finally, in 1922, Ts'ao K'un sent his 'adopted son', Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun, to conquer that province. For a short time Kiangsi was nominally under Ts'ai, who had been appointed Commissioner of Military Affairs of Kiangsi. Thus the only territory remaining in the hands of these branches was Kiangsu. It was under Ch'i Hsieh-yüan, who succeeded Li Shun as *tuchün* of Kiangsu after the latter's death in October 1921. Simply because of his military strength, Ch'i was able to hold the province under his control, despite the fact that many other militarists, in particular Wu P'ei-fu, cast their eye on it.

Rewarding 'adopted sons' was an important problem for both Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu. Their 'adopted sons' were mostly competent soldiers, who had great ambition either to secure a territorial base or to revive their own branches. Less able and less ambitious 'adopted sons' such as Lu Chin and Kung Pang-to, would be made a Minister of War or a General, titles of no great military significance. However, Feng Yü-hsiang, Sun Ch'u'an-fang and Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun presented a problem. They were always seeking a base, and if they were in control of one, looked forward to expanding it. They participated actively in the wars if the situation looked favourable for them to ascend. The usual method of rewarding these men was to give them a vague title over a turbulent area and let them take over the assigned area by themselves. If they were able to do so, it would enlarge the territories of the clique and at the same time satisfy them. It gave them an incentive to fight.

For example, after the First Chihli-Fengtien War of 1922, Feng Yü-hsiang was appointed co-director for Military Affairs of Shensi. This did not mean that because Yen Hsiang-wen was the *tuchün* of that province that Feng now had a base there. Fortunately for Feng, Yen died suddenly, and mysteriously. Feng was promoted to the tuchünship whereas under other circumstances he might have used force or other means to take over Shansi. Sun Ch'u'an-fang was appointed Comman-

der-in-Chief of the Upper Yangtze District and later Commander-in-Chief for the Lower Yangtze Valley. He faced tremendous difficulties as his appointment lay in the disputed area between the north and the south and he was unwelcome to the various *tuchün* in the Yangtze Valley. Through his military skill he was able to carve out a base in Fukien.³⁹ In the same way, Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun was given a tuchünship of Kiangsi, another area under dispute. He had to fight his way into Kiangsi before he could actually rule the area.

The members of the Quasi-Chihli faction, who were considered an out-group, were either given a base in the border area or no base at all. Wang Huai-ch'ing, a competent commander, was appointed Inspecting Commissioner of Jehol, Chahar and Suiyuan, an area of little military significance. T'ien Chung-yü, the other member of the Quasi-Chihli faction, was less fortunate. Although he shifted his allegiance back to the Chihli clique after the downfall of Tuan Ch'i-jui, he could not preserve his province. In May 1923, he was ordered to give up his tuchünship of Shantung and driven out of the province after the Lincheng Incident.⁴⁰

The reward system in the Chihli clique was important because it was the means to induce commanders to fight. The greater the opportunity offered to them to obtain territory, the more willing they would be to fight for the organization. The logic of the situation showed that the *ti hsi* of Ts'ao and Wu should actively participate in the wars since success would enlarge the stem's area. The branches and the Quasi-Chihli faction would hesitate, for they were likely to get very little out of the victory. The attitude of the 'adopted sons,' on the other hand, depended very much on the opportunity for ascent.

The Chihli military organization was only an informal organization, loosely joined together in an 'alliance-of-convenience'. There was never a clearly spelt-out goal, but only a mutual concern for the maximization of power. On the other hand interests of individual members were diversified. Very often, conflicts over these interests called for much attention and energy. Under such a situation, the Chihli clique needed a strong leader who could wield absolute power and impose his will on its members. But the clique lacked such a leader. Moreover, one might expect solidarity and harmony within the Chihli clique since it had a clan-type structure. But this is not the case. In the absence of any powerful leader or elder comparable to the clan elder, the Chihli clique had no overall authority to hold the fragments together. On the contrary, the structure contained the seeds of separatism; the militarists divided themselves into vertical groups. One group would look upon another

group in the same way as one branch in the clan looked upon another. The rewards which were handed out by the stem (usually the most powerful division) would favour the members of the stem and those branches closest to it. Discrepancy in rewards increased the existing tension, the intensity of which depended on the relationship of one member to another within such a structure. Intense friction took a form somewhat like the rivalry between siblings, which will be dealt with in the following chapter.

It is important to see how this kind of relationship between the members of the Chihli clique affected their behaviour in times of war. Did they come together in a solid bloc to face their common enemy? Or did the existing tension prevent them from fighting as a body? Let us take the First Chihli-Fengtien War of 1922 as a case. A list was published on 7 May 1922 in the *Nu-li chou-pao* [The Endeavor] estimating the military strength of the Chihli clique in the First Chihli-Fengtien War. After listing the various divisions and mixed brigades, the names of the commanders and their respective strength, the author has this to say:⁴¹

Since there are 23 divisions, 37 mixed brigades, 6 regular brigades, 5 reserve regiments and 87 battalions listed above, there should be 480,000 men [in the Chihli Army.] In fact, the actual number does not exceed 370,000–380,000. Among them [the troops of] Shantung and Honan belong to the Chihli Clique in name; their attitude is unreliable. The temperament of the troops in Hupeh and Kiangsu is extremely complex. The troops in these provinces that can actually be utilized by the Chihli Clique are 1 division and 2 mixed brigades. There are only 4 divisions in Shensi. The 1st Division, 9th Division and 13th Division that are stationed in the vicinity of Peking are unable to co-ordinate with the Chihli troops to the south of Peking. The troops in Kiangsi and Kiangsu only have the capacity of holding back the enemy. Hence, the troops that can be directly utilized by the Chihli Clique amount to approximately 9 divisions, 9 mixed brigades and 5 reserve regiments, altogether 130,000 men. They are full armies [i.e. no overestimation.] Aside from the 26th Division commanded by Ts'ao Ying, and the reserve regiments, the rest of the troops are well-trained, well-disciplined and all have field experience.

From the above quotation we see that only one-third of the troops of the Chihli clique could actually be used in this war. The rest were wavering elements. They consisted mainly of allies, branches, the Quasi-Chihli faction and some of the 'adopted sons': Chao Chieh and Cheng Chih-

ch'i, both of them allies, were in command of the troops in Shantung and Honan; they were reported 'unreliable'. The armies in Hupeh and Kiangsu were commanded by Sun Ch'uan-fang and Kung Pang-to. Both of them were 'adopted sons' recently taken over by Wu P'ei-fu and Ts'ao K'un from other branches, and were still not sure of their position in the new 'family'. Thus the temperament of their troops was extremely complex. Kiangsi was under Ch'en Kuang-yüan, a branch family. Ch'en naturally took no interest in a war that would enhance the power of Ts'ao and Wu. The last group of wavering elements was composed of the 1st, 9th and 13th divisions commanded by Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun, Lu Chin and Wang Huai-ch'ing. Ts'ai and Lu were 'adopted sons' of Ts'ao K'un. They saw no opportunity for advancement in this war.⁴² Wang, though relatively active in the war, was only a member of the Quasi-Chihli faction. It is not surprising to find that they were unable to coordinate with the Chihli troops to the south of Peking.

The actual fighting army, as reported by Li Chi-ch'en, Wu P'ei-fu's Chief-of-Staff consisted of the 3rd, 11th, 23rd, 24th and 26th divisions and 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th mixed brigades.⁴³ These commanders were Wu P'ei-fu, Feng Yü-hsiang, Wang Ch'eng-pin, Chang Fu-lai, Ts'ao Ying, Wang Yung-chung, Tung Cheng-kuo, Peng Shou-hsin and Sun Yo respectively. Except for Feng Yü-hsiang and Sun Yo ('adopted sons' of Wu P'ei-fu, who were trying to advance themselves) the rest belonged to the *ti hsi* of either Ts'ao K'un or Wu P'ei-fu. This group, therefore, was the fighting core of the Chihli clique.

It is clear that if one wants to understand the warlord period one must study the organizations of the different military cliques. As we have seen, although the military leaders of the Chihli clique had apparently grouped themselves into one, they were in fact seriously divided among themselves. These men might seem to possess the military potential to unify China, yet their individual interests and the form which their organization took defeated this purpose. We can now realize the separatism and diversity of interests which existed at that time. In fact, this was the most formidable obstacle for Wu P'ei-fu who had the intention of unifying the country. The following chapter will show how intra-organizational conflicts defeated his ideal of reunification.

Conflicts Within the Chihli Clique

When the Chihli clique had expanded into a large-scale, successful military establishment, it was inevitable that rivalries and rifts would develop among the officers. Regional ties, successful operational experience, and a common aim to eliminate their enemies might promote group solidarity; yet, these could not prevent the self-interest, the uneven promotional system, the diversity in training and background, and the conflicting personalities of these militarists from drawing them apart. The turbulent political situation at that time made the organization especially vulnerable to internal rivalries. Young men of strong ambition and ability tended to rise more rapidly in times of war; nevertheless, opportunities for subleadership and the amount of base area that could be portioned out were strictly limited. Consequently, it was these ambitious young men who made the organization very unstable by forming their own alliances and factions in their bid for power within the military establishment.

Intra-organizational conflict was a crucial problem confronting every militarist. According to the *Ku Chün*, a journal devoted to military matters, there were 179 revolts within the Chinese armies during the first eleven years of the Republic.¹ These revolts were due either to non-payment of troops, disbandment of troops, instigation by other cliques, or to conflicts between subordinates and superiors. However, revolts were not simply due to the ill-discipline of troops for considerable strain existed between division commanders in the officer corps.

As the Chihli clique had a clan-type structure, as described in Chapter 4, intra-organizational conflict bore a resemblance to sibling rivalry in a clan. Dr Hui-chen Wang Liu points out that the average family in traditional China did not succeed in keeping more than three generations together

because of tension among its members.² There were constant quarrels and disputes over family property. Aggressive brothers might mistreat or take advantage of a younger brother. Furthermore, when a person attained wealth and power he became the object of his brother's jealousy. Similar problems were particularly acute in the Chihli military organization because of the heterogeneous nature of the members and the rapid and uneven expansion of its segments. We can see that conflicts within the Chihli organization usually took one of two forms, vertical and lateral. Vertical conflicts were in the form of rivalry within the stem, or between the head of the stem and the 'adopted sons'. Lateral conflicts were between the sub-lineages, that is between the stem and the branches.

Vertical Conflicts

Conflict between Ts'ao K'un and Wu p'ei-fu

Conflict between these two leaders is a story that can be traced back to the Chihli-Anfu War of 1920. Rivalry first occurred between Wu and Ts'ao Jui, the Civil Governor of Chihli and younger brother of Ts'ao K'un. Ts'ao Jui was inordinately jealous of Wu because the latter was rapidly rising to power. His main objective and that of his following was to limit the power of Wu, even if they had to enter into conspiracies with militarists outside the Chihli organization. He was the main subscriber to the idea of working with Chang Tso-lin when the Manchurian warlord was assuming control of the Peking government at the end of 1921. Consequently, he did his best in negotiating with Chang Tso-lin to prevent the outbreak of the First Chihli-Fengtien War of May 1922. His effort, however, was in vain, as the Chihli and Fengtien leaders could not reach an agreement. After the Chihli-Fengtien War, Ts'ao Jui was removed by Wu P'ei-fu from his civil governorship of Chihli because of his pro-Fengtien orientation. Ts'ao Jui and his faction went into decline.³ Even though a breach between Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu did not appear, this incident created some tension between the leaders.

It is interesting to find that the Chihli militarists were most closely knit when on the offensive, but nearest to disintegration after a successful war. It was immediately after their victory over Chang Tso-lin that open rivalry between Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu actually began. The conflict between them is usually referred to by historians as the struggle between

Tientsin-Paoting and Loyang, the headquarters of the two leaders respectively. As its name indicated, Ts'ao's faction actually comprised two groups: (a) Ts'ao K'un's following at Paoting and (b) Wang Ch'eng-pin's following at Tientsin. This faction included: Ts'ao K'un, Wang Ch'eng-pin (*tuchün* of Chihli), Ts'ao Jui, Ts'ao Ying, (the two brothers of Ts'ao K'un), Pien Shou-ching (Chairman of the Chihli Provincial Assembly), Lu Chin (Commander of the 9th Division), K'ao Ling-wei (Ts'ao K'un's protégé), Wu Ching-lien (Speaker of the Lower House), Wu Yu-lin and Hsiung Ping-chi (Ts'ao K'un's advisers) and Wang Yu-chih (Ts'ao K'un's chief secretary and head of the Wine and Tobacco Bureau). Their common cause was to check Wu's influence at the capital and, once Wu was out of the way, to elect Ts'ao K'un as President. Wu P'ei-fu and his adherents, on the other hand, were known as the Loyang faction, whose main objective was to undermine the power of Ts'ao K'un's immediate followers, subordinates and secretaries in the central government in order to assume control of the capital themselves. The principal members of this faction were Sun Ch'u-an-fang, Hsiao Yao-nan, Shen Hung-ying, Chang Fu-lai, Liu Chen-hua and politicians such as Yen Hui-ch'ing, Wang Ch'ung-hui, Tung K'ang, Lo Wen-kan, K'ao En-hung and Sun Tan-lin.

The conflict between Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu was essentially a dilemma of authority based on ascription versus authority based on achievement. Ascriptive authority derived from such status as seniority, age and length of service, all of which commanded a great deal of respect in a transitional society where tradition and customs were still of great importance. Achieved authority, on the other hand, was earned through military competence. Ts'ao K'un was well-known for his military incompetence but was able to exercise his authority because of his seniority as the head of the Chihli clique. Wu P'ei-fu, however, began to assert his authority in the affairs of the central government because of the military success which made him a prominent figure within the military organization. The question then arose: who should have the final authority on matters such as cabinet-making, financial allocation and the choice of a president? Ts'ao or Wu? The history of events from June 1922 to June 1923 was the story of the efforts of the Tientsin-Paoting faction to fight for that authority, and Loyang's retaliation.

Cabinet-making. The control of Peking was important to warlords in two ways. First, the central government was the sole authority entitled to certain regular sources of revenue: the maritime customs, the salt

revenue, the wine and tobacco taxes and the sundry receipts. These revenues amounted to roughly Y\$ 7 million a month.⁴ Such reliable sources of money were of extreme value to any militarist who wanted to maintain a large standing army and to extend his territorial power. Secondly, the regime in Peking was recognized by the foreign powers as the legitimate government of China and the only authority with which the other countries would conduct their diplomatic relations. Moreover, the Peking regime was the legal body which had the right to approach foreign powers for loans and financial assistance. Therefore, it was natural that a militarist should attempt to ensure that the Peking government be formed according to his own taste.

After the First Chihli-Fengtien War, Wu P'ei-fu stayed long enough in the capital to make sure that he had his own government firmly established there. He had an initial success, for the first cabinet was made up mostly of his own followers. The Tientsin-Paoting faction had very little voice in the arrangement. Ts'ao K'un, though feeling very uneasy about it, was unable to object since his real strength was dependent upon Wu's fighting capacity. Without support from other militarists, Ts'ao was not prepared to strain his relationship with Wu too far. But the idea of letting Wu fill the central government with a disproportionate number of Loyang men was resented by the Tientsin as well as the Paoting groups. This resentment brought the two groups together in a common cause to wreck Wu's Peking government.

Their first tactic was to persuade Ts'ao K'un that he had been bossed by the Loyang chief. It was not difficult for the Tientsin-Paoting group to obtain enough evidence to prove their point. In the process of forming a cabinet to his own liking, Wu had acted high-handedly. He repeatedly dispatched telegrams to Peking denouncing the personal actions and appointments of President Li, who acted under the instructions of Ts'ao K'un. In fact no cabinet could be formed in this period without Wu's approval. At first Ts'ao K'un intended to organize a cabinet headed by T'ang Shao-i, the leader of the National Peace Conference in 1919. The nomination was rejected by the Loyang militarists on the ground that T'ang had been unfavourably criticised by the people during the time of the National Peace Conference and was therefore 'a serious hindrance to the plan for the reunification of the nation'.⁵ In view of this reaction of the Loyang militarist, T'ang Shao-i did not come to Peking to take office. Later Ts'ao K'un nominated his close friend Chang Shao-ts'eng. Wu objected again. He advised Chang 'not to meddle in current politics' and repeatedly told Chang that if he ever tried to be Premier their relations would end.⁶

Instead Wu took matters into his own hands and insisted that his confidants should be appointed to the cabinet posts. Without any military backing, Ts'ao K'un had to comply with Wu's request for the time being. On 19 September 1922, a new cabinet was formed, most of the cabinet members being Wu's followers. The cabinet was referred to by their contemporaries as the 'Able Men Cabinet' because some of the ministers were men of intellect and ability.⁷ Wu's actions thus convinced Ts'ao that he really was bullied by the Loyang militarist.

In order to determine the main reason for the conflict we may observe the factional affiliation of the cabinet members. Within the year from 11 June 1922 to 13 June 1923, five cabinets had been formed. None of them stayed in power more than half a year, the shortest being that of Wang Ta-hsieh, which lasted only eleven days. Table 4 groups the ministers together according to their office, indicates their faction affiliation, and gives their relations with Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ai-fu respectively. The Table shows that, except for the last cabinet (4 January 1923 to 13 June 1923), Ts'ao K'un could fill only the ministeries of war, interior, and agriculture and commerce, with his own followers. These ministries, however, were relatively insignificant. The Minister of War never had any substantial power as long as the provincial *tuchün* remained the overlords of their armies. The Minister of Interior, though rather important, had to perform a difficult job. He should be a man with special skill in manipulation and his main function was to negotiate between contending factions. The Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce might yield a great deal of revenue in times of peace. However during the warlord period, most revenue was detained by the provinces; very little and sometimes none was remitted to the central government. Therefore, a militarist gained very little materially by controlling such offices.

We observe that Wu was able to install his men in offices of Premier, Minister of Finance and Minister of Communications. Table 4 reveals that three of the five Premiers were Wu's confidants and three out of five Ministers of Finance and four out of five Ministers of Communications came from Wu's camp. Why did he struggle so hard to control these posts? The answer is that all were lucrative offices. The Premier was important because he was the decision-maker. Whatever policies and decisions he might make should be carried out by other ministers. Secondly, the Ministry of Finance was entrusted with the collection of national revenue. It was the sole organ to which foreigners would remit both the surplus maritime revenue and salt revenues. The control of this ministry would therefore mean the control of a very handsome income.

Table 4 *The faction affiliation and relations of the cabinet members*

Name	Faction Affiliation	Relations
<i>Premier</i>		
Yen Hui-ch'ing	Loyang	Supported by Wu
T'ang Shao-i	Paoting	Supported by Ts'aо (did not take office)
Wang Ch'ung-hui	Loyang	Pro-Wu; who wanted to promote a co-operation between Wu and Sun Yat-sen
Wang Ta-hsieh	Loyang	Pro-Wu; friend of Sun Pao-chi, Wu's teacher
Chang Shao-ts'eng	Paoting	A candidate of the Tientsin group
<i>Finance</i>		
Tung K'ang	Loyang	Recommended and supported by Wu
Kao Ling-wei	Paoting	Ts'aо's protégé
Lo Wen-kan	Loyang	Supported by Wu
Wang Ta-hsieh	Loyang	Pro-Wu; friend of Sun Pao-chi, Wu's teacher
Liu En-yüan	Paoting	Ts'aо's adviser
<i>Communication</i>		
Kao En-hung	Loyang	Pro-Wu; Shantungese
Kao En-hung	Loyang	Pro-Wu; Shantungese
Sun Tan-lin	Loyang	Pro-Wu; Shantungese
Wang Ta-hsieh	Loyang	Pro-Wu; friend of Sun Pao-chi, Wu's teacher
Kao Ling-wei	Paoting	Pro-Ts'aо
<i>War</i>		
Chang Shao-ts'eng (remained in office throughout 5 cabinets)	Paoting	A candidate of the Tientsin group
<i>Navy</i>		
Li Ting-hsin (remained in office throughout 5 cabinets)	Neutral	
<i>Interior</i>		
Tan Yen-k'ai		
Tien Wen-lieh	Neutral	Did not assume office
Sun Tan-lin	Loyang	Pro-Wu, Shantungese
Kao Ling-wei	Paoting	Pro-Ts'aо
Kao Ling-wei	Paoting	Pro-Ts'aо
<i>Agriculture and Commerce</i>		
Chang Kuo-kan		
Lu Hsin		
Kao Ling-wei	Paoting	Pro-Ts'aо
Li Keng-yüan	Paoting	Pro-Ts'aо; Li and Chang Shao-ts'eng were members of Cheng-hsüeh hui
Li Keng-yüan	Paoting	

Name	Faction Affiliation	Relations
<i>Foreign Affairs</i>		
Yen Hui-ch'ing	Loyang	Supported by Wu
V.K. Wellington Koo		
V.K. Wellington Koo		
Wang Cheng-t'ing		
Alfred Sze		
<i>Law</i>		
Wang Ch'ung-hui	Loyang	Pro-Wu
Chang Shao-ts'eng	Paoting	A candidate of the Tientsin group
Hsü Ch'i'en		
Hsü Shih-ying		
Wang Cheng-t'ing		
<i>Education</i>		
T'ang Erh-ho		
Wang Ch'ung-hui		
T'ang Erh-ho		
P'eng Yung-i		
P'eng Yung-i		

The Table is drawn up from the following sources: Chang chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vols. 1 and 2; Sonoda Kazukki, *op. cit.*; Ku Shih-i, *Min-kuo chu nien ti chi jen ts'ai-cheng tsung chang*, Chuan-chi wen-hsüeh tsa-chih she, Taipei 1967.

Note: Blanks indicate that their faction affiliation and relations are unknown.

More important still was the Ministry of Communications which took charge of national railways, posts, telegraphs and shipping. These national assets yielded a large amount of revenue yearly. Since Wu's income came largely from the Peking-Hankow railway, it was necessary for him to have complete control of this post. Moreover, anybody who sought the positions of managing directors of provincial railways and provincial directors of salt transportation had to go through the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Communications for their appointment. Hence if the Ministers of Finance and of Communications were Wu's confidants, he could obtain the appointment from the central government with little difficulty.

From the factional affiliation of the cabinet members, we can therefore conceive a picture of the quarrel between the two leaders over the issue of cabinet-formation. In this conflict Wu had alienated Ts'ao K'un too far by attempting to control all the lucrative posts, leaving only the

minor ones for his superior. Such action not only antagonized Ts'ao himself but also his immediate followers who tried to work their chief into a state of mind whereby he would resent all suggestions and decisions made in Loyang.

Although Wu succeeded initially in filling the first four cabinets mostly with his followers, it was Ts'ao K'un who finally won at the very end. On 4 January 1923, a presidential mandate announced the formation of a new cabinet, composed mostly of Ts'ao's followers. Ts'ao's success in eliminating Wu's influence at the capital was the result of two factors. First, by January 1923, Ts'ao was able to obtain military backing from two powerful militarists, Feng Yü-hsiang and Ch'i Hsieh-yüan. Secondly, he and his underlings conspired to wreck Wu's cabinet by charging Wu's protégé, Lo Wen-kan, with corruption. Thus, after removing Wu's followers from offices, the way was cleared for the formation of a new cabinet under the Tientsin candidate, Chang Shao-ts'eng. It is these two factors that we now turn to in the following sections.

Financial allocation Cheng Ko, the Minister of Interior in Sun Pao-ch'i's cabinet in 1924, attributed the final downfall of the Chihli clique to its inability to solve its financial problems.⁸ The financial situation of the Peking government had deteriorated ever since the First Chihli-Fengtien War, and it was well-known that both the central government and individual militarists were hard pressed for money during the period when the Chihli clique was in power. Therefore every Minister of Finance was confronted with the problem of how to raise enough money to pay for the ever-increasing military expenditure. In most cases, the only way out was to resort to foreign and domestic loans.

By making his confidants Ministers of Finance and Communications, Wu was able to get his money through these men. It was reported that Kao En-hung, Wu's Minister of Communications, was supplying him with Y\$ 1 million a month from the ministry.⁹ Moreover, Wu and his cabinets were constantly trying to secure loans both at home and abroad. For example, Wu tried to obtain a loan of Y\$ 5 million from a certain bank in Shanghai. His protégé, Kao En-hung, had been suggesting that the government should float a Y\$ 300 million loan, pledging the four railway lines – Peking-Fengtien, Peking-Hankow, Peking-Suiyuan and Tientsin-Pukow – as securities. Kao also proposed that the government should issue treasury notes and float domestic loans to the value of Y\$ 140 million in order to meet the monetary needs of the ministeries.¹⁰ Although these attempts did not succeed, they nevertheless serve to

illustrate why Wu fought so hard to get his men into the cabinet.

Wu also made an effort to conclude a loan with the foreign powers. With the help of Joseph Washington Hall, the correspondent of the *Peking and Tientsin Times* and Wu's foreign adviser, the 'Able Men Cabinet' approached the Four Power Consortium for a rehabilitation loan for China. This attempt was frustrated by the Japanese, who insisted that the Four Power Consortium could only lend money to China if she was united under one responsible government.¹¹

When he contracted loans from foreign powers, Wu sometimes excluded his superior from a share. The best example was the famous Wang Ch'ung-hui cabinet crisis of late 1922.

On 18 November, 1922, Ts'ao's protégés, Wu Ching-lien and Chang Pai-lieh, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the House of Representative, came to see President Li Yüan-hung. They accused the Minister of Finance, Lo Wen-kan, Wu's associate, of signing privately with the representative of the Sino-Italian Bank a postponement of the Austro-German Steamship Loan.¹² They asserted that the Sino-Italian bank had agreed to give Lo £8,000 as commission besides promising to allow China to postpone the payment. Wu Ching-lieh was able to produce the official statement which bore the seal of the House of Representatives. As a result, President Li issued an order to the Chief of Police for the arrest of the Finance Minister, on the charges of corruption and unlawful conduct.¹³

This accusation actually involved the whole cabinet, especially Premier Wang Ch'ung-hui. In order to defend his cabinet member, Wang admitted that the postponement of the Austro-German loan had been sanctioned by him, but had not been discussed by the cabinet members. Both Wang and Lo therefore were held responsible.

In this issue, Premier Wang was supported by the Loyang warlord, Wu P'ei-fu. In order to maintain his cabinet at Peking, Wu dispatched a number of telegrams to the capital, denouncing the arrest of the Finance Minister. He argued that this case was only 'an administrative error' and therefore should be considered a political, not a criminal charge. He protested against the arrest of Minister Lo as 'unconstitutional as well as illegal'. The matter, according to Wu, 'should first be reported to the cabinet for consideration and decision ... Lo Wen-kan cannot be handed over to the proper court of justice for trial until after he has been formally degraded and deprived of his official posts and ranks by a presidential mandate, formally countersigned by the cabinet ministers'. He further pressed the President to issue an explanatory telegram on this case to the nation, so as to 'remove all misunderstandings'.¹⁴

President Li was willing to apologize for issuing the order of arrest. However, he was prevented from doing so by Ts'ao's subordinates. On 23 November, Ts'ao himself supported the President and cabled the nation, saying that he possessed numerous and veritable proofs of Lo's guilt. He requested that 'the authorities involved in this case must be severely punished, but likewise Premier Wang should be dealt with in accordance with the procedure laid down by the law'.¹⁵ Imitating their leader, members of the Tientsin-Paoting group denounced Minister Lo for exceeding his authority and injuring the national rights. Unwilling to come to open conflict with Ts'ao, Wu yielded ground and openly expressed that he 'has been and is still supporting the Chief Executive and obeying the instructions of General Ts'ao K'un'.¹⁶

Wu must have known about the postponement of the Austro-German loan. But the financial situation of the central government had deteriorated to such a state that the Loyang militarist was desperate. He had to obtain money from the foreign powers. Throughout the years after the collapse of the Anfu clique, loans and obligations were piling up. In addition, continued civil strife always constituted a financial burden for both the militarist and the central government. Wu himself was also in need of money to maintain his large army in mid-China.

Apparently, Lo was not guilty of receiving bribes. But evidence seems to indicate that the Sino-Italian Bank did give a £8,000 commission to the Finance Ministry. The Loyang group asserted that the remains of the £8,000 commission, after paying off miscellaneous governmental expenses were transferred to the Ministry of Communications in order to meet the obligations of the Canton-Kowloon Railway Loan. It appears that this sum of money went via the Finance Ministry directly to Loyang for the benefit of the Yangtze militarist.¹⁷

Ts'ao K'un was not consulted in this loan project. Therefore, once he found out the truth, it was natural that he would act so that Wu's cabinet in Peking would be overthrown. Ts'ao also received information that during the six months after the conclusion of the First Chihli-Fengtien War, the amount of military funds forwarded to Loyang from the central government doubled that received by Paoting.¹⁸ Thus he came to realize that Wu had already become far too powerful. If he was to maintain his leadership of the faction, it was time he curbed the ambition of the Loyang militarist. Therefore, Ts'ao did not hesitate to endorse any scheme put forth by his entourage to bring Wang Ch'ung-hui's cabinet to the ground.

The choice of a President. After the defeat of Chang Tso-lin in May 1922,

Ts'ao and Wu, for the time being, still agreed about the choice of a candidate for the next president. At that time, they had a common aim to oust Hsü Shih-ch'ang, Chang Tso-lin's puppet, from Peking and to make Li Yüan-hung, the ex-President who resigned on 1 July 1917 after the failure of Chang Hsun's Imperial Restoration, to be the next President. Li Yüan-hung was the logical choice. First he did not have the military power to challenge any decision made by the two Chihli leaders. Secondly, by arbitrarily putting Li in the presidential chair, by restoring the old parliament and by drafting a permanent constitution, the Chihli leaders would have removed Canton's pretext for setting up a separate regime in the south.¹⁹ It was for these reasons that Ts'ao and Wu agreed to rush Li into office.

Acting upon Wu's suggestion, Sun Ch'u'an-fang, Wu's subordinate, who was now the Commander-in-Chief of the Upper Yangtze, issued a circular telegram on 15 May 1922, suggesting that the northern and southern presidents should resign simultaneously and that Li Yüan-hung should be reinstated as President. The old parliament, he continued in his telegram, should be restored and north and south should be reunited. In another telegram, Ch'i Hsieh-yüan and Sun Ch'u'an-fang jointly requested that, as a first step towards reunification, both Hsü Shih-ch'ang and Sun Yat-sen should immediately resign from their presidencies.²⁰

After his subordinates had done the preliminary work, Wu himself openly invited Li Yüan-hung to resume his office as President. Ts'ao K'un, for his part, dispatched his representatives to Tientsin to accompany Li to Peking. Other organizations in Shanghai also telegraphed Li and entreated him to proceed immediately to the capital.²¹ Wu then requested the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Communications at Peking to provide the members of the parliament with travelling expenses to Peking and other necessities during their stay in the capital.²²

Hsü Shih-ch'ang tried to cling to his presidency as long as possible. He sent out representatives to negotiate with Ts'ao and Wu on this matter, but to no avail. Moreover, the Manchurian warlord was ungrateful. Chang Tso-lin held Hsü entirely responsible for the outbreak of the First Chihli-Fengtien War. In a message, he told the entire nation that the President had sent his own brother and the Presidential secretary to Mukden with an order to bring troops inside the Great Wall. The war, Chang therefore claimed, was a direct result of his obedience to the Presidential instructions. He referred to Hsü Shih-ch'ang as 'a man who intrigues in every direction, a man who has a very naive exterior'.²³

Chang was only adding oil to the blazing fire. There was general resentment against Hsü at this time in China. The students of the National Industrial College of Peking addressed a long telegram to Hsü, denouncing him as an illegal President elected by an unlawful parliament. They said that Hsü 'cannot stand side by side with the old legislature in the eyes of the law. Hence reunification cannot be accomplished without the forfeiture of your [Hsü's] position'.²⁴ Under such popular pressure, President Hsü resigned on 1 June 1922, and left the capital for Tientsin on 12 June.

With Hsü Shih-ch'ang's departure, it was opportune for Li Yüan-hung, who was living quietly in Tientsin, to return to Peking as President. However, learning from his mistake in 1917, Li now stipulated that he would only accept the office if he could secure the full support of the militarists. The specific terms put forth by him were the abolition of the *tuchünate* and the disbandment of troops. He also hinted that Wu P'ei-fu should be made Minister of War and be made responsible for the reduction of troops.²⁵ Apparently, Li thought that with Wu as Minister of War, he would obtain the support of the Chihli militarists. Wu later declined the position, but, in order to induce Li to accept the office, Wu endorsed all these plans. In a circular telegram, he stated that he would 'serve obediently under President Li'.²⁶ Ts'ao K'un, Feng Yü-hsiang and other *tuchün* of the southwest also pledged their unconditional support to Li Yüan-hung. On 11 June 1922, Li entered the capital as President and again convened the old parliament.

Basically, Li Yüan-hung was Wu P'ei-fu's candidate rather than Ts'ao's. It was Wu's subordinate, Sun Ch'u'an-fang, who, acting upon Wu's instruction, first invited Li to resume the Presidency. In fact, this was Wu's step in exerting his influence in the capital. Ts'ao K'un gave his consent to the choice only because it was the most legitimate way of getting Hsü Shih-ch'ang out of office. Ts'ao had been dreaming of the Presidency for a long time. He had sought the Vice-Presidency in 1917 when he supported Tuan Ch'i-jui in Tuan's struggle against Feng Kuo-chang.²⁷ But now the time was not yet opportune for him to declare himself a candidate for the Presidency. Wu P'ei-fu was still influential in Peking and Li Yüan-hung was Wu's candidate.

What irritated Ts'ao even more was that between September and November 1922, Wang Ch'ung-hui and members of the Able Men Cabinet were actively promoting a Sun-Wu entente, trying to bring the two leaders together in a unified China. The rumour was that in the new government, Sun Yat-sen would take the Presidency while Wu P'ei-fu would be Vice-President. If this entente materialized, it would leave

Ts'ao isolated. Apparently, Ts'ao was not too happy when he received news of the Sun-Wu negotiation. This might have been one of the reasons why Ts'ao did not hesitate to bring the Able Men Cabinet down.

The situation, however, changed after Ts'ao and Wu quarrelled over the questions of cabinet-making and financial allocation. Wu P'ei-fu's star was setting after the Tientsin-Paoting group had wrecked the Wang Ch'ung-hui cabinet and had formed a cabinet of their own in January 1923. It was then that the Tientsin-Paoting group began to agitate for a Presidential election, in an attempt to put their leader into the presidential chair. It did not need much persuasion to convince Ts'ao that he, instead of Li Yüan-hung, should be the head of the Chinese government.

The Tientsin-Paoting faction then acted. The plan began with the overthrow of President Li Yüan-hung. This task was assigned to Feng Yü-hsiang, then the Peking garrison commander and a supporter of Ts'ao K'un. On 7 June 1923, Feng brought his troops and the metropolitan police before the President's residence and demonstrated for the unpaid military rations. A 'Citizens' Corps', probably acting upon the instructions of the Tientsin-Paoting group, paraded outside the T'ien-an Gate of Peking, demanding Li's resignation. When the President refused to comply with their request, the metropolitan police and the garrison troops went on strike. They then cut off the telephone and water lines of the President's house and forced Li to capitulate. Finding himself completely isolated, Li cabled Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu for help, but his telegrams were ignored. In June 1923, Li fled to Tientsin; but before he left the capital, he had his presidential seals safely placed in the French Hospital in the Legation Quarter. However, when he arrived at the Tientsin station, he was detained by the Chihli governor, Wang Ch'eng-pin, until he had surrendered all the Presidential stamps and tendered his letter of resignation.²⁸

The way was now open to elect Ts'ao K'un as President. Wu Ching-lien, who was stage-managing the election, formed a number of clubs to bring parliamentarians to their side. Allowances were given to members who joined these organizations. The Tientsin-Paoting group then commenced their Presidential campaign by offering Y\$ 5,000 per vote to the members of parliament (in some cases the sum went up to as high as Y\$ 7,000). In this way, Ts'ao was 'elected' on 5 October 1923 and inaugurated as President five days later.²⁹

Ts'ao's success through such corruption caused a decline in the reputation of the whole Chihli clique. The election aroused intense

indignation from the south as well as among the intellectuals of the nation. Sun Yat-sen denounced the new parliament as a 'swinish parliament'. Demonstrations and parades were organized by students in a number of cities such as Shanghai, Nanking and Hengchow. Since Wu was one of the most publicised militarists in the Chihli clique, he was looked upon by the nation as one of the villains.³⁰

How did Wu react to this election? Did he object to Ts'ao's election? At that time there was a rumour that Wu had consented to the election of his superior as President. Ts'ao's followers had sent a telegram, giving the impression that Wu had endorsed all their actions.³¹ The telegram was immediately denied by Wu. Actually Wu opposed the election scheme, though he made no public comment upon these events. Secretly he was trying to prevent the election. He spoke out strongly against the election when Ts'ao's subordinates came to Loyang to consult him on the matter.³² On several occasions, he tried to persuade Ts'ao to postpone the election until the parliament had drafted a permanent constitution. He thought that such a step might put Ts'ao's election on a legal basis and that it would be an indirect way of thwarting the ambition of the Tientsin-Paoting group. He was supported by his immediate followers who remained non-committal during the whole process of the Presidential election.³³

We may ask: why did Wu P'ei-fu bow to Ts'ao K'un's will in all things (cabinet-making, financial allocation and the choice of a President) and 'declare his obedience to Ts'ao K'un' in this power struggle? There are two answers to this question. First, although Wu was a very powerful militarist, he still did not have enough power to challenge his superior in a military contest. It was true that Ts'ao was only a nominal head, lacking in actual military power; yet one cannot overlook the fact that Ts'ao could always call upon the other militarists such as Feng Yu-hsiang, Ts'ao Ying, Wang Ch'eng-pin, Ch'i Hsieh-yüan and Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun to counter-balance Wu if an open conflict should ever arise. In fact, as later sections will show, Ts'ao had already cultivated his relations with these militarists before he launched his attack against Wu in January 1923. Moreover, it would be unwise of Wu to widen further the breach within the Chihli clique since Chang Tso-lin was prepared to send his troops inside the Great Wall, if there was a chance to avenge the defeat inflicted by the Chihli warlords a year earlier.

Secondly, Wu was bound to Ts'ao by the teacher-student, superior-subordinate ties. Such ties very often played a significant role in preserving the solidarity of an organization, if the strain among the members had not gone too far. Respect for one's teacher and obedience

to one's superior were, especially to a student of Confucius like Wu P'ei-fu, cardinal virtues. On the other hand, insubordination was a crime, according to the Confucian doctrine. Wu was confined in his action by the Confucian concepts of subordination and loyalty, as he said himself later. In his speech to the Sui-ting Cadets Educational Organization in Szechwan on 11 June 1930, Wu asserted that a soldier was obliged, as a subordinate, to dissuade his superior if he thought the latter was doing wrong, but he should in no case openly oppose or disobey him.³⁴ It was these concepts which prevented Wu from openly opposing Ts'ao K'un, his superior.

Conflict between Wu P'ei-fu and Hsiao Yao-nan

Another stem conflict can be illustrated by the rift between Wu P'ei-fu and Hsiao Yao-nan, the Inspecting Commissioner of Hupeh and Hunan. The cause of tension came from Wu's frequent interference in both civil and military matters that pertained to the Hupeh province. As Chapter 3 illustrated, Wu dismissed officials in Hupeh arbitrarily, often replacing them with his own men from Loyang, without first consulting Hsiao. Using the excuse that a provincial governor should not be concurrently a troop commander, Wu deprived Hsiao of the command of the 25th Division and gave it to another subordinate, Ch'en Chai-mu. Furthermore, Wu seized practically all the Hupeh provincial revenue, imposed extra taxes on the people, and forced loans from the Hankow merchants. He also took over the receipts of the Hupeh section of the Peking-Hankow railway as well as the daily earnings of the Hankow telegraph and telephone administration. Such a highhanded manner of dealing with Hupeh affairs was resented not only by Hsiao Yao-nan but also by the Hupeh citizens in general. These exactions aroused a strong dislike of Wu among the commercial and educated circle. Being the governor of the province, Hsiao could not but be influenced by the feelings of these people.³⁵ In spite of this resentment, Hsiao always tried to resolve his differences with Wu. Throughout his life, he remained faithful to Wu. As we will see in the following chapter, Hsiao did not desert his superior at the critical moment when Wu was defeated by Chang Tso-lin in the Second Chihli-Fengtien War in October 1924.

Because of their quarrels over financial allocations sometimes the relations among the members of the stem were very tense. Rapidly rising subordinates, who together with their followers began to form nuclei within the power complex, made the situation more complicated. As these 'upstarts' became more and more powerful, they could not be

excluded from the process of policy formulation. Then came the question: how great a share should be given to them in the whole decision-making process? Such a question was not easily solved and very often led to quarrels among different factions. Yet, the above conflicts between Wu and Ts'ao on the one hand and between Wu and Hsiao on the other) demonstrate that, if such a case should arise, the subordinate was expected to work out a way to resolve the tension, even if it was to his own disadvantage. Here, it was the teacher-student relationship and the system of ample rewards to the stem members which served as important ties to hold the members together.

Conflict between Wu P'ei-fu and Feng Yü-hsiang

Conflict with 'adopted sons' did tremendous harm to the solidarity of the organization. Unlike the adopted sons in a clan who were mostly filial, the relations between the 'adopted sons' and the head of the stem in a military organization depended largely on individual interest. The 'adopted sons' were generally competent soldiers. But once they had amassed enough power, they would challenge the leader of the stem. If they were offered opportunities to advance their own interests by geographical expansion, they faithfully carried out the order of the superior; once the situation revealed that there was little chance for advancement, signs of insubordination and disintegration appeared.

An example of this is the conflict between Wu P'ei-fu and Feng Yü-hsiang. Feng rose to power on his own before he joined the Chihli clique. He was a competent soldier. His 11th Division was well-known for its discipline and *esprit de corps*. One of his brigades commanded by Li Ming-chung was instrumental in the defeat of the Manchurian warlord in May 1922. And Feng Yü-hsiang was the one who suppressed the revolt of Chao Chieh, the brother of the Honan *tuchün* Chao Ti, in the first Chihli-Fengtien struggle.

Yet it was Feng's rapid success that brought him into direct conflict with Wu. Feng was becoming very powerful after the Chihli-Fengtien War of 1922. Not only had he created three new brigades under the commands of Chang Chih-chiang, Li Ming-chung and Sung Che-yüan, but he also had Pao Te-chuan, Wu's Associate Director of Military Affairs in Honan, seized and shot. Instead of following the rules of the game, he refused to remit the funds — Y\$ 800,000 initially and Y\$ 200,000 every month thereafter — which Wu demanded of him. He further acted independently in replacing Honan government officials with his own associates, at the same time turning away all the men who

came from Loyang to seek appointment in the provincial government.³⁶

Feng's advance in power was a more immediate threat to Wu than Wu's clash with the other members of the Chihli organization. As an 'adopted son', Feng was not restrained by the student-teacher relationship in his competition for power. Nothing could restrain him from going all the way in his challenge to the authority of his superior, even though this might cause a complete rupture within the Chihli establishment. By the same token, Wu was not restricted by such relations from dealing harshly with Feng, if he thought the latter was going too far in defying his orders.

Wu was greatly troubled by Feng's rapid increase in power and wanted to curb it before Feng became too powerful to deal with. Therefore, on 31 October 1922, Wu transferred Feng to the post of Inspecting Commissioner of the Army in Peking, thereby removing him from his base and financial resources in Honan. In retrospect, Wu's action seems to have been unwise in that it placed Feng Yü-hsiang in a situation so precarious that he would resort to any means to survive.

Deprived of his financial base in Honan, Feng had to look for new sources of revenue to support his army. For a time, he found his fortune in the Tientsin-Paoting group. Ts'ao K'un and his associates naturally welcomed with open arms this new member whose military power would strengthen their position in the struggle against the Loyang faction. Ts'ao promised Feng the Peking Octroi Tax, if Feng would drive President Li Yuan-hung out of office before Ts'ao ran in the next Presidential election. The Octroi revenue was a handsome sum of money. It amounted to over Y\$ 200,000 per month, and traditionally was used for the upkeep of the president's palace and the payment of salaries and various municipal expenses in the capital. This was a rich source of revenue for Feng. It was not until the end of 1923 after Ts'ao K'un was 'elected' President that Feng gained control of the Octroi. The seizure of the Peking Octroi would be a blow to Wu as the director of the Octroi Administration was Wu's follower.³⁷ By November 1922, Feng Yü-hsiang was labelled a Ts'ao K'un supporter and Feng's membership in the Tientsin-Paoting faction became an important factor in determining the outcome of the struggle between the Tientsin-Paoting and Loyang groups in the cabinet election of January 1923.

Wu's conflict with his 'adopted son' was fatal to the solidarity of the whole military organization. Since the loss of his tuchünship, Feng Yü-hsiang was looking for another avenue of upward mobility. He remained within the Chihli ranks because he needed time to consolidate his power and make alliances with other militarists before he broke with

the Chihli members. Finally, his chance came in the Second Chihli-Fengtien War in the autumn of 1924, which will be described later.

Lateral Conflicts

Lateral conflict was the conflict between Wu's stem and the other Chihli branch members such as Ch'i Hsieh-yüan (Li Shun's branch) and Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun (Ts'ao K'un's branch). Similar to 'sibling rivalry' in a family, Wu P'ei-fu often quarrelled with his weaker 'brothers' over their respective spheres of influence. The bone of contention was the Fukien-Anhwei-Kiangsi-Chekiang area in the Lower Yangtze Valley.

After the failure of the Lushan National Conference, Wu had completely given up his idea of uniting the country by legal-constitutional means and set out to unify China by force. In the main, he planned to incorporate the Upper and the Lower Yangtze into his sphere of influence. He had ample reasons to be concerned with these territories. This area was the line where the north and south met and included the provinces through which Sun Yat-sen tried to dispatch his northern expeditionary forces against the northern government. Although Sun's power had temporarily declined after Ch'en Chiung-ming's *coup d'état* of June 1922, his expeditionary armies were still active in this area.

Wu's tactic in the Upper Yangtze provinces – i.e. Hunan, Szechwan and Kweichow – was to give his support to a local military faction in the province. In this way, he aimed to create a buffer zone to check the southern armies. Therefore, he assisted Chao Heng-ti in Hunan, Yang Shen in Szechwan and Yüan Tsu-ming in Kweichow in their quest for power. He supplied them with money and arms and mobilized a division under Ma Ch'i to help Ch'ao Heng-ti drive the 'rebels' out of Hunan. For the Lower Yangtze Valley he had a more ambitious scheme. He considered creating a base there under Sun Ch'u-an-fang, from which he would advance southward into Kwangtung and eastward to subdue Lu Yung-hsiang in Chekiang. Taking the pretext that Hsü Ch'ung-chih's northern expeditionary force was infringing upon Fukien and Kiangsi, in December 1922 he sent Sun Ch'u-an-fang with his troops into this area. Simultaneously, he demanded that Peking appoint Sun Ch'u-an-fang and Shen Hung-ying, another of his associates, *tuli* of Fukien and Kwangtung respectively.³⁸

Wu's design in the Lower Yangtze led him into conflict with Ch'i Hsieh-yüan and Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun, two powerful branch members.

Ch'i, a subordinate of Li Shun's branch, was the administrator of Kiangsu and was the most popular militarist among Chinese commercial circles. He had 60,000 troops and the finances of the province under his command. He, too, was preparing the way for the unification of China and was also seeking the leadership of the Chihli clique after Ts'ao K'un. He meant to accomplish these ends first by expanding his base towards Chekiang, Fukien, Anhwei and Kiangsi provinces, an area which Wu hoped to control. Ch'i already had some success. On 7 October 1922, by supporting Ma Lien-chia, the commander of the 1st Mixed Brigade in Anhwei, to become the *tuchün* of Anhwei, he had extended his influence into that province.³⁹ Therefore, he looked upon Wu's plan in the Lower Yangtze as a direct challenge to his power. Because of his enmity towards Wu, he joined the Tientsin-Paoting side and plotted with them to bring about the downfall of the Loyang leader. He became a strong supporter of Ts'ao K'un for the Presidency and constantly made use of this issue to cause dissension between the two Chihli leaders.⁴⁰

Ch'i was not the only one who resented Wu's interference in the Lower Yangtze Valley. Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun, Ts'ao K'un's 'adopted son' was very much disturbed by Wu's expansion into this area. Ts'ai's main interest was Kiangsi province. Since Ch'en Kuang-yüan, the Kiangsi *tuchün*, had been driven out by the Northern Expeditionary force in the spring of 1922, Peking had sent Ts'ai and Sun Ch'u-an-fang to Kiangsi to bring the province back into the northern fold. After months of fighting, they defeated the Northern Expeditionary Army and forced it to retreat to Fukien to seek asylum. It was at this point that Ts'ai and Sun began to compete for the governorship of Kiangsi, each of them appealing to his superior for assistance. The situation was very tense for a while. A compromise was finally reached in March 1923 between Ts'ao and Wu whereby Ts'ai was to buy his governorship by giving Y\$ 200,000 to Sun for 'military expenses,' while Sun was appointed *tuchün* of Fukien province.⁴¹

This struggle between Wu and the branch militarists assumed a very significant role in the intra-organizational conflict of the Chihli clique. Although these branch members were, relative to Wu's stem, declining in power, they nevertheless could be very effective in changing the power balance within the Chihli organization simply by co-operating with and supporting one or the other faction. Because of the conflict with Wu over the Yangtze area, the branch militarists naturally gravitated towards the Tientsin-Paoting faction in the hope that by opposing Wu as a group, they might eliminate his expanding influence both in the capital and in the Yangtze area. In spite of his military

incompetence, Ts'ao K'un was shrewd in grasping this chance, and making full use of it in his contest with Wu. Playing upon the differences between Wu and the branch militarists, Ts'ao was able to secure the firm support of Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun and Ch'i Hsieh-yüan. With their assistance and with the Christian General, Feng Yü-hsiang, on his side, Ts'ao had the military backing not only to eliminate Wu's power at the capital in January 1923 but to ignore Wu's opposition to his running for the Presidency in the autumn of that year. With these conflicts going on among the members, the Chihli clique was virtually on the verge of breaking up. It was only the threat of Chang Tso-lin's invasion from Manchuria that saved it from disintegration.

The Second Chihli-Fengtien War, September–November 1924

After his defeat in the First Chihli-Fengtien War, Chang Tso-lin declared Manchuria autonomous and drew his provinces into a single self-governing territory with himself as Commander-in-Chief of the army. He also detained the salt revenue of his provinces and refused to give up control of the Mukden-Shanhaikuan section of the Peking-Mukden railway; nor would he return the rolling stock he had taken with him to Manchuria during the retreat at the end of the war.

In order to avenge his defeat of 1922, Chang devoted himself to preparing his army for the coming war with the Chihli clique. He established aviation schools and arsenals in Mukden and staffed them with foreign instructors. Aeroplanes and ammunition were constantly shipped to his capital from France, Denmark and Japan. His army was reorganized into twenty-six mixed brigades, their troop strength being increased to 150,000.⁴² On 9 October 1923, Sun Yat-sen, Chang Tso-lin and Tuan Ch'i-jui made a joint denunciation of the 'illegal election' of Ts'ao K'un.⁴³ This was once again followed by a triple entente of the three main non-Chihli factions.

Soon China was again in the throes of a civil war. The actual incident leading to the Second Chihli-Fengtien War arose from a dispute between Ch'i Hsieh-yüan and Lu Yung-hsiang, the Anfu *tuchün* of Chekiang, over a claim to the territories of Sungkiang and Shanghai. The dispute had gone on for a long time. Wu P'ei-fu, who was tied up by the warfare in Fukien and Kwangtung, was unable to aid the Kiangsu *tuchün*; he therefore coerced Ch'i Hsieh-yüan to sign a temporary peace agreement with Chekiang.

However, in May 1924, the strife in Fukien came to an end and Wu's

subordinate, Sun Ch'uan-fang, was appointed Commander of Frontier Affairs of Fukien and Kwangtung. With the Fukien problem settled, Wu was free to fight against the Anfuite. Using the excuse that the Chekiang *tuchün* had incorporated the insurgent troops of Fukien into his army, Wu sent a protest to Lu Yung-hsiang and prepared a joint attack on Chekiang by the combined force of four provinces, Kiangsu, Anhwei, Kiangsi and Fukien. Clashes between the two armies began in early September 1924.⁴⁴

Once fighting broke out in mid-China, it spread rapidly to the whole nation. In accordance with their agreement, Sun Yat-sen announced his intention of launching a northern expedition to overthrow the Chihli warlords in the Yangtze. In the north, Chang Tso-lin addressed an ultimatum to Peking denouncing Ts'ao's election as an illegal election and accusing Wu of infringing on his neighbouring provinces. He claimed that it was his 'duty to lead my army and swear to rid the country of the people's traitors'; accordingly, he moved his troops into Jehol.⁴⁵ By the beginning of October, he also attacked Shanhaikuan.

On 17 September 1924, Wu was appointed by President Ts'ao Commander-in-Chief of the Chihli army and Feng Yü-hsiang relieved him as Commander of the 3rd Division. Heavy fighting was going on in Chekiang, Jehol and Shanhaikuan. In the first round, Wu's forces scored a victory in Chekiang. Sun Ch'uan-fang was able to drive Lu Yung-hsiang out of the province. On 20 September, the Peking government appointed Sun *tuchün* of Chekiang and concurrently Inspecting Commissioner.

However, Wu did not have the same fortune in the northern war. The Fengtien troops under Chang Tso-lin made a successful attack on Shanhaikuan and Wu's force lost several battles. The Loyang militarist therefore proceeded to Shanhaikuan himself to direct his army in the defence. Under his command the Chihli troops were able to make a firm stand against the Fengtien forces at the front.⁴⁶

Unfortunately for Wu, Feng Yü-hsiang seized this moment for revenge against his superior. Feng abandoned his defence at Jehol and on 23 October 1924 brought his troops back to seize Peking. They surrounded the Presidential mansion and Feng declared himself in favour of an immediate peace. He then imprisoned President Ts'ao and forced him to dismiss Wu from all existing offices and instead to appoint him Director of Land Reclamation in Chinghai.⁴⁷

Because of their previous conflict, Wu had distrusted Feng for a long time, but he did not foresee that his subordinate would come out in open rebellion against him.⁴⁸ His blindness in this matter apparently was due

firstly to his belief in the concept of loyalty and secondly to the fact that Feng's troops were indispensable in the war against the Manchurian warlord. Wu was virtually compelled to put him in command of the Jehol front.

Upon hearing the news of the *coup*, Wu rushed back to Tientsin trying to rally the other Chihli *tuchün* to quell the 'rebel.' He hoped to receive reinforcement from the Yangtze Valley. However, Feng's *Kuominchün*, (Nationalist Army, the name Feng gave to his army after the *coup*) held all strategic points and refused to allow any Chihli troops to move northward. At this time, Feng was also able to get the support from military leaders in Shantung and Shansi to declare their neutrality. Unable to get reinforcements from mid-China, Wu made a final stand against Feng at Tientsin. The Shanhaikuan front collapsed a few days after he left, and the morale of his troops at Tientsin was shaken. At last, on 5 November, Tientsin was taken by Feng Yü-hsiang's forces. Ts'ao announced his resignation on 2 November and Wu sailed south with his squadron on the following day, leaving behind all but a fragment of his forces.⁴⁹

Wu remained faithful to his superior to the very end. Before he was finally defeated by Feng Yü-hsiang at Tientsin, Wu was visited by Yoshida Shigeru, the Japanese Minister at Tientsin, who suggested that as Wu had now lost his power it was advisable for him to co-operate with Tuan Ch'i-jui in forming a government. However, Wu declined the offer. He told the Japanese Minister that China and Japan differed in history and tradition; as a result, their people had different concepts of loyalty. If he turned against Ts'ao and served under Tuan at this time, he would be looked down upon by the people as having betrayed his superior. Wu said that although the old dynasty had fallen and the Confucian doctrines were no longer as much valued by the Chinese people it did not necessarily follow that a military officer should abandon his personal concept of loyalty. To some, he said that personal success and failure were not important when compared with loyalty to one's superior.⁵⁰

Interorganizational Conflicts and the Downfall of Wu P'ei-fu

The Second Chihli-Fengtien War brought the period of bipolar politics of Wu P'ei-fu and Chang Tso-lin in North China to a close. With the defeat of Wu, their leader, the Chihli military organization began to fragment into subsystems of competing power-holders, each with his cluster of followers. The remains of the warlord period gave rise to a host of political actors, some rapidly rising, others dwindling in power. None of them, however, possessed sufficient power to overcome his opponents alone and everyone depended on his allies for protection. This gave rise to a period of multi-bloc politics, characterized by the subtle interplay of power balance and counter-balance, formation of new coalitions and breaking up of existing alignments. This intricate maze of interaction among these militarists led some historians to study the warlord period as an international system.¹

Indeed the interaction of these power-holders displayed distinct behaviour patterns. All actors tried to maximize their own power. Each one calculated the actual (coercive and renumerative) and potential (normative) power of all other militarists before moving into any alliance.

They took into account the changing political situation. In a period of uncertainty, a militarist might vacillate, hesitate and remain non-committal. He might issue statements of dissociation from a coalition, adopt a calculated inaction, or remain in an alignment as an uncommitted partner, giving a negative sanction without explicitly stating it. Two major actors bargained for the loyalty of a third. A major actor could force minor actors into compliance with threats or outright

coercion. But that sort of combination is fluid and lasted only as long as the threats remained. Once the threats were lifted, centrifugal forces started to play.

A major militarist rapidly diminishing in power would barter with his former subordinates for a compromise. He might try persuasion, cajolery or simply try to force them into some sort of association. He might make up with his former rivals and settle old disputes. And so new alignments suddenly came into being, bringing erstwhile enemies together.

Frequently, a declining power attempted to sow dissension within the ranks of his enemies, and bribe their subordinates into defection through secret arrangements for peaceful division of power. He might attempt to abrogate an alliance entered into by his enemies, trying to induce one party to detach himself from it.

As these alliances were mainly based on immediate needs and shifting interests, lacking any ideological components, they tended to be of short duration. The constant shift of alignments made the political system extremely unstable. Once a victor sought hegemony over an area and assumed a position of predominance, minor actors promptly aggregated into coalitions of opposition. The essential rule in the game was to prevent a single actor from becoming predominant. As existing line-ups changed, re-grouping occurred, a state of balance-of-power standoff returned and tensions began to ease.

The continual shifting of allegiance had a permanent effect of breaking up all military organizations into factions, each of which favoured its own allies and adopted its own course of action. Factions splintered off to form new combinations. Disloyalty became the order of the day. Any ousted actor never considered himself permanently separate from the political system. Through negotiation and informal relations with others, he might one day make a comeback and be an essential actor again. The strength lay in one's patience in waiting for opportunities.

It was these internal dissensions, jealousies, intrigues and floating loyalties that enabled Chiang Kai-shek to win the neutrality of some militarists, buy others into defection with money and eventually eliminate all of them from power.

A Period of Uncertainty

Feng Yü-hsiang's *coup d'état* caused a drastic change in the political situation in China. The result was a period of uncertainty for all the

Chihli militarists. At the beginning, there was still some hope for Wu P'ei-fu. On 25 October 1924, the Yangtze *tuchün* circulated a proclamation in which they condemned Feng Yü-hsiang for betraying their faction. They stated that Feng's *coup d'état* was not merely a political problem but a breach in moral conduct. At the same time, they pledged their support to Wu.² Hsiao Yao-nan, a stem member, was willing to help. At the request of Wu, Hsiao dispatched two mixed brigades and some ammunition north over the Peking-Hankow railway to Wu's assistance. He even asked the Hankow General Chamber of Commerce to float a loan of Y\$600,000 to Wu.³ Unfortunately for Wu, these troops and supplies were only able to get as far as Chengchow before they were intercepted by the troops of Yen Hsi-shan from Shansi. The other Chihli *tuchün*, despite their 'avowed support,' hesitated to respond to Wu's appeal for military assistance because none of them wished to back the losing side. They made a show in condemning Feng's coup as a 'breach in moral conduct' without making an overt break with Wu. While the situation was still undefined, they remained neutral, inactive and non-committal.

The situation in Peking made it difficult for them to make a decision of policy. Peking was then in a state of turmoil. The capital saw a struggle between the two victors, Feng Yü-hsiang and Chang Tso-lin. Feng had forced the Yen Hui-ch'ing cabinet to resign on 25 October 1924 and had organized a new cabinet under Huang Fu, a follower of Feng. The Kuominchün members were trying to create a committee system of federal government in place of the Presidency. They suggested that Sun Yat-sen, Tuan Ch'i-jui, Chang Tso-lin, Feng Yü-hsiang and a few other dignitaries be elected chief members of such a committee. However, Chang Tso-lin looked upon this as an extension of Feng's influence in the capital and strongly objected to the suggestion. As a counter proposal, Chang and Lu Yung-hsiang of the Anfu clique jointly advocated that Tuan Ch'i-jui be invited to head the government. Since no supreme military-political leader had yet emerged due to the Feng-Chang conflict, the Yangtze *tuchün* deemed it advisable to take a non-committal attitude towards all factions.

The period of uncertainty did not last long. The first ten days of November saw the defeat of Wu's army. On 2 November, Wu's troops were crushed by Feng Yü-hsiang and four days later, Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun was driven out of Kiangsi, by Fang Pen-jen and T'an Yen-k'ai from the south. Facing such an adverse situation, the Yangtze *tuchün* were forced to readjust their policy. No longer could they waver and vacillate in the face of a possible attack by the northern army and risk losing their

territories. They had to work out a compromise with the Peking government without surrendering completely to the opposite side. The final decision was to support Tuan Ch'i-jui, whom they regarded as a senior Peiyang leader but who lacked the strength to challenge them. Hence on 10 November, Ch'i Hsieh-yüan, Hsiao Yao-nan, Sun Ch'u-an-fang, Chou Yin-jen, Admiral Tu Hsi-kuei, Ma Lien-chia, Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun and Liu Chen-hua issued a joint circular telegram, stating their intention to support Tuan Ch'i-jui as the head of the new government. Feng Yü-hsiang and Chang Tso-lin, at this time, were both uncertain about how much support they could expect from the Yangtze leaders. Once they heard that the provincial *tuchün* of the Yangtze were willing to accept Tuan as the leader, they immediately patched up their differences and agreed to persuade Tuan to come out of retirement. Thus for the moment, some degree of consensus was reached between Chang and Feng and a temporary resolution of the conflict occurred.

Wu P'ei-fu, ousted from power and weakened by his diminishing political authority, tried to maintain his military organization in the Yangtze area, without considering himself actually separate from the Chihli faction as a whole. Overestimating his 'alignment potential' as the leader of the organization, Wu mistook the 25 October circular telegram of his Yangtze subordinates as a pledge of allegiance to him. Therefore, after he reached Hankow with his squadron, and in spite of the 10 November telegram supporting Tuan, Wu sent a circular telegram to Peking on 17 November 1924, denouncing the authority of Tuan. He further announced that, since the legally constituted government had been rendered incapable of functioning after Feng's entry into the capital, the provinces of the Yangtze and the Yellow River should now assume their duty to represent the Republic in both domestic and foreign affairs. To carry out these responsibilities, these provinces would establish a 'Military Government for the Protection of the Constitution' at Wuchang.⁴ Such a proclamation amounted to a declaration of autonomy of central China from the Peking government.

By stressing their common interest as the Yangtze power vis-à-vis Feng Yü-hsiang and Chang Tso-lin, Wu was actually calling upon other members of the bloc for help. The Yangtze *tuchün*, however, found it hard to see that their chief was in command of any real power. Furthermore, the state of uncertainty had cleared up with Tuan's emergence as Chief Executive. As far as they were concerned, the power balance was now in favour of Feng Yü-hsiang and Chang Tso-lin. It would be to their own interest to effect some sort of compromise

agreement with the northern government for the sake of avoiding a trial of strength with Chang or Feng.

Ch'i Hsieh-yüan, the branch militarist in Kiangsu, who had obtained Wu's support in defeating Lu Yung-hsiang, was the first to turn against his benefactor. Not only did he emerge on 9 November to head a group of Yangtze militarists to request Tuan to return to the capital and assume the nation's leadership, he was also the first to repudiate on 1 December his connection with the military government. He went so far as to accuse Wu of 'disturbing the peace of the nation'.⁵ Following Ch'i's lead other Yangtze *tuchün* sent telegrams against the military government. They popularized a vague slogan, 'Respect for Tuan and veneration for Wu,' which, in reality, meant nothing more than an unwillingness to antagonize Wu, while at the same time, accepting Tuan as head of the Peking regime. Since they were all Chihli members, Hsiao Yao-nan, being a stem member, and Sun Ch'u'an-fang, an 'adopted son' of Wu, it would be too awkward for them to make an outright denunciation of their former superior. But they seemed convinced that it was safer to dissociate from Wu's struggle against the Peking government.

Once the Yangtze *tuchün* had decided to dissociate themselves from Wu's plans and to make a mutual agreement with Peking, the most immediate problem confronting them was the readjustment of relations between Tuan Ch'i-jui and Wu P'ei-fu, two antagonists claiming their allegiance. Wu had stubbornly refused to submit himself to the Anfu leader when the Japanese Minister approached him on the matter; he further refused to accept Tuan's invitation when the Chief Executive asked him to come to Tientsin to participate in a Rehabilitation Conference. Moreover, when Peking offered to reinstate him as Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan, Wu declined the offer.⁶

Wu's worsening relations with Peking created an embarrassing situation for the Yangtze *tuchün*. After having failed to enlist Wu, Tuan Ch'i-jui now put a price on his head. Besides ordering the *tuchün* in central China to arrest Wu immediately, the Chief Executive also instructed that Shensi and Shansi troops be dispatched to Honan to eject him from the province. As hostile troops were advancing towards Honan, Wu had to seek refuge in Hupeh, where he expected the protection of his subordinate, Hsiao Yao-nan. Hsiao, though a stem member, was compelled, in view of the possible conflict with the northern militarist, to refuse sanctuary to Wu on the pretext that he could not act against the orders of Peking. Having committed himself to

support Peking, Hsiao was unwilling to strain his relations with Tuan, thereby creating dysfunctional tension, by giving protection to his former superior. Hsiao urged Wu instead to either retire, travel abroad, or take refuge in the foreign concession. Wu was hardly the person who could be easily persuaded to retire from the political arena. He refused to seek foreign protection, nor was he willing to board a foreign ship.⁷ Denied sanctuary by his subordinate, Wu made his way to Chikungshan, a mountain on the border between Hunan and Hupeh, where he lived in temporary 'retirement.' There he made constant contacts with politicians, watched the affairs of the country and waited patiently for another opportunity to participate in political affairs.⁸ The northern militarists, on the other hand, permitted Wu to be marooned, so long as he remained an inessential partner of the Chihli military organization.

The attitude of Chihli militarists towards their former superior during this brief period of October and November shifted from a policy of support to a policy of dissociation and detachment. Their identification with Wu depended upon the general political situation and upon the actual and potential power still under Wu's command. In a period of uncertainty, in which none was able to predict the outcome, the Chihli militarists supported Wu hesitantly. For a moment they vacillated, remained inactive and neutral. Once they realized that Peking was definitely the victor, they found it expedient to repudiate their connection with Wu and to shift their policy towards an agreement with Tuan out of fear that Peking might dispatch forces against them. Without a territorial base and with very few troops in command, Wu was bargaining in a position of weakness and hence unable to attract his fellow militarists to regroup under his proposed military government. In order to protect their own interest, the Chihli militarists splintered off; one by one they left their superior. The branch militarist broke away first, soon followed by the 'adopted son' and finally the stem member departed. Even Hsiao Yao-nan, Wu's immediate subordinate, felt it advisable to deny him shelter hoping to keep his province out of trouble with the Peking government. Without a militarist with sufficient power to assume control of the clique, the Chihli military system shattered into minor individual systems.

Wu's Emergence as Chief of the Anti-Bandits' Allied Army

Despite their recent shift of allegiance to Peking, the Yangtze *tuchün*

nevertheless faced a new menace. After the collapse of Wu P'ei-fu in north China, Chang Tso-lin, Feng Yü-hsiang and Tuan Ch'i-jui, the three leaders in the north, met at a conference at Tientsin to talk about reorganizing the government. This was actually a meeting of the victors to share the spoil and redefine their spheres of influence. The result was: in December 1924, Chang Tso-lin was appointed the *tupan* of Northeastern Defence of Fengtien, Kirin, Heilungkiang, Jehol and Chihli, while Feng Yü-hsiang became the *tupan* of Northwestern Defence in the area of Suiyuan, Chahar and Kansu, each one carving out his own empire. Feng kept his troops in Peking until May 1925. However jealousies arose with respect to one another's position. Chang and Feng competed in order to consolidate and expand their respective administrative areas.

The bone of contention was the Peking-Hankow railway, a major line for troop mobilization in times of war. Feng controlled the southern section of the railway in Honan while the Fengtien clique took over the northern part during the war, particularly the two cities Paoting and Taiming which for some time had been under the control of the Honan governor. Feng's division was forced out by the Manchurian warlord of Peking. When a war broke out between Chang Tso-lin and Sun Ch'uangan. Feng took the opportunity and moved his troops toward western Shantung and advanced toward Paoting and Taiming. A war between Feng and Chang was averted only after Tuan Ch'i-jui mediated in November 1925 and ordered the whole Peking-Hankow railway to be placed under Kuominchün control while the Tientsin-Pukow railway was given to the Fengtien.

In order to prevent a future revival of Wu's power in Honan, Feng Yü-hsiang instructed his Kuominchün to clear the remnants of Wu's forces in that province. The 2nd Division of the Kuominchün under Hu Ching-i marched towards Honan. By 1 December, Wu's forces in Honan were defeated. Peking then appointed Hu Ching-i *tupan* of Honan. In late July 1925, Feng successfully invaded Shensi and installed his subordinate, Sun Yo, as *tupan* of that province.⁹

Although the Yangtze *tuchün* had verbally pledged their support to Peking, they were continually under a threat of losing their holdings as the Kuominchün expanded into Honan. This called for a realignment to check the northern encroachment. The northern threat provided Wu with an opportunity to recover his power. After his defeat in the Second Chihli-Fengtien War of 1924, Wu possessed practically nothing but his 'alignment potential,' a power to pull the Yangtze *tuchün* together in a coalition. He was, to be sure, still respected by many of his former

subordinates and because of his prestige within the Chihli Clique, politicians and militarists from other cliques did seek him out. During his short stay in Chikungshan, Wu continued informal relations with leaders of other factions through representatives of Tuan Ch'i-jui, Hu Ching-i and Sun Yo.¹⁰

It was the small militarists in Szechwan, Hunan and Kweichow who first felt it safe to come together for a defensive alliance. The alliance was partly an effort of leaders of these provinces, expressing their gratitude for Wu's previous assistance, to get Wu out of his precarious situation,¹¹ and partly as a measure against T'ang Chih-yao, the Military Governor of Yunnan, who hoped just at this time to extend his power in the southwest and even to take Canton. The new combination was based upon the mutual interest of restricting their enemy's expansion. Therefore, in February 1925, Chao Heng-t'i, the Commander-in-Chief of Hunan, and Yang Shen, the Military Affairs Rehabilitation Commissioner in Szechwan, having decided to amalgamate with Wu, invited him to Yochow, Hunan, to be the head of their alliance. Hsiao Yao-nan, who was more powerful than Chao Heng-t'i and Yang Shen, apparently still doubted whether Wu could return to effective power even supported by some leaders in these three provinces. Although Hsiao was just as much facing a threat from the southward movement of the Kuominchün, he realized that the proper response was inaction. Acting upon the instruction of Tuan, Hsiao publicly tried to prevent Wu from crossing Hupeh to Yochow. Secretly, he politely allowed Wu to go south and make his way directly to Hunan. Early in March 1925, Wu P'ei-fu, having reached Yochow, assumed the head of a Joint Protection Alliance of Szechwan, Hunan, Kweichow and Hupeh.¹² Actually, this alignment was no more than a vague promise of the *tuchün* to come together to face the northern invaders. The alliance was unable, beyond a small locality, to make its will effective. Although Hupeh was a member, it was doubtful whether Hsiao was a faithful member of the alignment. As this alliance was designed for protective rather than offensive purposes and in no way construed to be a break with Peking, Hsiao felt it unnecessary to withdraw his membership but played the role of an uncommitted partner giving a negative sanction.

However, the Joint Protection Alliance did not become a powerful alignment until Sun Ch'u'an-fang joined it in October 1925. Sun's joining the alliance with other Yangtze militarists was forced by the Fengtien expansion into the Lower Yangtze between January and August 1925.

Wu P'ei-fu's temporary eclipse in the north ushered in a period of instability and power conflict between the heads of two coalitions,

Chang Tso-lin and Feng Yü-hsiang. The equilibrium was disturbed as Chang, with the possession of Peking as his main objective in mind, attempted to strengthen his own position. Not only did he draw Tuan Ch'i-jui, who was his nominee anyway, into his alignment, but he swept away much of Feng's influence in Chihli by occupying the province with the troops of Li Ching-lin, who became the *tupan* of Chihli in December 1924. Tuan, associating with strength, was completely willing to be Chang's man; his subordinates, Lu Yung-hsiang and Wu Kuang-hsin, transferred their allegiance to Chang and some of the Anfu politicians joined Chang's camp.

Having reduced Feng's influence in Chihli, Chang was determined to extend his power along the Tientsin-Pukow railway down into the Yangtze Valley. On 7 December 1924, Chang held a conference in Tientsin with his subordinates and the Anfuites, Wu Kuang-hsin and Lu Yung-hsiang. In their discussion of how to deal with the Yangtze militarists in central China, they agreed to dismiss Ch'i Hsieh-yüan from the tuchünship of Kiangsu and to authorize Fengtien troops to march southwards into that province.

This decision precipitated hostility in the Kiangsu province. On 10 January 1925, Chang Tso-lin mobilized troops under Lu Yung-hsiang and Chang Tsung-ch'ang along the Tientsin-Pukow railway down to Nanking. In response Ch'i Hsieh-yüan declared himself an ally of Sun Ch'uan-fang. Peking adopted the tactic of gaining Sun's allegiance by appointing him *tuchün* of Chekiang after he had defeated the advance troops of Lu in this area. With Sun remaining neutral and watchful, Ch'i Hsieh-yüan could not withstand the northern forces alone. Chang Tsung-ch'ang drove him out of the province by 28 January 1925. Peking then appointed Lu Yung-hsiang *tupan* of Kiangsu in January.

Shantung and Anhwei came next in the list of provinces that Chang Tso-lin attempted to seize from the Yangtze militarists. In order to obtain complete control of the Tientsin-Pukow line, Chang forced Tuan to appoint Chang Tsung-ch'ang *tupan* of Shantung in April. In mid-May Chang Tso-lin sent his Fengtien forces to Peking to compel Feng's army to withdraw.¹³

The period between May and August 1925 was marked by the May Thirtieth Incident in Shanghai and the great troubles in foreign relations all along the Yangtze Valley. On 30 May 1925, the killing of thirteen demonstrators by British-officered police of the municipal council in Shanghai touched off a series of nationwide anti-foreign demonstrations, protests, strikes and boycotts in cities such as Shanghai, Peking, Hankow, Canton and Hong Kong. This May Thirtieth Movement

provided a chance for Chang Tso-lin to extend his influence further into the Yangtze Valley. Chang sent his son Chang Hsüeh-liang with about 2,000 cadets from Manchuria to maintain order in Shanghai. He arrived on 12 June. Then Chang Tso-lin replaced his son with General Hsing Shih-lien on 22 June. As head of the Shanghai-Woosung Garrison Command, Hsing had about 8,000 Tungpei troops. One of his main tasks was to prevent Sun Ch'u-an-fang from getting control of the Lunghua arsenal just outside Shanghai. Moreover, Chang Tso-lin completed his control of the Lower Yangtze in August 1925 by appointing Yang Yü-t'ing, his Chief-of-Staff, *tupan* of Kiangsu, and Chiang Teng-hsun, Chang Tsung-ch'ang's subordinate, *tupan* of Anhwei.

At the beginning of 1925, Sun Ch'u-an-fang was not too concerned about the Fengtien southward expansion. At the time when Wu sailed for Yochow in early February 1925 to head the Joint Protection Alliance, Sun was still taking advantage of the Kiangsu War to incorporate Chekiang into his sphere. With Ch'i driven out of Kiangsu by the end of January, Sun was brought face to face with the Fengtien clique. As described above, between March and August 1925 there was a rapid expansion of Fengtien power into Shantung and Anhwei. By August 1925, Sun became anxious about his Fengtien neighbour. War became more imminent after Yang Yü-t'ing, Chang Tso-lin's Chief-of-Staff and a leading general of the Fengtien clique, replaced Lu Yung-hsiang as *tupan* of Kiangsu in August 1925. Yang advocated a policy of southward expansion by the Fengtien army. After assuming the position of *tupan* of Kiangsu, Yang prepared to move south. Sun Ch'u-an-fang then took immediate action to offset this threat by proclaiming himself, on 15 October 1925, Commander-in-Chief of the allied army of Chekiang, Fukien, Anhwei, Kiangsi and Kiangsu, thereby defining his sphere of influence, at the same time indicating that he would wrest from Fengtien the provinces of Kiangsu and Anhwei. On the following day Sun drove out Hsiung Shih-lien and occupied Shanghai. Operating at the end of too long a supply line, the Fengtien army was forced to retreat without taking up the challenge. By mid-November, Sun had conquered Anhwei and Kiangsu. The five provinces were now in Sun's hands.¹⁴

Chang Tso-lin's tactic in seeking hegemony in the Lower Yangtze changed the whole complexion of the political picture. The struggle between the various individual actors for some kind of predominance over one another upset the state of equilibrium in the system and eventually drove lesser members to regroup in opposition to Chang's challenge. The concern for safety thus induced Sun to return to Wu the

full membership of the coalition. Wu and his associates were more than willing to accept Sun in their alignment, since the latter possessed actual power. Militarists of Upper and Lower Yangtze therefore sent out telegrams, requesting the former Chihli leader to be the head of their alliance and 'to conduct a war against Fengtien troops with Sun Ch'uan-fang'.¹⁵ On 22 October 1925, at Sun's invitation, Wu sailed from Yochow to Hankow to assume the title of Commander-in-Chief of the Anti-Bandits' Allied Army. He further declared that the fourteen provinces of Upper and Lower Yangtze had agreed to join in a defensive alliance.¹⁶

On the very day that he assumed leadership of the allied army, Wu issued a circular telegram accusing the Mukden militarist of the intention of invading central China.¹⁷ He also announced his wish to dispatch a force northward to Honan against Feng Yü-hsiang in order to quell insubordination and to uphold law and order.¹⁸ Hsiao Yao-nan, who by this time had swung over to Wu's side because Sun had joined the alliance, declared Hupeh independent of the central government and condemned Chang Tso-lin's design on his province.¹⁹

An alliance, with loosely attached members, brought about for the limited purpose of restricting the enemy, tends to be of short duration. The shifting interests of conflicting members became noticeable from the beginning. Sun Ch'uan-fang's attitude indicated this clearly. Sun was suspicious of Wu. For instance, Wu having arrived at Hankow proposed to send his forces through Honan to join Sun in his fight against the Fengtien troops. Sun openly declined Wu's military assistance.²⁰ Apparently, Sun feared that by allowing Wu to join the fight against Chang Tso-lin he would be providing an opportunity for Wu to expand into his sphere. Sun looked upon this alliance merely as a temporary alignment of convenience to offset the growing threat of the Fengtien power.

By October 1925, Wu appeared to have made a military comeback. He had re-established his headquarters in Hankow. His power was by no means equal to that of two years before. He had a military force, the Anti-Bandits' Army of Hupeh, Szechwan and Kweichow nominally under his command, but he had to depend largely upon his former subordinates for support.²¹ Sun Ch'uan-fang, who invited him to be the head of the Anti-Bandits' Army, at least gave verbal support to his former superior, although Sun seemed more concerned that Wu might become powerful again and re-establish his base in the Yangtze Valley.

The Wu-Chang Alliance

Sun Ch'uan-fang was notoriously uncertain in his allegiance and gave the Chihli militarists good reason to feel anxious. He cultivated his relationship with Feng Yü-hsiang. It was because of Chang's predominance that Sun and Feng found it in their own interests to agree to counter-balance the Fengtien clique. In Sun's mid-October offensive against Fengtien in Kiangsu, the Kuominchün agreed to co-operate with him and sent forces eastward towards Shantung to cut off the Fengtien troops from their base in Manchuria. In mid-November 1925, after Sun had conquered Kiangsu and Anhwei, he halted his advance and left the attack on Fengtien troops in Shantung to the Kuominchün. Sun therefore adopted a two-fold policy of allying with both Wu and Feng.²² Of course this was incompatible with Wu's hostility toward Feng Yü-hsiang.

Wu's relations with Feng Yü-hsiang, who overthrew him in the *coup d'état* of October 1924 and whose ally had driven Wu's troops from Honan, never improved. Feng tried to settle the differences with his old superior and to persuade Wu into an alignment or some form of association with him. When Wu assumed the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Anti-Bandits' Allied Army, Feng sent a congratulatory telegram to Hankow.²³ However, Wu had no intention of improving his relations with Feng. Since his return to power in Hankow, Wu dreamed of expanding his power northward into Honan and eastward into Anhwei ...²⁴ his actions towards this end precipitated a direct power conflict. In October 1924 when Wu, using the pretext of assisting Sun Ch'uan-fang in the fight against Fengtien, tried to send his troops by way of Honan. Feng's protégé, the Governor of Honan, refused to allow the troops to pass through his territory.

What made Feng more of an enemy to Wu was Feng's rapid expansion of power after he joined Sun Ch'uan-fang. As part of the plan worked out by Sun and Feng in their defence against Chang Tso-lin, Feng was assigned to attack the Fengtien troops in Shantung. After Sun's success in occupying Kiangsu and Anhwei, Feng advanced his army towards Taiming and Paoting, and demanded that Fengtien troops withdraw completely from the northern part of the Peking-Hankow railway in Chihli. His demand was ignored by Chang. Feng then tried another tactic, namely sowing dissension among the Manchurian ranks by making pacts with important members of the Fengtien coalition. He entered into a secret pact with Kuo Sung-ling, one of Chang's chief commanders. They planned to force Chang to retire, and then for Kuo to

have a free hand in Manchuria as a reward for his support. Li Ching-lin, who was the *tupan* of Chihli and had agreed to co-operate in the revolt, would receive Johol for his assistance.²⁵

On 23 November 1925, Kuo staged a *coup d'état*, leading his troops against Chang at Mukden. The revolt was successful initially. But the tide turned when Li Ching-Lin was forced to withdraw from the conspiracy because of Chang's threat to take reprisals against Li's mother. The Japanese also intervened when they realized that Kuo's insurrection was becoming a menace to Japanese interests in the South Manchurian Railway. With the aid of Japanese forces the mutiny was suppressed.²⁶

Although Kuo Sung-ling's revolt was a failure, Feng Yü-hsiang recovered the Chihli province from Chang Tso-lin. He was helped in this by Chang being forced to withdraw some of his forces from Manchuria in order to fight Kuo's army. Chang's influence in the Yangtze was thus greatly weakened; this eased the tension of a Fengtien threat in that area. Conversely, Feng's strengthened position in Chihli made his predominance felt in the Yangtze. To Wu, this meant living with a powerful Kuominchün as a neighbour.

The sudden change of essential actor in the whole system necessitated a reshuffle of alliances. For the dual purpose of neutralizing Feng and augmenting his bargaining power with Sun, Wu P'ei-fu had to seek support from other militarists. The recent debacle suffered by Chang made it possible for him to approach his old rival, Wu P'ei-fu for a new alignment. Kuo Sung-ling's revolt and the consequences had greatly altered the power balance in favour of Feng. As far as Chang was concerned, a readjustment was needed in order to maintain the balance. Chang was ready to forgive Wu's enmity, and bargain with him in an effort to gain his allegiance. Chang Tsung-ch'ang, Chang Tso-lin's protégé, then Military Governor of Shantung and a fellow Shantungese of Wu, had sent his emissary to negotiate with Wu.²⁷ Nothing came of that negotiation as Wu was not prepared at the time to commit himself to an alliance with his enemy. During his conflict with Feng, Chang Tso-lin made another attempt to persuade Wu to co-operate. In December 1925, Fengtien generals used the public slogan 'Support Wu', as a signal that they were willing to publicly support Wu. Such a signal warned the other possible armies that a Wu-Chang alliance might materialize and that they should not support Wu. This was an attempt to isolate Wu from his possible allies. Chang Tsung-ch'ang then sent Hsiung Ping-chi, previously Ts'ao K'un's Chief-of-Staff, to meet with Wu. Later in the month, Chang Tso-lin himself sent an emissary, Wu Hsi-lin, to propose

an alignment. As part of an agreement Chang pledged to withdraw his troops to outside the Great Wall, release Ts'ao K'un from his imprisonment and elect Wang Shih-chen as President.²⁸ Presumably he also agreed to assist Wu with military funds; this is indicated by his aid to Wu's attack on Honan.²⁹ Consequently, a short-term truce was agreed in January 1926, in which Fengtien recognized Wu's territorial base along the Yangtze Valley while Wu in return pledged his support to Chang in the struggle to eliminate the Kuominchün influence from north China.³⁰

As a result of Kuo Sung-ling's defeat Feng Yü-hsiang, on 1 January 1926, announced his 'retirement' and decided that he would take a trip to Moscow.³¹ Feng had formed a secret understanding with Russia in April 1925, and had been obtaining Soviet supplies of ammunition for his armies.³²

Despite his 'retirement', the Kuominchün remained powerful in north China. Wu got to know of Feng's activities in Russia and immediately denounced his pro-Bolshevik policy. In a number of circular telegrams, he referred to Feng as 'traitor to all,' and avowed to suppress him.³³

Having obtained support from Chang, Wu attacked Honan. On 19 January 1926, he called a military conference in Hankow and then dispatched his troops northward against the 'bandits,' now applying this epithet to Feng Yü-hsiang rather than to his old enemy Chang Tso-lin. The Kuominchün in Honan was soon defeated by the combined army of Wu and Chang.

The Wu-Chang alliance undoubtedly further strained Wu's relations with Sun Ch'u-an-fang, who had been Feng's partner. Wu's hostility towards Feng and his alignment with Chang put Sun in a difficult position. Sun had pledged his allegiance to both Wu and Feng in the hope of obtaining help to check Chang's southward advance. Chang Tso-lin had always been Sun's prime target. Even with the subsequent retreat of Fengtien forces to the north after Kuo Sung-ling's revolt, Chang Tsung-ch'ang still controlled Shantung. Sun's strategy favoured the co-operation of Wu and Feng to help him remove the Manchurian influence forever from eastern China. Although Sun had appealed to Wu to head the Anti-Bandits' Allied Army, he did not expect him to act independently to form an alliance with Manchuria.

Relations between Wu and Sun deteriorated in December 1925, when Wu negotiated with the Fengtien power. Various rumours also added to the tension between the two leaders. Sun had reportedly arrested some of Wu's men, who were alleged to be spying in Nanking.³⁴ It was rumoured in December 1925 that Wu intended to extend his influence

into Anhwei, assisting Ch'en Tiao-yüan, an Anhwei militarist.³⁵ There was also speculation that Wu was rallying his Chihli militarists in preparation for war with Sun. Even though these rumours were unfounded, they nonetheless further severed relations between Sun and Wu.

In early 1926, Wu marshalled all his resources in a bid for power. Two factors contributed to his success. First, with troops of the new Chihli coalition, he was able to drive the Kuominchün out of Honan in January and February 1926. Secondly, Hsiao Yao-nan, the Hupeh *tuchüin*, died on 14 February 1926. Wu immediately took over and appointed his subordinate as Governor of the province. This significantly transformed Wu into a real power with the Hupeh army under his command and heir to the Y\$ 10 million of the monthly income of Hupeh.³⁶ Having Honan and Hupeh under his control, Wu resumed the position of a central character in the warlord political system.

After the Honan operation and in accordance with his agreement to collaborate with the Mukden army, Wu mounted another campaign to drive the Kuominchün out of the capital. On 24 March 1926, Chihli and Fengtien forces met at Tientsin. The leaders worked out a plan for an attack against Kuominchün troops controlling Peking. As the forces of Wu and Chang approached Peking, Lu Chung-lin, one of the Kuominchün leaders, knowing that he could not face the allied army alone, attempted to cajole Wu into an agreement. As a friendly gesture, Lu surrounded the office building of the Chief Executive with troops. Tuan Ch'i-jui immediately took shelter in the legation quarter. Lu then freed Ts'ao K'un, who had been imprisoned by Feng in October 1924. On 9 April 1926, the Kuominchün issued a circular telegram, inviting Wu to come to Peking to take charge of affairs of the state. They hoped that by releasing control of Peking to Wu, the Kuominchün could secure Wu's support and abrogate the Wu-Chang alignment. The situation was further complicated by simultaneous bargaining by the Kuominchün and Fengtien factions for Wu's loyalty. Both tried to effect a compromise with Wu to the exclusion of the other. Wu however declined Lu's offer and marched on Peking with his troops.³⁷ The Kuominchün then withdrew their forces from the Peking-Tientsin area into Inner Mongolia and took up a defence at Nankow, a pass 30 miles northwest of Peking. On 20 April 1926, the capital fell into the hands of the allies.

Wu was then in an even stronger position to bargain with Sun Ch'u'an-fang. On the other hand, Sun became isolated after some of the troops of his ally, Feng Yü-hsiang, had been defeated. Out of the sheer

necessity of negotiating from a position of weakness and isolation, Sun's attitude towards his former leader dramatically changed into one of compliance. In March, he began supplying Wu with arms and munitions.³⁸ He blamed Ch'i Hsieh-yüan for his previous conflict with Wu. Ch'i by this time had come to Hankow and was working under Wu. Sun accused him of trying to restore his power in central China by creating discord between the two Chihli leaders.³⁹ On 24 March 1926, Sun even acted in union with Wu in recommending Teng Ju-cho as Commander-in-Chief of the Kiangsi army.⁴⁰ Thus because of his rapid increase in power in the first three months of 1926, Wu was able to draw Sun back into his alliance for a short while.

The problem of choosing between Chang Tso-lin or Feng Yü-hsiang as an ally eventually caused internal dissension within Wu's own ranks. When the allied forces of Wu and Chang were approaching Peking, Wu's followers were divided over the question of settling their differences with Feng Yü-hsiang. Because of their previous association with Feng, some of Wu's generals, in particular Chin Yün-e, Commander of the 14th Division, and Ch'in's subordinate, T'ien Wei-chin, Commander of the 16th Mixed Brigade, favoured a Wu-Feng amalgamation.⁴¹ Informal contact between Ch'in's chief-of-staff and the Kuominchün went on. The opposing faction included K'ou Ying-chieh, Commander of the Hupeh 1st Division, and Chang Chih-tan, the head of the Section of External Affairs in Wu's *yamen*, who favoured a pro-Chang posture.⁴² As Wu found Chang Tso-lin a more useful ally, the pro-Chang faction rose in power, in turn alienating the pro-Feng faction. K'ou Ying-chieh was made *tuli* of Honan. Chin Yün-e, being a pro-Feng man, had to be content with second place as civil governor of the province. This pro-Chang policy of Wu had a serious consequence in causing the pro-Feng faction to revolt against him later during the Northern Expedition.

The Wu-Chang alliance did not work smoothly. A permanent alliance had to be based on common ideological components rather than on shifting interests. Thus, once the Kuominchün was removed, differences between Wu and Chang re-emerged. Even though Wu agreed that Ts'aō K'un should not be reinstated as President, he insisted that the constitutional government be restored and that Yen Hui-ch'ing be appointed Premier-Regent.⁴³ Chang claimed that the latter suggestion was Wu's attempt to gain control of the Peking government. In early June 1926 representatives of Wu and Chang met in Tientsin to discuss the peaceful division of power; eventually a compromise was reached. Essentially they agreed to continue to co-operate against the Kuominchün. Wu gave

way on the cabinet problem and permitted Chang to appoint Tu Hsi-kuei, as Premier-Regent.⁴⁴ Having reached an agreement, the two leaders met in Peking on 28 June. Wu was to be in charge of the expedition against the Kuominchün, while Chang was to 'look after the affairs outside the Great Wall', that is Manchuria. Wu received the titular command of Fengtien armies in Chihli and Shantung.

To carry out his duty, Wu mounted heavy attacks on the Kuominchün at Nankow, but the resistance proved more formidable than he anticipated. With the reinforcement from Fengtien, Nankow fell in August 1926, but the Kuominchün only retreated further into the northwest, consolidating its power in Kansu, Shensi and Inner Mongolia.⁴⁵

The Northern Expedition and Wu's Downfall

While northern militarists were bartering for each other's loyalty, the Kuomintang rapidly rose in power. Since the signing of the Sun-Joffe agreement in January 1923, the Kuomintang broadened its base to admit Chinese communists as individuals into their party. Simultaneously, the party was reorganized with the help of Michael Borodin, a Russian adviser. In the Whampao Military Academy, under Chiang Kai-shek, who had briefly visited Russia in the Autumn of 1923, the Kuomintang began to train junior officers and to develop a well-disciplined and indoctrinated army.

The events which brought the Kuomintang into action came in the spring of 1926. Chao Heng-t'i the Military Governor of Hunan was forced from office by his subordinates. This was followed by a contest of power between two generals, T'ang Sheng-chih and Yeh K'ai-hsin. Originally it was a localized war but it soon developed into a wider conflict between the Kuomintang and Wu P'ei-fu when Yeh appealed to Wu for help, and T'ang agreed to join the southern government. On 5 June 1926, Chiang Kai-shek was appointed to the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Nationalist Revolutionary Army and was sworn in on 9 July. By then, some Nationalist troops had gone northward to support T'ang in Hunan.

The balance of power standoff in north China collapsed when the expeditionary forces moved swiftly from the south. The crisis swept away whatever loose alliances were concluded among these militarists, leaving them in a power struggle for individual survival. The effect of continual adjustment and readjustment of alignments had the adverse effect of splitting every coalition down the middle with one faction

favouring combination with one clique and the other faction favouring another. This set the stage for political intrigues, doublecrosses and defections, eventually giving the Kuomintang the chance to buy over some of the northern militarists.

Wu P'ei-fu apparently underestimated the Hunan Incident. He continued to focus his attention mainly on the north, and calculated that if he could weaken Feng Yü-hsiang, he would increase enormously his bargaining power with Sun Ch'u'an-fang and Chang Tso-lin. Ignoring the Kuomintang's northward drive, he devoted his energy to destroying the Kuominchün in Chihli. He also attempted to make an alliance with Yen Hsi-shan. He first sent a representative, T'ung Chung-san, and later made a personal trip to confer with Yen in Shihchiachuang. But he failed to reach an agreement with Yen.⁴⁶

Sun Ch'u'an-fang's primary concern was still his enemy, Chang Tso-lin, who was taking advantage of his opportunity to regain power. The unification of Kwangtung in late 1925, the alliance of Kwangsi with the Kuomintang and the build up of the National Revolutionary Army with Russian help made northern militarists fearful the rising power in the south. Therefore, on 6 April 1926, when Chang proposed a meeting of the *tuchün* at T'angshan in an united effort to meet the southerners, Sun immediately objected saying that he would join the Kuominchün if Wu and Chang should harbour any selfish design because of the southern menace.⁴⁷ When Wu issued a telegram calling upon the *tuchün* to rally under Chang Tso-lin in view of the threat from the south, Sun declared his provinces independent of the central government.⁴⁸ In order to prepare for any southward expansion of Chang, Sun made an inspection of his troops in Kiangsu on 29 June 1926, particularly at Hsuchow, a point where his forces and those of Chang Tso-lin met.⁴⁹

Sun Ch'u'an-fang changed the existing line-up and renewed contact with the Kuominchün. This time he had a partner, Chin Yün-e, a pro-Feng general and Wu's Assistant Commander of the Anti-Bandits' Allied Army. Chin was secretly negotiating with both Sun and the Kuominchün.⁵⁰ Therefore when Wu instructed him to move against the Kuominchün in the north, Chin refused to mobilize his troops. There was rumour that Sun Ch'u'an-fang and Chin Yün-e were to form a new Chihli clique outside Wu's authority.⁵¹ In order to show Chang that he was still faithful to their alliance, Wu suddenly on 27 June 1926, dismissed Chin from all his offices except his civil governorship of Honan. This dismissal of Chin led to a series of revolts by Chin's subordinates, who favoured a Wu-Feng alliance.⁵²

As long as the outcome of the Northern Expedition remained

uncertain, Sun Ch'uan-fang put on a show of obedience to Wu P'ei-fu. He remitted the salt revenue to Peking and it was reported that as late as 22 June, he still supplied Wu with funds and ammunition.⁵³ The success of Wu P'ei-fu and Chang Tso-lin in driving the Kuominchün out of Kalgan at the end of July 1926 forced Sun to adopt a new attitude. Sun concluded with Chang Tsung-ch'ang a truce on 24 July, by which they agreed to ease the tension along the frontier of Kiangsu and Shantung.⁵⁴ Between 27 and 30 July, Wu negotiated with Sun a joint defence of the Yangtze area. Wu specified that Sun would be allowed to send troops to Kiangsi and Hunan but not to the Hankow area.⁵⁵

Sun Ch'uan-fang had reason to adopt an attitude of friendliness towards Wu. First, he was a member of the Anti-Bandits' Allied Army. Secondly, he could not ignore completely the attitude of a faction of his subordinates who favoured an alliance with Wu P'ei-fu. They were mostly men who formerly served under Wu. These were powerful commanders such as Chou Yin-jen, *tuli* of Fukien, Teng Ju-ho, Commander-in-Chief of Kiangsi, and Hsiao Chao, Chou Teng-ch'i, Pai Pao-shan and Ma Yü-jen of Chekiang, Kiangsu and Anhwei.⁵⁶

Between August and October 1926, Chiang Kai-shek was in secret negotiation with Sun.⁵⁷ Therefore, when Wu sent his representative, Chang Po-li, to talk with Sun about a policy of containing the Kuomintang, Sun remained non-committal.⁵⁸ While conducting his campaign against Feng Yü-hsiang at Nankow, Wu sent Sun a telegram in early August with the information that he would send five divisions southward and instructed Sun to move his troops to Hunan in accordance with the plan of attacking the Kuomintang from two flanks. Sun answered the telegram, giving Wu only a vague promise to act according to the instruction.⁵⁹

When the Kuomintang made a drive into Hunan in July and early August 1926, Wu was still directing his campaign against the Kuominchün at Nankow. Wu delayed his own return to central China until it was too late. The situation in Hunan had become desperate. On 22 August, the Nationalist Revolutionary Army occupied Yochow, a city on the border between Hunan and Hupeh, and only then did Wu hurry south and organize his forces to defend the Wuhan cities.

Wu poured all his efforts into resistance against the Nationalist Revolutionary Army. He reappointed as Assistant Commander, Chin Yün-e, the pro-Feng general he had dismissed a month before. Wu then withdrew his troops from the north. Fierce fighting went on. On 6 September 1926, Hanyang was taken and on the following day Hankow fell to the Canton army, T'ang Sheng-chih's 8th Army of the Nationalist

Revolutionary Army. The fall of Hanyang, with its arsenal, was due to the betrayal of Chin Yün-e and Liu Tso-lung, a Hupeh general, who had been bought over by the Canton government.⁶⁰ Wuchang did not fall into the hands of the southerners until 10 October 1926. As a result of these defeats, Wu was driven out of Hupeh.

In fact the power balance would have been decidedly unfavourable for Chiang Kai-shek, had the northern militarists been united. The armies of Wu P'ei-fu, Sun Ch'uan-fang and Chang Tso-lin together numbered over half a million. However, personal power conflicts prevented them from working in unison. Wu's defeat in Hupeh was due, to a large extent, to the failure of Sun Ch'uan-fang to come to his aid by attacking the Nationalist flank from the east. With the dwindling away of Wu's actual power, Sun completely ignored his pleas for reinforcements. The Kuomintang announced on 23 August that Feng Yü-hsiang had agreed to come under their banner. Feng returned from Russia and rejoined his troops in the northwest on 16 September. With this Wu's hope of recovering his territory had vanished.

After relinquishing his hold on Hupeh, Wu retreated to Honan. His alignment with Chang Tso-lin now showed every sign of breaking down. As Wu's power was greatly weakened, Chang began to act arbitrarily. Instead of uniting with Wu in a defensive action against the Canton threat, Chang exploited the situation for a short-term gain of power. After the southern forces had taken Hankow and Hanyang, Chang called a conference at Fengtien on 11 September. He then wired Wu offering to dispatch his troops to Hupeh to Wu's assistance.⁶¹ Although Wu declined his help, Chang nevertheless mobilized his troops in Shantung and Chihli and sent them towards Honan with the hope of extending his influence in that area.⁶²

Though desperate, Wu feared that the entry of the Fengtien army in Honan would greatly undermine his power. He requested the Mukden warlord to send funds and ammunition instead of troops and advised Chang to dispatch his forces by sea to attack the Kuomintang in Kwangtung. Wu claimed that he had enough manpower to face his enemy.⁶³

After having driven Wu out of Hupeh, Chiang Kai-shek invaded Kiangsi in October 1926 and by November Sun Ch'uan-fang had to withdraw from Nanchang. Because of this defeat, Sun had to approach his antagonist Chang Tso-lin for reconciliation and assistance. Chang and Sun then forced the Ankuochün, the Pacify the Country Army, of which Chang was the commander and Sun Ch'uan-fang and Chang Tsung-ch'ang, two old rivals, were the vice-commanders. The Mukden

warlord then sent an emissary to negotiate with Wu. Chang promised Wu financial aid and supplies of ammunition in return for Wu's recognition of Chang's title as Grand Marshal of the Peking government, that is the leadership of the Ankuochün, and the control of the area north of the Yellow River.⁶⁴ Agreement meant submission to Chang. Therefore, Wu declined the offer.

Chang's offer again caused dissension among Wu's generals in Honan, splitting them as usual into two groups: pro-Feng and pro-Chang factions. (1) The head of the pro-Feng faction was Chin Yün-e, who had failed in negotiations with the Kuomintang after his betrayal of Wu a month before and had rejoined Wu in Hsin-yang, Honan. During March 1927, with the help of Feng Yü-hsiang, Chin was able to establish connections with the Kuomintang. Feng offered him the province of Honan if he could topple Wu and withstand the Fengtien attack from the north.⁶⁵ T'ang Sheng-chih, the Kuomintang general, was said to have supplied Chin with funds and munitions.⁶⁶ Among Chin's followers were Fan Chung-hsiu, Wei I-san, T'ien Wei-chin and Wang Wei-ch'eng. (2) The pro-Chang faction, on the other hand, wanted to invite Fengtien troops to Honan in an united effort to face the southerners. They pledged their support to Chang as head of the Ankuochün. They were anti-Feng and anti-communist. This group included Yü Hsüeh-chung, Mi Cheng-piao, Kuo Chen-ts'ai, K'ou Ying-chieh, Ch'en Te-lin, Ho Kuo-kuang, and Chai Man-hsiang. These generals obtained ammunition from Chang Tsung-ch'ang. One of them, Yü Hsüeh-chung went over to serve under the Ankuochün as Commander of the 20th Army.⁶⁷

Weakened by internal dissension, Wu's power steadily declined. Feng Yü-hsiang moved out of his stronghold in Shensi with an army and pushed southward towards Nanyang, Wu's headquarters in western Honan. Unable to face enemies on two fronts, Wu retreated into Szechwan. On 14 June 1927, when Honan fell to the south, Wu had to retire from the political arena.⁶⁸

Neither Sun Ch'u'an-fang nor Chang Tso-lin had better luck than Wu. Yen Hsi-shan, *tuchün* of Shansi, had by this time, joined the Nationalists. Chiang Kai-shek made an encircling movement against Sun in Nanking. In March 1927, the Nationalist Revolutionary Army occupied that city. In early 1928, Chiang led his forces northward. Soon Shantung fell. Shortly afterwards on 3 June 1928, Chang Tso-lin was assassinated by a group of Japanese officers as he was retreating to his old base in Mukden. His son, Chang Hsüeh-liang, shifted his allegiance, at least nominally, to the Kuomintang. The Northern Expedition was completed.

Thus, the period from the end of the Second Chihli-Fengtien War to the success of Chiang Kai-shek's Northern Expedition was a period of suspicion, intrigue and alliance-making for the northern militarists. Every militarist was suspicious of the others. Each was watchful for any tendency that others might encroach upon his area. In order to check the aggressiveness of their enemies, they had to form alliances. But the alliances they concluded were nothing but 'alignments of convenience'. Although it was highly important that they united to face their common enemy from the south, their mutual suspicions kept them hopelessly divided. At the end, they were swept away one after another by the Northern Expeditionary forces.

Part Two

Foreign Relations

Introduction

The current treatment of China's foreign relations focuses mainly on the national level, that is, between Peking and Washington. It is often assumed that the formulation and the implementation of foreign policy are prerogatives of the Chief Executive and the Foreign Minister. Very little work has been done on the foreign relations of sub-national leaders. Yet, the study of foreign relations at a sub-national level is meaningful when a nation is fragmented into competing military factions, whose leaders sometimes held the same prerogatives as the Chief Executive and the Foreign Minister. If one assumes that internal politics and foreign relations are not separate spheres, then the pronounced instability within a nation will have a great effect on the foreign policies of these sub-national military leaders.

A study of military foreign relations at a sub-national level is particularly relevant to China in the 1920s. China was then deeply divided into the north and the south and again fragmented into multifarious domains, each dominated by a military leader. The Foreign Ministry, to be sure, still remained the normal channel through which diplomatic relations were conducted. But at a sub-national level, negotiations and contacts went on between militarists and foreigners. At times, decisions already made at Peking had to be ratified by provincial militarists, if these decisions had not already been made in consultation with them. Any negotiation, for instance that bearing on the Chinese Eastern Railway in Manchuria had to obtain the sanction of Chang Tso-lin, if it was to have any effectiveness at all.¹ Foreign governments, therefore, had to carry on not only formal diplomatic relations with Peking, but informal personal contacts with militarists in the provinces.

The very fragmented nature of Chinese politics in the 1920s thus gave rise to a pattern of multi-tier and multi-choice foreign relations. On the one hand, foreign governments had to conduct relations directly with Peking as well as with militarists at a lower level. On the other hand, sub-national military leaders also found it profitable to maintain extensive multi-tier contacts with foreign legations, consulates, military and naval officers, businessmen, press and missionaries. The instability of Chinese politics and the wax and wane of power-holders precluded any attempt by foreign governments to give unreserved support to one faction or party. It would be more advantageous to remain neutral and have as many choices as possible till the political situation was better defined. While a power-holder might prefer a certain nation as his ally, he could in no way afford to disregard the diplomatic gestures of less friendly nations. It was an advantage to have cordial relations with these less friendly nations and to keep his options open.

It was certainly impossible for any Chinese militarist to wage a war in China without giving at least perfunctory attention to, if not actually cultivating relations with foreign nations. In China foreign nationals enjoyed tremendous privileges granted by treaties and protected by their governments. Any infraction of these rights could have diplomatic repercussions and anything serious could lead to foreign military invasion. A militarist's appropriation of the customs, the salt revenue and the railway funds, or his conducting a war in the Peking-Tientsin zone, would bring about strong protests from foreign governments. By assuring to protect foreign lives and properties and by cultivating foreign diplomats and nationals, a militarist might win the sympathy of friendly nations, hoping that they might extend to him the courtesy of using these facilities.

To a certain extent, the political situation in the 1920s dictated that these military powers seek support from foreign nations. As no single faction possessed enough power to dominate the others, each was forced to seek foreign help in order to gain enough power to break the balance-of-power standoff. Foreign governments could lift an arms embargo in favour of a military leader and let war materials flow in. Foreign nationals could be a potential source of arms supply and financial assistance. Foreign support could be in the form of moral support from the press or other private individuals. In the Chinese military politics of the 1920s, political prestige was to power as credit was to cash. Furthermore, maintaining amicable relations with a certain nation would at least ensure her neutrality, at the same time denying one's rival the opportunity of obtaining support from that particular source.

Therefore, the foreign policy of a militarist in this period was often subsumed to serve certain domestic or militaristic objectives. Sometimes the local military interests prevailed over the national interests. In a society of political instability, domestic militaristic goals in terms of military unification, arms procurement, foreign loans and foreign moral support became the primary concerns in the relations between the militarists and foreign nations.

The purpose of this study of Wu's foreign relations is to provide some insight into the way at least one militarist conducted his foreign diplomacy during a time of political instability within China.

Relations with Britain and the United States

A militarist frequently had to elicit foreign support and to request foreign favours if he wanted to maximize his power and obtain foreign recognition. Throughout his career, Wu looked upon Britain and the United States as his allies. During his seven years in power, he persistently wooed British and American officials and nationals in an attempt to win their moral and material support in his bid for supreme power in China. He made every effort to cultivate four groups of foreigners in China: diplomats, businessmen, the press and missionaries.

His diplomacy included making formal statements to assure the protection of foreign lives and properties, making direct approaches to foreign government and business communities for financial aid, covertly procuring arms and ammunition from private foreign merchants, and cultivating foreign diplomats, particularly military and naval personnels, foreign press, missionaries and influential individuals through interviews and social entertainment.

Relations with Diplomats

Interviews: exchange of information and favour

Wu conducted his foreign relations mainly through personal diplomacy. When he was in power, he frequently granted interviews to foreign

diplomats and foreign military and naval officers. It was in these interviews that he exchanged information and favours with them. Between 1920 and 1925, he met with a number of British officials. They include:

<i>British Officials</i>	<i>Date</i>
An officer from the Naval Intelligence Division	September 1920
Herbert Goffe, Consul-General of Hankow, accompanied by Colonel Orpen-Palmer, British Military Attaché	26 August 1921
Colonel Orpen-Palmer, accompanied by Major Brooke, General Staff Officer, China Command	31 August 1921
Mr Barton, secretary of the British Legation	Early 1922
Colonel Orpen-Palmer	31 March 1923
Edward Bennett, British Vice-Consul, accompanied by Sir Francis Aglen, visited the battlefield	May 1922
Sir Ronald Macleay, British Minister to Peking, accompanied by two aides	January 1924
Harold Porter, Acting Consul-General in Hankow	November 1925

As the list of official visitors indicates, the most frequent caller was Lieutenant-Colonel Orpen-Palmer, the Military Attaché to the British Legation in Peking. Between 1921 and 1923, Orpen-Palmer had called upon Wu three times in his headquarters. The Lieutenant-Colonel wanted a close look at Wu's troops as well as the scene of hostilities. Wu always received him with the greatest cordiality and hospitality. Once he saw him at his private yacht. On another occasion, he received him in his private office, where he was hard at work conducting his official correspondence. Every arrangement was made to bring the Lieutenant-Colonel to the battle front and to show him around the headquarters in Loyang.¹

Wu did make a good impression on the Lieutenant-Colonel. Orpen-Palmer described him as 'very intelligent and resolute; he struck me as a man who would not easily be dissuaded from any course once he had made up his mind.'² He also stated in another report that 'Wu P'ei-fu has

proved himself to be the most able soldier in China, no other General can boast that in the space of little over a year he has conducted three campaigns with brilliant success as Wu can do Wu's troops are, as a whole, far better armed, trained and equipped than any other in China.³

Taking advantage of his friendship with the Lieutenant-Colonel, Wu tried to obtain information from his foreign visitor. During Orpen-Palmer's third visit to Loyang in April 1923, Wu asked him about the application he had submitted to the British Legation through the Chinese Foreign Office for permission to refit five ships at Hong Kong before coming to the north. He told Orpen-Palmer that he appreciated the action of the British Legation in approaching the Governor of Hong Kong in connection with this matter and he wanted to know how the matter stood. Pai Chien-wu, Wu's head of the Administrative Department, also assured the British military officer that his superior had no intention of employing these ships to further his military plans and would be content for these gunboats to be interned at Hong Kong until the reunification of the country was completed. Unfortunately, the request was refused by the British Legation on account of the rejection by the British Admiralty and also because of strong opposition shown by Sun Yat-sen in the south.⁴

Wu also wanted to discover from Orpen-Palmer if it was true that the Government of Hong Kong was prepared to make a loan of \$2 million to Sun Yat-sen. He said he was very perturbed by the received report and argued that such a loan would consolidate Sun's position in the south and would interfere seriously with his plans for reunification.⁵

In late 1925, when Harold Porter, the Acting Consul-General in Hankow, visited him, Wu took the opportunity to tell the British official that he wanted the Tariff Conference postponed till the country had been reunified.⁶

The British also came to Loyang with something in mind. The purpose of British Consul-General Herbert Goffe's visit in the summer of 1921 was to sound out Wu as to his military plan in Hunan and Szechwan. Mr Goffe was asked by the British consul at Changsha to find out from Wu if he would modify his resolution not to enter into negotiation with Hunan until the Hunan forces had left Hupeh.⁷

Sir Ronald Macleay, the British Minister to Peking, visited Loyang in January 1924. His mission was to discuss with Wu the problem of restoring to the Chinese the British controlled the T'ao-ching railway in Honan and the two coal mines at Chiao-tso and Men-t'ou-kou in Shansi. He hoped that through the intercession of Wu, the British might obtain some preferential treatment in these areas. An agreement was reached.

Wu agreed to hand over the mines to the British and to give them a discount of 30 per cent on freight for transportation of coal along the T'ao-ching line while in return the railway was to be restored to the Chinese without any terms.⁸

From the American side, there was also a steady stream of official visitors in Loyang. They include:

<i>American Officials</i>	<i>Date</i>
Major W.C. Philoon, Assistant Military Attaché to the American Legation, with R.W. Clack of the YMCA as interpreter	9-22 July 1920
Commander C.T. Hutchins, Naval Attaché of the American Legation	Autumn of 1920
Major W.C. Philoon	August of 1921
Commander C.T. Hutchins visited the battlefield	April of 1922
Admiral Joseph Strauss, Commander of the Asiatic Fleet, accompanied by the Naval Attaché, visited the front	Summer of 1922
Commander Simonds dined with Wu at Paoting	15 June 1922
Brigadier-General William P. Connor USA commanding the American Forces in China, accompanied by W.R. Peck, Chinese Secretary of the American Legation, Lieutenant-Colonel Barnes and his aide Lieutenant Butler	12-17 May 1924
Colonel Barnard and Captain Woodbridge US Army officers attached to the Legation, accompanied Wu as observers at Wu's invitation at the north front	October of 1924
J.C. Huston, American Consul in charge at Hankow	29 April 1926

Wu took every opportunity to enlist the support of the American officials. In July 1920, he wrote several letters to Commander C.T. Hutchins, the American Naval Attaché in Peking, a friend of Pai Chien-wu, chief of the Political Administrative Department in Wu's yamen,

requesting information about the United States navy, such as the number of dreadnaughts, cruisers and destroyers and the strength of the enlisted personnel. Hutchins gladly furnished him with the information and was subsequently thanked 'most profusely' by the Chihli militarist. Wu later requested Hutchins to pay him a visit in his yamen at Honanfu for the purpose of explaining to him certain naval matters. Hutchins therefore came to Loyang in the autumn of 1920. During the conversation, Wu told the American Naval Attache that he was seriously hampered by a lack of funds, obviously hoping that Hutchins would bring the matter up with the American government. Although Hutchins had a favourable impression of Wu because, as he put it, Wu's actions were controlled by his 'anti-Japanese feeling,' unfortunately, he simply reported the interview to the Legation without suggestion of any financial aid. The American government did not follow up the matter.⁹

When Major W.C. Philoon, the American Assistant Military Attaché, and his interpreter R.W. Clack of the YMCA visited Wu and Ts'ao K'un in Paoting in July 1920, Wu received them kindly, granted Philoon's request to visit the front and even furnished him with a special train from Paoting to Peking. Wu saw to it that everything possible was done for them during their entire stay in the military headquarters. But at the end of the visit, he asked Philoon to carry a letter to A.B. Ruddock, the American Minister in Peking. In it, he requested the assistance of the American Minister and his diplomatic colleagues in making it impossible for foreign legations to be used as places of asylum by his five Anfu enemies.¹⁰ Though no reply was made by Ruddock the Loyang militarist, however, had made an excellent impression on Philoon in the interview. In his report of 3 August 1920 to the State Department, Philoon wrote:

The outstanding personality among the Chihli leaders is Wu P'ei-fu. Each time I have seen him I have become more impressed with the man. The association with his friends, advisers, staff officers, officers and soldiers of his command, and also reports by Americans on statements he had made in regard to the Chinese and foreigners have all convinced me that his actions are those of a real patriot, working for the good of his country, rather than for his own personal gain He is apparently very democratic, his soldiers have both great respect and great love for him. He has filled them also with patriotism.¹¹

In May 1924, Brigadier-General W.P. Connor, Commander of the United States Forces in China, in the company of his Chief-of-Staff, Lieutenant-Colonel Barnes, his aide Lieutenant Butler and

Mr W.R. Peck, the Chinese Secretary of the American Legation, called upon Wu in Loyang. After Connor and his officers were first met by Wu's chief-of-staff and members of the Foreign Affairs Department, they were then lavishly entertained by Wu in the grand dining room with the military band playing. At dinner, Wu told Connor that foreign governments and the diplomatic body could assist him in his unification of the country by allowing the central government to charter foreign steamships for the conveyance of troops and ammunition up the Yangtze River to Szechwan. Wu also said he wanted to see American capital invested in the development of Chinese railways. If the railways could be developed extensively, he stated, it would not only permit a great industrial development but would also stop civil war and disorder in the country. As for the use of American capital for railway building he assured Connor that he would personally assist any such enterprise.¹²

Pai Chien-wu, the head of the Political Administrative Department, later followed up Wu's suggestion in a conversation with W.R. Peck, the Chinese Secretary of the American Legation. Pai assured Peck that the earnings of the future railways would be utilized primarily for the repayment of capital. Peck, however, told him that it was difficult to secure American capital at that time since one or two railways still owed large sums to American suppliers of railway materials.

Peck, on the other hand, asked Wu to help the American Federal Telegraph Company. This was connected with Japanese requests for Wu to prevent the progress of the American company. Peck wanted Pai Chien-wu to secure Wu's influence on behalf of the American contract. The American official, with Wu's support, said he was confident that the Ministry of Communications would execute the Federal Telegraph Company's contract despite bitter Japanese opposition. However, Pai did not give him a definite answer.

Peck then brought up another matter, the provincial cigarette tax for the American cigarette business. The Chinese Secretary of the American Legation argued that such a tax was contrary to China's treaty obligations and harmful to her interest. Nevertheless, Pai remained unmoved, noting that this tax would come out of the consumer's pockets and not the foreign merchants.

Although no deal was made, friendly relations were definitely established between Peck and Pai, who assured each other of further contact and mutual service if matters in the future lay within their power.¹³

Immediately following Connor's visit, Wu wrote Peck a letter dated 28 May 1924, inviting him to serve as honorary adviser. Peck declined

on the ground that regulations in the American Legation prevented him from accepting such an appointment.¹⁴

Seeking financial and military assistance

On various occasions, Wu directly sought financial and military assistance from the American and British governments.

He approached the American side three times. On 15 December 1921, Wu and Hsiao Yao-nan, the Military Governor of Hupeh, sent their envoy to P.S. Heintzeleman, the American Consul in Hankow, with a specific request for a Constructional Loan of \$ Mex 5 million to be used for filling in a tract of land between Hankow and Shenkow upon which residential houses would be constructed. The suggested rate of interest was 1 per cent, the issue price \$95 on the hundred, and the security the southern section of the Peking-Hankow railroad. They proposed to repay it by monthly instalments of \$300,000 beginning four or five months after the loan was made. The envoy told the American that the contract would be sealed by both Wu and Hsiao, with the proper sanction from the central government. But Heintzeleman found the site of the scheme unfit for construction of residential buildings. The proposal was subsequently turned down.¹⁵

In January 1925, when militarists in Szechwan, Hunan and Kweichow invited Wu to Yochow to head a defensive alliance, Wu made his way in an armoured train to Hankow. He then had to find a form of transport that would take him from the city to Yochow in Hunan. He therefore approached Rear Admiral B. McVay, the American naval officer on the Yangtze River. He sent Chang Hsi-chin, his brother-in-law, and Albert C. Li, his adviser, to request that McVay, who was aboard the American warship *Isabel*, take him and his subordinates on board and sail for Yochow, 'on account of Wu's friendship for Americans' and McVay's relation with Wu's generals along the Yangtze River. McVay was unable to comply with such a request. The instruction from Heintzeleman was that McVay's attitude 'should be one of strict neutrality'.¹⁶

The representatives then asked McVay to convoy Wu's steamers, if he got them, to Yochow; this was also refused by the American officer. They further asked whether Wu could come aboard the *Isabel* as a refugee if he was attacked. McVay replied that he could not discuss such a problem in advance for he had to make his decision on existing conditions.

Later Wu did obtain two gunboats and was about to sail for Hunan.

Before he left, he sent Albert Li aboard the *Isabel*, thanked McVay for what he had done, apologized for not being able to call in person, for he would have to pass through a foreign concession which was against his principle. Li asked if the admiral would steam down the river with the two gunboats, and to say that such an action was designed 'just to show that Wu P'ei-fu has some friends. He knows that the Japanese are helping Chang Tso-lin and that the Americans regard them as enemies and since Wu is a friend of America and hates the Japanese and Chang Tso-lin, Americans should help Wu.' McVay could not do so as it was low water and the *Isabel* could not navigate the river.¹⁷

Finally, at the time of the Northern Expedition in 1926 and 1927, Wu made his last attempt to seek American military assistance. In the naval battle against the south, his gunboats often sought refuge near the American warship anchored in the Yangtze River. His own yacht was only a few hundred yards away from the American destroyer *Pope*. It was from that vantage point that he engaged his battle with the southern forces. As the south proved too formidable an enemy, he was forced to go directly to the American navy for help. On 30 August 1926, he sent Mr T.L. Shum, his director of the Special District Administration at Hankow, to see F.P. Lockhart, American Consul-General at Hankow, with a request that some assistance be given to him by the American naval vessel. Lockhart did not even have time to make a decision; only a few days later, Wu was defeated by the south and had to evacuate the city.¹⁸ He later asked Admiral McVay for protection. The request was refused, but McVay did help him to get on board a junk and flee for safety.¹⁹

From August 1925 to January 1927, Wu made persistent efforts to seek financial assistance and military supplies from the British government. He often used the Bolshevik threat and the anti-British sentiment, particularly the May Thirtieth Incident, to pressure the British to give him support. In August 1925, just before his comeback in Hankow as the chief of the Anti-Bandits' Allied Army, he sent two emissaries, his close confidant Admiral Liu Yung-chien and nephew of T'ang Shao-yi to see Mr Porter, the British Acting Consul-General at Hankow. The emissaries reminded the Acting Consul-General that Wu's policy towards the British had always been friendly and that now he would like to work with the British alone on the matter of withstanding the Russian threat. Wu was willing, they said, to head a combination against the 'Chinese and Soviet menace' if the British government would contribute four million taels to his war funds. They also told Porter that their superior had already got six million taels but would not make a

move till he had the rest of the money. If financial assistance was accorded him, they assured the British official that a complete change of the present hostile policy towards the British would follow.

Wu's approach for financial aid was reported by Palairet, the British Minister at Peking, to the Foreign Office, which then debated the matter. The general consensus was that no assistance could be given although some Foreign Office officials were sympathetic towards him. G.S. Moss, for example, noted that Wu was 'one of the finest characters, if not the finest, in modern China and one who is disposed to be sympathetic to British conservative ideals and to be consistent in his theory and practice'. He told his colleagues that Wu had snubbed student agitators who asked him to join their movement. Wu had reportedly said that the students 'were fools and were ruining their own country by attempting to remedy injustice by injustice'. Moss therefore recommended that Palairet should give Wu a 'confidential and reasoned reply'. Basil C. Newton agreed with Moss; Wu's attitude, he said, was a 'hopeful sign of reaction against the extremists'. Newton thought, as did Victor Wellesley, that no reply should be given at that time. However, he suggested that if in the future Wu and Chang Tso-lin could establish an authoritative central government in Peking, the British government should give such a government, if well-disposed, firearms or remove the arms embargo.²⁰

Lawrence Collier suggested that the British should accord the Wu P'ei-fu movement 'a very benevolent neutrality, if not some degree of assistance, such as the abolition of the arms embargo'. Mr H. Goffe, the British Consul-General at Hankow, then on leave in London, proposed to the Foreign Office that he be authorized by his government on return to his post to convey to Hsiao Yao-nan, Wu's subordinate and Military Governor of Hupeh, a personal message, expressing appreciation of Hsiao's effort in curbing anti-British trouble in the mid-Yangtze area.²¹ In order to appease the Chihli militarists without making a definite commitment, the Foreign Office finally gave Goffe permission to deliver such a message.²²

When British financial aid was not forthcoming, Wu continued to play up the Bolshevik threat and eventually won over some of the British officials in China. Mr Porter was definitely sympathetic towards the Chihli chief. He told Heintzleman, the American Consul-General in Hankow, in August 1925 that he favoured the return of Wu to power because Wu could be depended upon to suppress the anti-British movement within his domain.²³

Wu also turned to Hong Kong for support, knowing that the British

colony suffered the most from the anti-British movement in that year. In September 1925 he dispatched two representatives, Prince Kung and General Yeung Shing, former minister at Vienna, separately to Sir R. Stubbs, the Governor of Hong Kong, asking for a military loan of Y\$ 3 million in return for his action against Canton. Stubbs, more than willing to support a militarist like Wu, who professed to crush the 'Bolshevik administration' at Canton, and without even consulting the British Legation at Peking nor the Canton Consulate, cabled the Colonial Office in London directly.

The Governor proposed that first the British government should offer assistance both in money and materials to Wu and the Peking government to compel Canton to end their anti-British activities. He pointed out that the Boxer Indemnity funds could be used for such a purpose. Secondly, for the purpose of cutting off supply of Soviet arms to Canton and stopping Soviet ships at the mouth of the Canton river, Stubbs proposed that the Peking government should be induced to prohibit importation of arms and ammunition for anyone other than their own nominees. In return the British government should assist Peking with supplies or give them the use of Hong Kong as a naval base and provide them with armed launches that flew the Chinese flag. He concluded his proposal by saying:

We cannot give them the pecuniary assistance for which they are continually asking us but my strong advice is that they should be given all the support that is possible. For instance we could hand over to them any munitions that we have. Provided that we showed clearly that we are acting not against China but for China against Bolshevism, sane opinion in China, which is undoubtedly opposed to Bolshevism, would welcome any intervention by His Majesty's Government.²⁴

The reactions to Stubbs' proposal varied. A.L. Scott, the Vice-Consul at Canton, then in London, said that he was in favour of supplying assistance other than financial to anti-Bolshevik militarists such as Wu P'ei-fu, but it should be done secretly, so that the Hong Kong authority could disavow connection if necessary. Some suggested that armed forces at Hong Kong could be used to assist the Peking government to enforce the prohibition of imports of Soviet arms and ammunition. However, Victor Wellesley and others were strongly against it, accusing Stubbs of acting independently without consultation with Palairet in Peking nor with Sir J.W. Jamieson at Canton. Later Stubbs was replaced by a new governor and the Stubbs proposal never materialized.²⁵

Although the British refused to comply with Wu's request, they were disturbed by the reported efforts of the Soviet Union to bribe Wu and other Chihli militarists to come to an understanding with Feng Yu-hsiang, which as Moss put it, might be 'inimical to the British Empire'.²⁶

In December 1925, an anti-Red alliance was finally affected by Wu and Chang Tso-lin, who vowed to eliminate the Bolshevik influence from China. The allies immediately renewed their efforts to secure help from Britain. Local agents of Wu and Chang contacted Barton, the British Consul-General at Shanghai, and attempted to impress him that their movement against Canton was dependent on promises of financial support from Hong Kong.²⁷

The British government, however, remained unmoved. Out of frustration, Wu condemned the British in an article published on 10 February 1926 in the *Central China Post*. He said that the British themselves should be blamed for the recent anti-British boycott. Wu asserted that it was entirely their fault, as he had asked them for a 'little assistance' in exchange for guarantees to suppress the boycott at once. And yet they failed to heed his request. He also claimed to have moved of his own accord to suppress it without any expense to the British, but his action was hampered by lack of equipment and funds. While admitting that the financial part could be overcome by the Chinese, he specified that the problem of equipment remained the basis of negotiation between him and the British authorities in London and Hong Kong. He called the attention of the British to the fact that many thousands of rifles and rounds of ammunition had been seized by the Hong Kong government as contraband. He offered to purchase them to fight against the 'Reds', but he assured the British that he would take no action until a definite reply was received. The Bolshevik, he maintained, was a common danger for the British and himself and he resented the British standby attitude which left him to fight against a common foe alone. He strongly criticized the British for not taking definite steps to overcome the menace and preferring to 'indulge in an orgy of expensive conferences'. He indicated that by adopting such a wait-and-see policy they were fast losing his friendship.²⁸

While reproaching the British publicly for their inaction, Wu privately moved forward to ask for British aid. He approached H. Goffe, the Consul-General in Hankow, pleading that he would not have enough time to build up reserves of ammunition with which to oppose the attack from Canton after his northern campaign against Feng Yu-hsiang. He asked the British government to supply him with 200 machineguns and 20 million rounds of ammunition. Although the Foreign Office still held

that no supply of free arms be given to Wu, G.S. Moss and F. Gwatkin wondered if the arms embargo could be lifted in favour of Wu and Chang Tso-lin. Gwatkin was of the opinion that the Arms Embargo Agreement of 1919²⁹ could be replaced by making the Chinese Arms Mandate³⁰ applicable to a British subject, which would then make it possible for Wu to import arms under special permit if he obtained control of the Peking government. But then they hesitated and finally decided to adhere to the old policy of non-intervention, discounting Wu's story of a threatened attack from Canton as 'merely an attempt to scare us into supporting him. The country is very difficult and the Canton forces are not very strong'.³¹

Sir R. Macleay, the British Minister in Peking, was definitely in favour of some sort of aid to Wu in the future. He wired the Foreign Office on 3 March 1926, recommending that if Wu ultimately succeeded in establishing a stable and conservative government in Peking, it might be advisable to lift the arms embargo in his favour. He further asked authorization from his government to instruct the British Consul-General at Hankow to assure Wu

verbally of our appreciation of his friendly attitude and to explain to him that His Majesty's Government while not contemplating any immediate change in their present policy of strict neutrality towards contending factions in China might be led to modify that policy to [sic] extent of withdrawing obstacles in the way of supply of munitions of war from British sources in favour of a friendly and stable central government at Peking

Moss thought the suggestion excellent, and others in the Foreign Office concurred.³²

Therefore, when Wu's agent called on Goffe again on 21 March 1926, enquiring about the possibility of ordering arms and ammunition from British sources if he was installed in Peking, Goffe responded by saying that 'no British government can supply him with arms or money; the most they can do is to afford facilities to a stable and friendly government to obtain them from British sources'.³³

Encouraged by Goffe's reply, Wu replayed the theme of a foreign menace again. In mid-April, in a conversation with Goffe, Wu's entourage told the British Consul-General that Japan was equally responsible with Russia for the anti-British campaign at Canton. The Japanese hoped to cripple Hong Kong as a counterblow to the Singapore naval base, he said.³⁴

But as the invasion from the south became imminent the Foreign

Office was immediately confronted with the likelihood that Wu might be beaten in the coming conflict. Their view of the Nationalist regime in the south began to change, but they still wanted to save Wu and the Peking government. George Mounsey, a member of the Far Eastern Department, put the Chinese situation this way: 'The regime of the militarists cannot produce a stable government and that sooner or later the return of the nationalists to power is not only inevitable, but is the one great hope for China's future – however disagreeable that fact may be for our own prospects in China.' However, he recommended the immediate granting of the Washington surtaxes to Peking as the only possible tactic of saving that government.³⁵ Another member in the Foreign Office regarded that as almost a 'Hobson's choice'.³⁶

In Peking, Macleay made an effort to smooth over the difficulties between Wu and Chang Tso-lin, and tried to bring them together to form 'a solid front of anti-Red combination'. On 20 June, Macleay dispatched Colonel Steward, the British Military Attaché, and Mr Teichman, the Chinese secretary to the British Legation, to Wu in Paoting 'in order to bring such personal influence as I [Macleay] could bear upon him ...'. Steward and Teichman, received by Wu on 21 June presented him with a 'private and personal message' from Macleay that reads:

More recently the successful emergence of Marshal Wu, with regard to which His Majesty's Minister tendered his congratulations, as the head of a party seeking to re-establish a stable Central Government representing a coalition of the more solid and conservative elements in the country led us to hope that things were now going to take a turn for the better There could be no prospect of any real stability of government, while there was a constant danger that the more extreme elements influencing the Kuo-min-chun, who had shown themselves in the past so hostile to British interests and who receives support from an external quarter, would again descend upon the capital and establish a Government, under the influence of a certain foreign Power ... Therefore His Majesty's Minister, taking advantage of his personal friendship with Marshal Wu, wished to urge with all the earnestness he could command that Marshal Wu should lose no time in settling any outstanding differences between him and Marshal Chang, with special reference to the constitutional issue, in order that through the loyal co-operation of the two marshals the Kuo min-chun might be speedily eliminated

According to Macleay, Wu was not very responsive. While

maintaining that he would continue the fight against the Bolsheviks to the end, Wu, however resented the British apathy towards 'his lone effort in combating a worldwide danger,' saying that the British could at least help him by attacking the Bolsheviks in Russia. He was particularly critical of the British for the negotiations between the Hong Kong government and the Canton authorities on the question of the year-long British-Cantonese dispute which included a general strike in Hong Kong and an anti-British boycott in Canton, following the May Thirtieth Incident of 1925. Although Teichman assured him that such local settlement would not prejudice the general British attitude towards the Chinese government, Wu argued that if the Powers should desire flourishing trade and good relations in China, they should deal solely with the constitutional central government. Throughout the interview, Wu never raised the matter of supply of arms from British sources.³⁷

Yet it did not take him too long to come back to the British for aid. Hard pressed by the northern expeditionary forces from the south, Wu hurried back in mid-September from the north to direct his stand against the south at Wuhan. By mid-September, Hankow and Hanyang were in the possession of the Revolutionary Army. Desperately, Wu sent his emissary Liu Ting-chun on 20 September 1926 to see Colonel Steward and Mr Teichman. Appealing to Teichman by saying that Wu had always been friendly towards the British, had looked to them as friends for help and there was nothing he would not do for them, Liu said that Wu wanted the British to give him either a large loan to be secured on the salt revenues, or some munitions which he would pay for by the issue of new custom bonds. Citing the precedent that the British had helped China suppress the T'aip'ing Rebellion, Liu told Teichman that the British could provide Wu with the same kind of assistance for crushing the 'Red danger'. If actual military assistance in the shape of troops could not be given, he continued, the British government could at least supply Wu with munitions and funds in his extreme need. Teichman, however, replied that the British policy was still one of strict neutrality and non-intervention in China's civil war.³⁸ Wu's emissary therefore left empty-handed.

As the southern troops were pressing home their attack on Wuchang a month later, Wu tried his luck again with the British minister. On 5 October, only five days before the fall of Wuchang, he sent his envoy to Sir R. Macleay in 'an almost piteous appeal for financial assistance'. Once again, the representative emphasized Wu's 'closest relations and co-operation' with the British and reiterated that there was nothing Wu would not do for the British after the position had been restored.

Assuring Macleay that Wu had not appealed to any power except Britain, 'whom he had always trusted and regarded as the only real friend of China', the envoy asked for a loan of Y\$ 4 million a month for three months, to be secured on anything, and the repayment for which Wu would be personally responsible. Macleay gave the envoy a negative but guarded reply, expressing his appreciation of Wu's friendly attitude but refusing to grant such a loan on account of the British policy of strict neutrality and the inability to raise the sum from British businessmen and bankers in view of existing defaults and the commercial depression which was a result of the wars and boycotts.³⁹

On 10 October, Wuchang was captured by Chiang Kai-shek's Revolutionary forces. During the next few months Wu was defending his territory at Honan and at the same time negotiating with Chang Tso-lin for a joint attack on the southern army. He made a final attempt to seek help from the British government. This time, he sent Hsueh Han, his Commissioner for Foreign Affairs in Honan, to ask Colonel Steward in Peking at the end of January 1927 for some British financial assistance to pay his troops who had not been paid for four months. But Wu was unable to offer any security for he had but a few miles of railroad in his control. The British Military Attaché therefore told Mr Hsueh that it was impossible for the British to help Wu in any way.⁴⁰

Relations with Private Individuals and Businessmen

Cultivating friendly relations

Wu had a very able subordinate, Pai Chien-wu, who served him as the head of the Political Administrative Department. Pai was a returned student from Japan, who had been employed in the *yamen* of Li Shun, former Military Governor of Kiangsu, for five years as chief political adviser. While serving under Li Shun, Pai came to know many Americans. Some were personal friends of Li himself, others were friends of Ch'i Hsieh-yüan, the successor of Li after his death. Thus Pai was able to build a close friendship with a number of influential Americans. Among them were Sidney Roy Anderson, who worked for the British-American Tobacco Company, an American adviser of Li Shun and a friend of Ch'i Hsieh-yüan, Charles R. Crane and Dr Paul S. Reinsch, both former American Ministers to Peking, Dr Charles D. Tenney, former Chief Secretary of the American Legation at Peking,

W.H. Donald, co-director, Bureau of Economic Information at Peking and Commander C.T. Hutchins, the American Naval Attaché.⁴¹

Upon entering the service of Wu, Pai brought with him his American connections. It was through Pai that Wu came to know these people. Later when Wu became the *de facto* head of the Peking regime following his victory in the First Chihli-Fengtien War of 1922, some of them joined the new government as advisers. For example, Sidney Roy Anderson became the adviser to the Department of Agriculture and Commerce while Paul S. Reinch served as adviser to the Chinese government.⁴²

To show that he valued the American friendship, Wu had a picture of George Washington hung on the wall in his *yamen* and often told his visitors that he desired to do for his country what Washington had done in uniting the thirteen colonies.⁴³ Wu undoubtedly realized the influence these Americans could exert on their government and compatriots. They could if they wanted to mould foreign opinion in his favour. Some had previously served in the American Legation and therefore had close ties with their home government. Sidney Roy Anderson, for instance, had lived in China for more than twenty years and was described by the *New York Times* as an American 'old China hand' and 'the very wideawake American who knew the Chinese thoroughly'. On account of his wide friendship with both the Chihli and Fengtien militarists, Anderson even acted as mediator between the two cliques during the First Chihli-Fengtien War.⁴⁴

After Wu's victory in 1922, Anderson publicly supported Wu and his new government in the *New York Times*. He predicted that China would shortly be a unified nation under Wu. 'The United States of China,' as he called it, would emerge out of the chaos to be 'the ideal democracy of the world, more democratic even than the United States of America'. In this the 'World's Greatest Democracy,' Anderson noted, there would be a 'strong man' and he would be Pai Chien-wu, the right-hand political adviser of Wu P'ei-fu. Wu and Pai would be a good combination for China, he wrote, because Wu was a 'fine soldier,' and Pai 'had many other qualities which I think stamp him as one of the great men in China.' Anderson appealed to the Powers to provide China with assistance, now that China was putting her house in order. He concluded his article by saying 'China is the greatest neutralizing force in the Yellow race. She asks now "If I help myself, will you help me?" '⁴⁵

Equally important was Paul S. Reinsch, the former American Minister to China, then financial adviser to the Chinese government and the author of a book, *An American Diplomat in China*. Reinsch was a

close friend of Wellington Koo. As early as August 1920, he had been a Chihli sympathizer. In a memorandum presented to the Chinese government, later published on 28 August 1920 in the *Peking Leader*, a Chinese owned paper published in English, Reinsch extolled Wu as 'the upholder of the democratic popular government'. In comparing Wu's representative government with the tide of the Yangtze River, a force no one could obstruct, he advised all 'wise statesmen' to ally themselves with this 'great force', saying that it was only in blindness that people should ignore it.⁴⁶

As a former American Minister, Reinsch had close connection with the American Legation in Peking. On one occasion, he attempted to impress Jacob G. Schurman, the American Minister to China, about the financial difficulties of the Chihli government in Peking. He proposed that the American government should give a Y\$ 2 million loan to China and claimed that the Secretary of State had invited him to communicate his observations and views on China to Washington directly. He therefore asked Schurman that he be given the privilege of telegraphing in code to the State Department.⁴⁷

Because of his influence within the American community, all Chihli militarists tried their best to cultivate his friendship. Reinsch was royally entertained by Ts'ao K'un and was very well received by Wu P'ei-fu as well as his subordinate Feng Yu-hsiang. In return, Reinsch often gave speeches and issued statements, which will be shown later, in support of the Chihli government.

Wu's friendly hand extended not only to former American diplomats but also to American businessmen. On the whole, he had good relations with the American business community. He invited P.S. Hopkins and W.L. Carney, the manager and assistant manager of the Standard Oil Company at Hankow to receptions and accepted a return invitation from Hopkins. He and his staff had tea for an hour, during which he discussed with Hopkins all kinds of questions. Wu repeatedly assured the American manager that 'his relations with Americans and the Standard Oil Company had been most cordial and that the most rigid regulations had been issued his army to protect to the utmost the lives and properties of foreigners'.⁴⁸

People in the Standard Oil Company obviously had a good impression of Wu. Henry F. Merrill, the assistant of the Standard Oil Company of New York in Shanghai, later had this to say about the Chihli militarist in the *Political Science Quarterly*: 'Wu has shown ability and tenacity of purpose, and he appears to have won the admiration and good will of his troops If however, there is one actor in this political movement who

is actuated by patriotic motives and not merely by personal ambition, that one, in general estimation is Wu P'ei-fu.⁴⁹

Seeking financial assistance

Wu's principal objective in developing such cordial relations was to secure loans through foreign businessmen. The first place he looked to naturally was the International Banking Consortium. The idea was initiated by Josef Washington Hall (alias Upton Close), an American journalist and adventurer. One day in a conversation with Hall at the close of the First Chihli-Fengtien War, Wu mentioned in passing that he would like to conserve the Yellow River so that he could build bridges and engage in some engineering projects. Hall called Wu's attention to the fact that the International Banking Consortium was specifically organized for such projects and mentioned that Frederick W. Stevens of J.P. Morgan & Company, the American representative, was then in town. Hall, however, said that it was the Consortium's policy to audit the expenditure of all loan money. Wu felt that such policy was hard on Chinese pride; he suggested instead a reversal of the policy, outlining a formula by which China would act as auditor of the expenditure and administrator of foreign loans, and foreigners would design, construct and administer China's public utilities under development. Upon his return to Peking following Wu's victory, Hall drew up a programme for the Chihli chief and submitted it to Stevens. Initially Stevens, according to Hall, was very impressed by the scheme and even wrote Wu a friendly letter offering to postpone his sailing date should negotiations develop. But after communicating with New York, Stevens informed Hall that Consortium representatives could only discuss such matters with a properly installed Minister of Finance or Minister of Communications in Peking.⁵⁰

Therefore on 12 June 1922, when Tung Kang was officially installed as the new Minister of Finance under Wu P'ei-fu, the idea of approaching the Consortium began to surface again. This time Hall helped with the preliminary propaganda. In June 1922, he published an article in the *Far Eastern Review*, an American newspaper in Shanghai, outlining Wu's financial program. In it, he told the foreign community that ever since Kao En-hung and Tung K'ang had taken over the offices of Minister of Communications and Minister of Finance respectively, a great effort had been made to reorganize the railway administration and the finance of the central government. Superfluous positions in the

department were abolished so as to save a great deal of money in salaries. The banking system was completely reformed; the Bank of China and the Bank of Communications, the two most important banks in the nation, had been amalgamated, thus eliminating the financial domination of the government by the Communications clique from the central government. Moreover, Hall asserted, the finance of the central government would be put on a firm basis as Wu had agreed to release his hold upon the salt revenues of Hupeh and to return the earnings of the Peking-Hankow railway to the control of the central government. Finally, Hall appealed to his compatriots, saying that if foreigners wished to see China reunified under one government, they should lend her a hand and give her a reorganization loan.⁵¹

The idea of a reorganization loan first caught on among the British circle. On 13 June 1922, one day after Hall's article appeared in the *Far Eastern Review*, E.G. Hillier, the agent of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, reported in a letter to Sir Robert Clive, Counsellor of the British Legation in Peking, that the Chinese government had made sufficient progress in the practical problems of unification, disbandment and the abolition of the *tuchün* system. Predicting that the Consortium would be called upon to play a part in the reconstruction of the nation, Hillier believed that 'there is no lack of money in the London market for investment at the present moment, and we are not now dependent on American assistance in order to take up our share, or possibly more than our share, of any well considered financial proposition that may be placed before us'. He recommended that London should go to the extent of acting independently if necessary in giving assistance to the Chinese government.⁵²

Publicly, A.G. Stephen, chief manager of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, made a similar statement to the press. In an interview with the *Peking and Tientsin Times* in late 1922, Stephen told the reporter: 'If China desires to borrow money and she had a real and upright government to represent the real wishes of the citizens, a loan will not be difficult. There is plenty of money on the London market The London market can help China financially if China should need such help, and the best and fairest rates will be given to China'.⁵³

The proposed loans were formally raised with the foreign governments on 7 July 1922, when Yen Hui-ch'ing, the Premier, Tung K'ang, the Minister of Finance and Wellington Koo, Chairman of the Financial Commission, met with the ministers of the Allied and Associated Powers on the subject of the suspension of indemnity

payments. On that occasion Yen told the ministers that China intended to fund both the external and internal floating debts on the security of the 2½ per cent proposed customs surtax.

On the 8th and 11th July representatives of France, Britain, Japan and the United States had two meetings. They finally decided that:

The consortium banks should be authorized on application of Chinese Government to make advances not exceeding \$15 million spread over a period of 6 months to be added to floating debt and secured by above mentioned [customs] surtax or otherwise as the consortium banking groups may determine subject to supervision and audit with foreign assistance of this expenditure as to the further condition that the Chinese Government definitely pledges itself forthwith and concurrently with the said advance to negotiate and conclude with the consortium the consolidation of the internal and external floating debt. Provision for the disbandment of troops within a stated period and for the regulation of future borrowing should form part of the arrangement.

Subsequently, ministers of these nations sent identical telegrams to their home governments individually, informing them of their decision.⁵⁴

Apparently, having been told of the decision of the ministers, Tung K'ang immediately approached the Consortium for two loans. First, he said he wanted to negotiate a consolidation debt loan of Mex\$400 million to pay off all foreign and internal obligations, based on the 2½ per cent proposed customs increase. Then he asked for monthly advances to the aggregate of Y\$15 million (Y\$2.5 million monthly for six months) for administrative expenses. Tung predicted that at the end of six months, the central government would have re-established its hold over the provinces and revenue would start flowing into the treasury.⁵⁵

The American group led by Frederick Stevens rejected both these proposals. In a meeting with the group on 13 July, Stevens told the group that he had checked with Sir Francis Aglen, Inspector General of the Maritime Customs Service. The possible annual increase of the maritime revenue could not even cover the interest charges of the debts let alone any amortization. As for the monthly advance to the Chinese government, Stevens thought that the American group could not look favourably on such a proposal under the present political conditions. Stevens, to be sure, was sympathetic towards Finance Minister Tung. In a memorandum to the State Department, he praised Tung as 'an honest and courageous official struggling to better the present chaotic financial condition against great odds ... like to have him helped if it were possible

to do so without risk'. But Stevens regretted that he could not do anything for the Finance Minister because no monthly advance could be given to the 'Reconstruction Government', since no adequate security could be obtained at that time.⁵⁶

The Japanese government also refused to approve the debt consolidation loan proposal. Obata Yukichi, the Japanese Minister, though publicly supporting the terms in the identical telegram, secretly looked upon the proposal as a partial assistance to Wu and accordingly advised his government to turn it down. In the next meeting of the four ministers, Obata, reading an abstract from a telegram, stated that his government regarded the state of China too chaotic to make foreign financial aid advisable, adding that when normal public conditions were established, Japan would be ready to lend financial assistance to China. Because of the Japanese opposition, the proposal was finally defeated. The British group, on behalf of all groups, sent Peking a message formally turning down the proposals.⁵⁷

Although the Japanese attitude was unfavourable, the American and British diplomats at Peking were well-disposed toward the idea of assisting the new government. Jacob G. Schurman, the American Minister, recommended his government to take the lead in postponing the indemnity payment for two years, hoping that other nations would follow, and thus enabling the new government to float a loan large enough to meet its minimum financial requirement for some months.⁵⁸

The British were furious at the sudden change of the Japanese position. Sir Robert Clive, Counsellor of the British Legation in Peking, in a letter to the Foreign Office on 28 July, strongly criticized the Japanese position. He argued that no government could carry on without money, and yet it was the principles of the Consortium that reunification and disbandment should preclude financial aid to China. In this way, he said, he feared that they were in a vicious circle.⁵⁹ In another letter to Victor Wellesley on 8 August, Clive pointed out that it was exactly the lack of financial assistance that resulted in the impotence of the Peking government, which in turn gave a new life to Chang Tso-lin.⁶⁰

The British Foreign Office also were disappointed that such a proposal was defeated. H.F. Handley-Derry, after reviewing Clive's letter, noted that it was unfortunate that no fund was available to establish this 'better element', when 'a sane man like Li Yüan-hung took the place of Hsü Shih-ch'ang'. Basil C. Newton, one of the China experts, suggested that his government might have to compromise by approving the issue of a small loan as an experiment, if the Chinese government insisted that

something should be done. However, Victor Wellesley doubted if such a small loan would affect anything.⁶¹

Despite the flat refusal from the Consortium, the Peking government did not give up. This time Paul Reinsch helped to do the propaganda for them. On 8 September 1922, in a speech given at Wellington Koo's residence, Reinsch told an informal gathering that foreign powers should advance a constitutional interim loan of Y\$2 million in gold a month for ten months in order to give the government a chance to exist without financial worries during the constitution-making period. Reinsch however made no mention of security. When Frederic E. Lee, the American Economist Consul, asked him for an explanation, he said that foreign loans should be arranged with China solely on her credit as a nation.⁶² Later Reinsch made two more addresses, the first one before a group of bankers and the second one to the Chinese Social and Political Association. In both these speeches, he pointed out that what China needed was not a 'strong man' but a good financier and co-operation between the bankers and the government.⁶³

Acting in co-ordination with Reinsch, Wellington Koo, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, first contacted the British group on 25 September, and then formally approached the Consortium on 2 October for a loan of Y\$18 million (to be spread over six months with monthly advances of Y\$2 million for November, December and January and Y\$4 million for February, March and April) secured on the salt revenue.⁶⁴

However, the Japanese still refused to budge. In a statement to the United States State Department on 19 October, the Japanese government reaffirmed their August position of abstaining from giving assistance to any party or faction in China. They believed that there had been no substantial change in the Chinese political situation since August.⁶⁵

The British government, on the other hand, took positive steps to help. Sir C. Elliot, the British Ambassador in Tokyo, was instructed by his government to press the Japanese government to consider the loan proposals. In a conversation with I.M. Tokugawa of the Japanese embassy in London, Victor Wellesley, Superintending Assistant Secretary of the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office, tried hard to persuade the Japanese Ambassador that the Consortium should seize the opportunity to settle the unsecured debt.⁶⁶ On 23 October 1922, Wellesley also submitted a memorandum to Oliver B. Harriman, First Secretary of the American Embassy in London, stating that the British government approved in principle the examination of the loan proposals and recommended that it should be accepted by other governments. At the same time, Sir Auckland Geddes, the British Ambassador at

Washington, was instructed by the Foreign Office to put the matter before the Department of State. On 2 November 1922, in a communication to Charles E. Hughes, the American Secretary of State, Geddes informed Hughes that the British government had already decided in principle to approve further examination of the proposals on the following grounds: (1) although China was far from unification, there was a government in Peking, well-intentioned and deserving of assistance, while there was no government in the south following Sun Yat-sen's flight from Canton; (2) the unsecured foreign debt should be settled before the Special Tariff Conference to avoid any clash at the conference; and (3) the longer the Consortium remained inactive, the greater the danger that the policy of co-operation would be wrecked. Geddes urged the United States government, should it agree with the British position, to authorize their representative in Tokyo to associate with the British Ambassador and press the Japanese government to consider the proposals.⁶⁷

As far as the American government attitude was concerned, it was favourable. Secretary of State Hughes, in his reply to Geddes on 23 November agreed that the Peking government was the recognized government in China, the sole agency answerable for the protection of foreign rights and interests. No reconstruction programme, he wrote, could be put through without financial assistance from outside. He went on to assure the British Ambassador that the United States welcomed the negotiations if terms were mutually satisfactory to the Chinese government and the banking interests of the Consortium. He said he had already communicated the above point of view to the Japanese Charge d'Affaires and assured the British government that he would advise the American Ambassador at Tokyo to associate with his British colleague to bring pressure upon the Japanese government.⁶⁸

Despite the British and American pressure brought upon the Japanese in order to bring them into line, the Japanese government steadfastly refused to move from their previous position. On 28 December 1922, in a memorandum, it flatly rejected the proposals on the grounds that when there was an absence of a sufficiently responsible government, any loan would imply a departure from their policy of neutrality in China. The Japanese government desired that the question of loan be deferred until the assembly of the Special Tariff Conference.⁶⁹ Nor did Frederick Stevens change his mind. In Tokyo, he gave a speech strongly opposing any loan to China. Even though Wellesley thought that 'the Wu P'ei-fu government, weak though it may be, stands for the unification of China', and E.H. Carr recommended the British government 'to go on by

ourselves and carry through a reduced loan for dealing with British unsecured debts', no Chinese consolidation loan could materialize without Japanese and American support.

Apparently, because of the friendly British attitude Wu looked more and more to the British for support during the latter part of his career. In late 1923, Sir Robert Hotung, a well-known British subject of Chinese origin and a comprador with Jardine, Matheson and Company in Hong Kong, launched a 'round table conference' movement to bring leaders of various Chinese factions together to solve their outstanding differences. In October, Hotung went to Loyang to sound out Wu on this subject. With great confidence of his ability in the field and professing to conquer his enemies in a short time, Wu did not think much of the 'round table conference' idea. He said he would send a representative to the proposed conference only after other militarists had vacated their posts. But turning to another subject, Wu asked Hotung for a loan of \$5 million. Hotung, however, refused to loan him the money.⁷⁰

This brief contact with Hotung served as a link between Jardine, Matheson and Company and Wu, which he used two years later. In July 1925, as part of the scheme of using the Bolshevik menace to pressure the British into supporting him, Wu, still in Yochow, sent an emissary to see A. Brook Smith, the manager of Jardine, Matheson and Company in Shanghai, with a proposal for a 15 million taels loan. Stressing 'Red agitation' and its threat to the British commercial interests in central China, the emissary told Smith that should the British agree to assist Wu with a loan, Wu would make sure that there would be no disturbances and lawlessness in his sphere of influence in the future. Thus, he said, the British could kill two birds with one stone — the Bolshevik menace to Hong Kong and the strike and boycott throughout China. The emissary further stated that Wu had 5 million taels already but he hoped Smith would interest either the British or the Hong Kong government to put up another 15 millions. No security was provided in the proposal except Wu's personal signature and suggestion that the money would be repaid by various provinces which shared the anti-Bolshevik feeling. Wu wanted the payment to be kept secret and made through a third party, the emissary said. The Hong Kong government should authorize the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank to advance 15 million taels to a Chinese 'trading' company in Shanghai which would conclude an agreement to reimburse the bank within a certain period with low interest. On the other hand, Wu would have a similar agreement with that company. After the loan had been made, Wu pledged to organize a legal

government in Peking and maintain the law and diplomatic relations with the Powers.⁷¹

The proposal, together with a personal letter, was forwarded by A. Brook Smith to D.G.M. Bernard, the manager of Jardine, Matheson and Company in Hong Kong. Smith mentioned in his letter that he doubted if Bernard could do anything but indicate that Chinese public opinion admired Wu for his honesty and the only chance to restore peace and order in China was to get Britain, Japan and America to finance this militarist. The proposal was then sent up to A.G.M. Fletcher, clerk of councils of the Hong Kong Colonial Secretariat, who in turn showed it to Sir R. Stubbs, the Governor of Hong Kong. In a reply to A. Brook Smith, Bernard told his colleague that the Hong Kong government was unable to advance money to support 'these good people'. But he said that Wu's emissaries were also in Hong Kong and Fletcher was trying to enlist all possible support for the 'big man' from Chinese sources.⁷²

A copy of the proposal was communicated either by Hong Kong or by Shanghai to D. Landale in London, who on 20 October 1925, took it to the Foreign Office and urged the British government to intervene and support Wu with money and encouragement, because the Chinese would never do anything without foreign help. Though sympathetically disposed toward Wu because of his anti-Bolshevik stance, the Foreign Office threw cold water on the idea, stating the British government was unwilling to change its principle of neutrality.⁷³

Hampered by lack of funds after his comeback, Wu took extreme measures to levy taxes on the foreigners. Even banking houses with substantial foreign interests were compelled to meet his demands. Since the shootings and the anti-foreign movement started in Shanghai, Canton and Hankow, the foreign business community, particularly that of Hankow, was greatly shaken by the 'Red' faction in Canton, which they thought 'would resort to various measures to make the position of foreigners here uncomfortable'. Wu, on the other hand, never ceased to exploit the situation and advertised that he and his associates represented a distinct Chinese movement against the further penetration of 'Red' influence into China. For his service as defender of the foreigner, Wu moved ahead to tap the foreign companies for contributions to his war funds.

Two big companies in Hankow – the British-American Tobacco Company and the Asiatic Petroleum Company – fell victim of his fund raising. It was easier to enlist the support of the British-American

Tobacco Company for Marc T.W. Tseng, Wu's adviser on foreign affairs, was the Chinese manager in the company and Sidney Roy Anderson, Pai Chien-wu's friend, who died in 1924, had worked there before. Late in 1925, the company was forced to give a monthly payment of Y\$50,000 in return for the lifting of the boycott against them in the Hupeh province. The Asiatic Petroleum Company was forced to pay Y\$200,000 in return for stopping the boycott against their goods.⁷⁴ In both cases, the negotiation was conducted by Chang Ying-hua, Wu's subordinate and former Minister of Finance. In the British-American Tobacco Company arrangement, the British Consul had reportedly taken part in the discussion.⁷⁵

As the southern troops approached Hankow, the foreign community panicked. In May 1926, C. L'Estrange Malone, a member of the British Independent Labour Party, during a tour of investigation in China, reported that in a meeting held by the British Chamber of Commerce, the chairman spoke out saying that 'the time had arrived when they should come out into the open as the supporters of Wu P'ei-fu, instead of supplying arms secretly'. Malone was also informed that the British-American Tobacco Company had recently arranged a loan of Mex\$4 million for Wu.⁷⁶

In financial difficulty, Wu struck again in July 1926. His subordinate, K'ou Ying-chieh, Military Governor of Honan, demanded a loan of Y\$300,000 from the British-American Tobacco Company. When refused, he placed a 30 per cent *ad valorem* tax on tobacco products. An agreement was finally reached in which the company agreed to pay a special tax on cigarettes and tobacco products. It was inaugurated by means of a loan, thus enabling Wu to raise a revenue of Y\$1 million a year from this source.⁷⁷

Seeking Military Supplies and Technical Assistance

Chinese communist historians have repeatedly accused the United States of having 'invested militarily on a grand scale' on the Chihli clique, and particularly on Wu P'ei-fu. As early as February 1923, Ts'ai Ho-sen reported in the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao* that James Slevin, an American merchant, had helped Wu obtain some aeroplanes from the United States.⁷⁸ In July 1924, Ch'en Tu-hsiu wrote in the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao* that the United States had recently supplied Wu with a great deal of arms and munitions. The illegal supply, he related, was seized by the Tientsin customs, which carried a permit No. 1249, issued by the

Ministry of War on 20 April 1924 that bore the signatures of Lu Chin, the Minister of War, and Wu P'ei-fu.⁷⁹ A month later, in August, Ch'en again cited the *Talbot* case in the same periodical. According to him, the United States had tried to supply Wu with Y\$3,280,000 worth of arms and ammunition. The whole consignment consisted of eight machine guns and seventy-two cases of pistols and munitions and was seized on board the schooner *Talbot* in Tientsin. Hu Sheng, in 1950, in his book *T'i-kuo chu-i yü Chung-kuo cheng-chih* [Imperialism and Chinese Politics] accused the United States of supplying Wu in 1923 with \$US3 million worth of arms and ammunition. Through the intercession of the American minister, Hu wrote that Wu was able to obtain from an American merchant 10,000 rifles, 20 million rounds of ammunition and 250 machine guns.⁸⁰ The same story was repeated by Wang Min-chih in his *Mei-kuo ch'in Hua hsiao shih* [A Short History of American Aggression in China] and again by Liu Ta-nien in his *Mei-kuo ch'in Hua shih* [A History of American Aggression in China].⁸¹

It has already been demonstrated that both the British and American governments had repeatedly denied Wu's request for arms supplies on the ground of 'friendly neutrality' and 'non-intervention'. Did Wu then turn to private foreign merchants for this supply? And did he get it? The answer is affirmative, but he had little success.

Wu's principal supply of foreign arms came from Italian sources. This refers to part of a consignment of 30,000 cases of unsold arms and ammunition imported as 'military store' on board the Italian vessel *Nippon* in 1919. The consignment was distributed to Peking, Tientsin and Shanhaikwan. Wu made repeated attempts to purchase the Tientsin and Shanhaikwan portions. Finally, in November 1921, he was successful in obtaining 20,000 rifles, together with 200 rounds of ammunition for each rifle from the Italian military depot at Shanhaikwan.⁸²

In 1926, Wu once more sought Italian help in obtaining some pistols. These arms were smuggled in pieces hidden in food packages by a German firm Leiter & Company from Belgium. They arrived at Tsingtao and were gathered by an Italian agent who assembled the material in a factory at Peking. After bribing a Chinese official, the Italian agent had the assembled material shipped by railroad to Wu in Hankow.⁸³

Wu did try to procure arms and ammunition from private American merchants. In May 1922, during his visit to Schurman, the American Minister in Peking, the Japanese Counsellor stated that he was informed that 45,000 old rifles and 70,000 rounds of ammunition sold by the American government when in Siberia were to be sent to Shanghai for

Wu P'ei-fu. He added that an American in Tientsin might be involved in the transaction. Schurman later discovered that the arms referred to might have been part of a shipment of 268,000 rifles sent by the United States government in 1919 to Vladivostok which ultimately reached the hands of the Kolchak.⁸⁴ An American named Murphy, formerly with the American Red Cross in Siberia and connected with some company in Tientsin, might be the one trying to sell these arms lying in Vladivostok. Since it was in Vladivostok, Schurman concluded that the matter was outside the President's embargo proclamation. And on 15 June 1922, the American Legation in Peking issued a memorandum of denial, stating that the results of an investigation indicated that the report of arms and ammunition having been sent to Shanghai for Wu was without foundation.⁸⁵

The James Slevin case reported by Ts'ai Ho-sen, concerned six Curtis airplanes made in the United States which were seized on 3 December 1922 in the Hankow harbour by Admiral W.W. Phelps, Commander of the Yangtze Patrol Force, United States Asiatic Fleet. James Slevin, an American citizen, was subsequently charged with the unlawful importation of fourteen cases of airplanes and fittings valued at Mex\$86,000, destined for Wu P'ei-fu. The American naval authority found that the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank was in some way involved and that junks were hired by a British firm. The seizure brought about a strong protest from Hsiao Yao-nan, Wu's subordinate, who claimed that these planes were the property of the Wuchang government and had been purchased for non-military purposes. Ch'en Chieh, the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs at Hankow, wrote to Heintzleman, the American Consul-General at Hankow on 18 December 1922, affirming that the aeroplanes and their accessories were ordered by the Aeronautic Department from the Curtis Aeroplanes and Motor Corporation and were to be used for 'commercial aviation' between Peking and Hankow. Both the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the American authority insisted that any commercial planes imported would be used for military purposes and would promote domestic disturbances. Slevin was brought to trial but acquitted, and his planes were released on the ground that they were for 'commercial use'.⁸⁶

The *Talbot* case cited by Ch'en Tu-hsiu refers to the seizure by the Chinese Maritime Customs at Shanghai in July 1924 of contraband arms, consisting of several thousand rifles and revolvers and about 100,000 rounds of ammunition hidden away beneath the poop deck of the schooner *W.H. Talbot*. The destination of the arms was unknown, though the probability was they were for one of the Chihli militarists.⁸⁷

The case most frequently cited by Chinese communist historians refers to a consignment of 10,000 rifles, 10 million rounds of rifle ammunition, 1,500 revolvers, 200,000 rounds of revolver ammunition and 250 machine guns which was allegedly ordered by Wu P'ei-fu. It was the Japanese who first brought the case to the notice of the American officials. In a visit to the American Legation, Hochiro Arita, the First Secretary of the Japanese Legation, showed Mr Bell and Mr Peck proof of a deal concluded between Wu and an American company. The permit of importation No. 1249 was supposed to be sealed by Wu and the Minister of War and issued by the Ministry under the instruction from the President of China on 20 April 1924.

In a subsequent telephone conversation between Mr Peck, the Chinese secretary of the American Legation, and General Chin Shao-tseng, the Vice-Minister of War, the General denied the issue of such a permit. On close examination of the copy of the deal, the American official found that the word indicating 'American' bore a close resemblance to the word 'Italian.'

On 21 August 1924, Edward Bell, the Chargé d'Affaires of the American Legation, was able to obtain from Chin Shao-tseng a statement saying that the Ministry had not issued a permit and that the Superintendent of Customs at Tientsin had neither confiscated an American arms shipment nor had any information with regard to such an affair. Chin's statement was later forwarded by Bell to Yoshizawa. J.G. Schurman then concluded that the whole incident was an unfounded rumour.⁸⁸

Just before the Second Chihli-Fengtien War, Wu placed an order for 400 cases of cartridges and 85 cases of pistols through a naturalized American citizen Henry W. Krippendorff. The money for these arms was advanced by the Deutsch Asiatic Bank in Tientsin and the material was imported on a German steamer *Rickmers*. The contract of sale was drawn up by Li Ching-lin, then Governor of Chihli and Wu's subordinate, and was duly registered at the Ministry of War in Peking. When the cargo finally arrived in mid-1925, Wu had already fallen from power. Krippendorff intended to sell them to other militarists but was unable to obtain a permit for his cargo from the new Peking government. The arms were therefore undeclared upon entry and were seized by the Shanghai Customs.⁸⁹

Wu also sought foreign assistance in various technical projects. The machinery of the Yu Foong cotton mill at Chengchow was manufactured in America by the Laco-Lowell Works and the International General Electric Company. It was supplied and installed

under the direction of Anderson, Meyer & Company. When the mill was officially opened on 12 June 1920, Wu and his staff came to inspect it.⁹⁰ Wu purchased from a foreign firm in Hankow 30 motor trucks and 5,000 cases of gasoline for military use.⁹¹ In early 1924, he sent his commissariat, Liu Tzu-ching to Hankow to negotiate a Y\$10 million loan with an American firm for the purpose of constructing motor roads in the Shantung, Chihli and Honan provinces.⁹²

When Colonel Orpen-Palmer, the Military Attaché of the British Legation in Peking, visited Wu on 31 March 1923, he found traces of American influence in Loyang. Wu had constructed a bridge over the Lo River with the American Red Cross Relief Fund. He told Orpen-Palmer that he was interested in modern agriculture and had imported several modern machines and implements from America. On 25 March 1922 *The Weekly Review* reported two foreign experts in Wu's service inspecting arsenals at Techow and Kunghsien, and looking into the possibility of manufacturing aeroplanes in the Hanyang arsenal.⁹³ The British officer asked Wu about that matter. Wu confirmed that there was American machinery in the Kunghsien arsenal but refused to show it. The British Military Attaché also reported that Mr C.J. Carroll, an American chief engineer of the Hankow-Szechuan railway, was there during his visit.⁹⁴

Relations with the Foreign Press

Cultivating the press

Wu knew very well that the foreign press could be a significant means of manipulating foreign opinion. Foreign correspondents could, if they wanted to, help transmit his denunciations and publicize his policies. Favourable comments from the press could have tremendous effect not only on foreign nationals but on foreign government officials.

Therefore, throughout his entire career, Wu never ceased to cultivate the press, and, at the same time, made use of it as an instrument of propaganda. In order to gain the widest press coverage, Wu frequently gave addresses before gatherings of foreign correspondents and sent out circular telegrams, knowing they would appear first in the Chinese press and later in English papers. He also frequently gave interviews to newspapermen. During the course of these interviews, he read and dealt with despatches, explaining that this was necessary in order to get

through his work. In doing this, Wu hoped to impress his foreign friends that he was a hard-working official, trying to run the country.⁹⁵

In order to demonstrate his skill as a military commander Wu invited the pressmen as observers to visit the battlefield. Every courtesy was extended to them. They were given the special privilege of riding on the same train with him. Or if that was impossible, he provided special means of transport to their destination. Sometimes he even gave them permission to use his rail cars as living quarters.

But it takes a relatively large bureaucratic machine to handle such a task. Wu therefore created a Political Administrative Department to manage the foreign affairs. The Foreign Relations Section of the Department consisted of men of varied skills and visions. Many of the staffs were trained in the West. Apart from Pai Chien-wu, who took charge of the Department as a whole, the Foreign Section had two important figures, Hsieh Han-yueh and Li Hsin-ling. Hsieh, a graduate of St John's University in Shanghai, was a returned student from the United States. Now, at the age of twenty-five, he was recommended by Wellington Koo, the Foreign Minister, to be the head of the Foreign Relations Section. Li, also a returned student from the United States, acted as Hsieh's assistant. Together with Lu Han, a secretary, they formed an efficient team, serving Wu as interpreter, negotiating with foreign diplomats and sending English despatches to foreign press and governments. In addition, the Foreign Relations Section was responsible for the translation of foreign news. Everyday the staffs screened all foreign newspapers, summarized important news and briefed their superior on all significant events and comments.⁹⁶

For the purpose of reaching the foreign press, Wu invited a number of foreign journalists to be his 'advisers'. Among them were O.M. Green and H.E. Morris, the director and the editor of the *North China Daily News*, a British newspaper in Shanghai. Another 'adviser' was Rodney Gilbert, an American, a Peking correspondent for the same paper and a very good friend of Pai Chien-wu. Hollington Tong, a Chinese assistant editor of the *Milliard Review* (later renamed *China Weekly Review*), an American weekly paper in Shanghai, and an editor of the *Peking Daily News*, was invited to be the Secretary of the Ministry of Communications, serving under Kao En-hung, the Minister and a protégé of Wu P'ei-fu. Above all, there was Josef Washington Hall, an American, unofficially engaged as an adviser to Wu and also to Kao.⁹⁷ Hall was the American representative of the *North China Star*, an American paper at Tientsin, an editor of the *Peking Leader*, and the assistant manager of the Chung Mei News Agency: he also wrote

extensively for the *Milliard Review*, an American registered weekly, for the *China Press*, a British oriented paper in Shanghai, for the *Peking and Tientsin Times*, a British paper in Tientsin and for the *Far Eastern Review*, another American paper in Shanghai.

Among these advisers, Josef W. Hall (alias Upton Close) stood out as the most adventurous character of all. He first began working as a press-agent for Wu in the Chihli-Anfu War. During the war, he took over the *Peking Leader* and a Chinese paper, *Yi Shih Pao*, which he registered as an American company to give it American protection. He then used these papers to support Wu P'ei-fu publicly. His papers, as he himself put it, were riding on the crest of victory and kept pace with Wu's drive against his enemies.⁹⁸

At the end of the war, he interviewed Wu at Changhsintien, where the Chihli armies had camped. They became friends instantly and began to exchange favours. Wu gave him horses to go into town to gather news about Chang Tso-lin's 3rd Army and Hall promised to let Wu know what he discovered. Thereafter Wu received whatever military information Hall obtained as a press agent. For instance Hall secretly informed Wu that Chang Tso-lin had made a pact with the Shensi militarist in order to threaten his rear.⁹⁹ In return Hall received the privilege from Wu of transmitting Wu's declarations and pronouncements to the foreign press. For example, he could use the military wires to transfer despatches to the commercial telegraphs.

During the First Chihli-Fentien War, Hall served as Wu's adviser. From then on, he became more or less an official in the Chihli establishment, running many errands for the Chihli leader. For example, Wu sent him as an advisory member in a commission which was to negotiate with President Hsü Shih-ch'ang. During the pursuit of the Fengtien army, when Wu encountered difficulties with the Japanese authorities, who insisted upon the letter of the Boxer Protocol¹⁰⁰ and ordered the removal of Wu's military headquarters from Tientsin, it was Hall who helped out his friend. He advised Wu to bypass the agreement by making himself the Civil Governor of Chihli and transforming his army into a civilian force. Simultaneously, he issued notes to all foreign consuls-general protesting the discriminatory treatment of Wu by the Allied Powers, arguing that they had allowed Chang Tso-lin to operate in that area in the first place. He even went to the American consulate to obtain help from Stuart J. Fuller, the Consul-General at Tientsin. As a result of these diplomatic manoeuvres, Wu was finally allowed to remain at Tientsin to direct his campaign.

After the war, relations between the two became a little strained. Hall published an article in the *China Press* entitled 'On to Tokyo, Says Wu P'ei-fu', which resulted in some trouble between Wu and the Japanese government. Despite this Hall remained a close associate of Wu's subordinates. He participated in the discussion of the 'reconstructed government'. He persuaded Wu to recall Li Yüan-hung and was sent to Tientsin to sound out the ex-President on the matter. He moved back and forth among Ts'ao K'un, Wu, and Li, trying to bring about an agreement. Finally he became one of Wu's delegates to Tientsin whose purpose was to invite Li to resume his post. Moreover, when the new government was formed in Peking, Hall assumed the task of propagating Wu's financial programme.¹⁰¹

Other foreign newsmen who gave Wu a very favourable coverage in the news during this time included: David Fraser, a British correspondent of *The Times* and the *British Chamber of Commerce Journal*; Nathaniel Peffer of Columbia University, an American 'stringer' for the *New York Tribune* and editor of the *China Press*; Peter S. Jowett, Hankow correspondent of the *China Weekly Review* and Chinese editor of the *Independent Herald* (later renamed *Hankow Herald*), an American newspaper in Hankow; and Charles Daily of the *China Weekly Review*. Some well-known figures also wrote favourably about Wu. For example, T.R. Jerigan, an American lawyer representing the owner of the *China Press*, former United States Consul-General at Shanghai and representative of the Hague Tribunal in China; W.W. Willoughby, Professor of Political Science at John Hopkins University and former legal adviser to the Chinese government and John Dewey, Professor of Columbia University, educator and philosopher.¹⁰²

Few of these press supporters of Wu, most of whom were American, had close ties with him; others were merely distant sympathizers. However they did represent a broad cross section of foreign opinion in China. Influenced by the American domestic situation and the ideal of progressivism, these journalists, together with the American business community in Shanghai, encouraged reformism in China, which they believed would help strengthen the country. Their ideal China was a strong China. Many were convinced that their efforts were being blocked by the Japanese who had a great interest and strong control in China. Therefore they favoured strong American government support against the discrimination of American products in the country. However the American government was unwilling to act and preferred a strict policy of non-intervention. The other alternative to them,

which was shared by their British friends, was to support a strong man of the Yüan Shih-k'ai type, a progressive reformer, who could bring peace and stability to the Chinese nation.

In the early 1920s, they placed their hopes in Wu P'ei-fu, whom they believed to be a progressive and moderate man, perhaps their ideal strong man. The principle of democracy and constitutionalism expounded by Wu, if not in action at least in utterance, was close to the principle of progressivism they shared. This is why the core group, or the 'Chinified American Group,' as they were called, continued to support Wu publicly. George Benson Rea, the American publisher of the *Far Eastern Review*, had noted in June 1923 that this Chinified American Group had 'stood solidly behind the Peking military oligarchy and moved heaven and earth through propaganda to oust the Anfu party and eliminate Chang Tso-lin's influence in the government in order to boost the cause of Wu P'ei-fu, its chosen instrument to restore law, order and unity in China. Wu P'ei-fu was painted in glowing colours as the "Hope of China"'¹⁰³

Press comments on Wu P'ei-fu

A survey of the Western press in China, in particular the three leading British papers, the *Peking and Tientsin Times* (and its weekly edition *China Illustrated Review*) in Tientsin, the *North China Daily News* (and its weekly edition *North China Herald*), the *British Chamber of Commerce Journal* in Shanghai, and two principal American papers, the *China Weekly Review* (formerly known as *Milliard's Review* and the *Weekly Review of the Far East*) and the *Far Eastern Review*, both in Shanghai, may serve to illustrate the way Western journalists lionized Wu in the 1920s.

Their support began in 1920 when Wu emerged the victor of the Chihli-Anfu War. Suddenly the Western press showered him with all kinds of honours. Even before the end of the war, Rodney Gilbert made this remark about Wu in the *North China Daily News*:

Everyone believes in Wu P'ei-fu. His sincerity and courage are unquestioned ... If a handful of officials of Wu P'ei-fu's type could control things in Peking for a time, which is too much to hope, some reforms could be more radically effected The defeat of the Anfu clique is not the panacea for all of China's ills, it simply makes room for something better.¹⁰⁴

In contrast, Josef W. Hall published an article in the *Milliard's Review*,

discrediting the Anfu government as a combination of 'petty demagogues, egoistic politicians and ephemeral tyrant'. Criticizing the Anfuites as Japanese puppets, Hall wrote, 'Behind the scene as usual are the Japanese plotters of Welt-politics, jerking their dummies about by the strings of cupidity, vanity or fear'.¹⁰⁵

Wu's proposal for a National Peoples' Convention thrust him into the limelight as the leader of a popular movement, who, according to Rodney Gilbert, was 'fighting to do away with China's bogus militarism and inaugurating a new era in which democracy would be given a fair trial'.¹⁰⁶ T.R. Jerigan even traced Wu's representative government to British and American origins. General Wu, he observed, 'not only has before him the example of the English people but the Americans also, who founded and organized their government on the very principle which bases the plan he advocates'.¹⁰⁷

In an interview, Chang Tso-lin slighted Wu as 'only a chief of a division'. A strong critical response from the *Milliard's Review* followed immediately. The editor defended Wu and insisted that the Chihli militarist was the real soul of the present movement. He said that Wu had received high praise from the people and from foreigners and that the foreign press considered him to be the only bright spot on the dark horizon in China. Therefore, far from being 'only a chief of a division', Wu was the dominating figure not only in the north but throughout China.¹⁰⁸

However, it was Hollington Tong, the assistant editor of the *Milliard's Review*, who raised Wu to the highest position of esteem. In an article entitled, 'General Wu P'ei-fu, China's National Hero,' Tong named Wu 'the man of the hour ... he has emerged triumphantly and is now recognized as China's national hero, a fearless champion of popular rights'. Tong gave Wu all the attributes that one could bestow upon any notable figure. Wu's piercing eyes indicated intelligence and determination. He was modest. His personal courage was well-known to his men. His poverty was due to his honesty and his unselfishness begot the loyalty of his soldiers. Although this popular hero was a military man, he was also a scholar and he did not like publicity or flattery. In short, Tong concluded that Wu was an exemplary figure for all China.¹⁰⁹

Wu was equally well-received in foreign academic and commercial circles. In December 1920, John Dewey called the readers of the *New Republic*

to note down the name of one of the leaders on the victorious side, the only one whose troops did any particular fighting, and that against

great odds in numbers. The name is Wu P'ei-fu. He, at least, has not fought for the Chihli faction against the Anhwei faction. He has proclaimed from the first that he was fighting to rid the country of military control of civil government, and against traitors who would sell their country to foreigners.¹¹⁰

David Fraser, writing for an audience of engineers and financiers in the *British Chamber of Commerce Journal*, had this to say about Wu.

The pro-Japanese party is down and out because a national hero has appeared in the person of Wu P'ei-fu, who has had the mind to think, the energy to act and the wit to accomplish and the end for which he set forth. He may not be a politician or a statesman, but he is evidently a man of character, and he has now gained the confidence of the country. China will look to him to see that a new beginning is made on decent lines In Wu P'ei-fu, all the hopes of the nation now centered.¹¹¹

As Wu's popularity fluctuated in 1921, and as Chinese opinion came to regard him as merely another militarist, the *Peking and Tientsin Times* assured its readers in May: 'One thing is certain, and that is that a challenge to the Super-Tuchuns from Wu P'ei-fu would evoke enthusiastic support throughout the country. Rightly or wrongly, he is credited with honesty of purpose, indifferent to personal ambition and a sincere desire for the welfare of his country'.¹¹²

Despite Wu's expansion into Hupeh and the suspicion that he was acting out of self-interest, the *Peking and Tientsin Times* was still confident that 'there are many people who believed that General Wu is himself no admirer of the Super-Tuchun system'.¹¹³ Even Wu's seizure of the telegraph, posts, customs and salt revenue was brushed aside as a 'blunder', the 'slightest false step'. The same paper helped to justify Wu's illegal action:

Upon General Wu P'ei-fu are concentrated the high hopes and reluctant fears of all, Chinese and foreigners, who really wish this country well And if sometimes we have been impelled to hearken to a murmur of sudden and fleeting scepticism, we have disdained it as the unworthy product of the disillusionment that has hitherto seemed quickly to attend every hope of progress to better things in China ... In the endeavour to achieve the aims which he has avowedly set before him he must use what weapons are at hand, crude as they may be ... he should establish and firmly consolidate his own power in the Yangtze region But it is the final aim that really matters.¹¹⁴

The same newspaper, on the other hand, charged Chang Tso-lin's seizure of the salt revenue in Manchuria as 'from every point of view indefensible ... It means defiance of the Peking government It also means defiance of the foreign legation'.¹¹⁵

While Wu P'ei-fu became their 'saviour of the country' in the north, Ch'en Chiung-ming was chosen as their hero in the south. The Western press strongly advocated a Wu-Ch'en alliance thereby excluding Sun Yat-sen. For instance, in the August editorial, the *Weekly Review of the Far East* named Wu P'ei-fu, Feng Yü-hsiang and Ch'en Chiung-ming as the 'seemingly more patriotic and public-spirited' military men and 'apparently the hope of China'.¹¹⁶ The *Peking and Tientsin Times* also joined in with a eulogy: 'General Ch'en, like General Wu is a man of good reputation among foreigners and Chinese If an agreement could be reached between them providing for the reunion of the nation and the restoration of constitutional government the rivalry between the illegally elected Presidents of Peking and Canton would become a matter of minor importance'.¹¹⁷

In August 1921, the *Peking and Tientsin Times* stated two requisites for the prompt solution of China's problems: (1) a leader who had the confidence of his country, meaning Wu P'ei-fu, and (2) the elimination from politics of Sun Yat-sen. It went on to say that Sun 'has been so thoroughly discredited throughout the rest of the country that there can be no hope of reunion while his pretensions to the presidency are maintained'.¹¹⁸ In October 1921, the *Far Eastern Review* said that if the ideals of a truly democratic government, which Wu was said to possess, were not mythical then Wu deserved as much support as Sun from those who would like to see a settled China.¹¹⁹

As the Chihli-Fengtien conflict was approaching in Spring 1922, leading Western commentators repeatedly vilified Chang Tso-lin as the 'arch militarist' and the 'reactionary' of north China. The *Far Eastern Review* castigated him as a 'veritable dictator, asserting his will in all affairs of state and wielding such power as made of the government a mere puppet show'. Rodney Gilbert and Nathaniel Peffer reported that Chang was allegedly involved in a plan to restore the monarchy under his protection in Mongolia and Manchuria with Japanese help. Josef Hall accused him of having amassed a considerable fortune, thus turning himself into a financier. He predicted that Chang was doomed. 'If Wu P'ei-fu falls before Chang Tso-lin', then Hall noted, 'Chang, in spite of his armies and his banks, will fall before the people and far more promptly than did Yüan Shih-k'ai'.¹²⁰

The Western press, on the other hand, continued to support Wu.

Peffer called him 'a unique figure. He is unique among the men of his class. First he is not ignorant ... He is also unique, or almost unique, in that he is honest He is a man of advanced ideas'. Hollington Tong told his readers that Wu had been in the limelight for a year and a half, and would be the coming leader of China, the one recognized by the masses.¹²¹

Wu's victory over the Manchurian militarist was an occasion for more praise. After denouncing Chang Tso-lin as 'an aggrandized brigand chief' and 'Tuan ch'i-jui's successor as Japan's protégé', and slighting Sun Yat-sen and his 'absurd parliament and his hotchpotch constitution', Peffer complimented Wu in the *Asia*: 'Wu is a capable military man and a good strategist Wu is no superman. He will not make peace and prosperity overnight or work any other miracles. But I believe him to be the best man that has forged his way to the top in China since the establishment of the Republic, and I consider his victory in the war just concluded to be altogether to China's advantage'.¹²² In an article in July, Hall reported that Wu had pledged full co-operation in the abolition of the tuchunate. However, Hall suggested that the break up of the tuchün armies could only be attended by a gathering of well-disciplined forces under the control of two or three outstanding military leaders such as Wu P'ei-fu, Feng Yü-hsiang and Ch'en Chiung-ming.¹²³ Maintaining that the First Chihli-Fengtien War was a 'glorious victory', Hall listed for his readers what they had gained in this war: under Wu's auspices, the corrupt Communications clique had been eradicated; constitutional parliament was about to be convened; militarism in politics had received another definite setback; Japanese influence on Chinese internal politics had been eliminated; and, inspired by Wu, good will existed among and between disorganized provinces and extended to outside friends of China.¹²⁴

The press launched a drive to help Wu procure loans from the International Banking Consortium. Hall first outlined Wu's financial programme in the *Far Eastern Review* in June.¹²⁵ David Fraser added his support in *The Times*. He wrote:

Wu P'ei-fu in the past has done great work on an absolute minimum of funds and he can do a great deal more with very little money. That little must be forth coming, and as Peking is certainly impoverished to the last degree some foreign assistance in this direction might be given with advantage with a strong personality like Wu P'ei-fu behind the scenes there is every reason to hope that factionness will be overruled and a government established which will set about its task with vigour and earnestness'.¹²⁶

The result was not as rosy as they expected. American financiers were unwilling to come to Wu's aid. Writing in the *Far Eastern Review*, George Bronson Rea told them to face the fact that Peking had lost confidence in its own bankers and investors and Wu, although looked upon as the 'saviour of China' by foreigners, had derived his power from pocketing state revenues.¹²⁷ One critic even pointed out that Wu's plan was a game of 'playing Uncle Sam for a sucker'. He argued that American business conducted with the Chinese government had not been successful and that the Peking-Hankow railway owed American companies money in excess of \$US4.5 million for locomotives, cars and equipment.¹²⁸

When the 'Able Men Cabinet' fell in November 1922, all the high hopes for Wu were dashed. By then, the Chinese nation had been beset with factional rivalry between the Loyang and Tientsin-Paoting cliques. Faith in Wu was greatly shaken. *The Times* reported that Wu had 'completely failed as a statesman Officialdom is as corrupt as ever, the treasury is empty'.¹²⁹ Rodney Gilbert changed his mind and stated that Wu's aim was no longer that of a representative government, but a reunion of the nation by eliminating his rivals.¹³⁰ The *Peking and Tientsin Times* ridiculed the Peking regime as 'a dictatorship by Ts'ao K'un'.¹³¹ David Fraser called the Peking cabinet 'the unfortunate elements of the party'. In disgust, he said 'the parliament daily declines in public estimation. The whole situation is so rotten and meaningless as to be not worth discussion'.¹³² The *Far Eastern Review*, in accord with Sun Yat-sen, asserted that the first step towards unification was the withdrawal of foreign recognition and support to the 'puppets of Wu P'ai-fu'.¹³³

Ts'ao K'un's corrupt October election was strongly condemned in the Western press. The Y\$4.5 million were, according to David Fraser, 'criminally wasted in pure bribery and corruption'.¹³⁴ The new president and his parliament failed to gain the respect of foreigners from the very beginning. The *Peking and Tientsin Times* noted: 'It is indeed an insult to the Chinese nation to suggest that it can even be unified under a President, who owes his position to shameless bribery and a parliament which is a by word for corruption and ineptitude'.¹³⁵

Despite this let-down by Wu, some newsmen still clung to him as 'the only leader who can be relied upon to resist Japanese influence'.¹³⁶ Although Charles Daily realised that chaotic Peking was like an 'addled egg', he nonetheless spoke of Ts'ao K'un as 'an honest man, as men go in China', but 'an easy sort and follows the lines of least resistance'. To him, Wu P'ai-fu, no longer the saviour now because 'the saviour of

China probably has not even been born', still remained 'the ablest military man in China, albeit the poorest politician'.¹³⁷ In December 1923, David Fraser also wrote: 'Disappointing as Wu P'ei-fu has proved in many respects, he remains the hope of his party, for if his actions in many instances have been misguided he is still credited with sincerity and patriotism'.¹³⁸

However, things got worse as time passed. Foreigners practically lost faith in the one-time 'Hope of China'. 'Today Wu P'ei-fu', said the *Peking and Tientsin Times* in May 1924, 'is no longer regarded by more than an insignificant fraction of his fellow-countrymen as a potential saviour; he is classed with other militarists as a public nuisance'. What annoyed them most was Wu's absolute refusal to intervene in Peking politics; on the other hand, he was 'obsessed with the idea that he can achieve the unification of the country by force, in defiance of public opinion'.¹³⁹ Wu's determination to unite the country was futile, they insisted. Reunification, one writer explained, entailed subordination of provinces to the central authority. Since the Peking government was 'harassed daily by a horde of corrupt and self-seeking politicians, who now expect substantial bribes for every important vote on national or foreign issue' how could they fulfill their responsibility, he asked. 'And Wu P'ei-fu, or anyone else who attempts the task of reunification by force is entering upon a losing battle, unless the nucleus of an efficient administration can first be created'.¹⁴⁰

The press was immensely disillusioned when Wu was finally defeated in the autumn of 1924. Yet it was impossible for them not to be sympathetic. On 8 November the *North China Herald* kindly remarked: 'he [Wu] has borne himself throughout as a gallant man, a terrific worker, straightforward and sincere'.¹⁴¹ Two weeks later the same paper went on to say

His title as the ever-victorious general has gone, his shield as an army commander is tarnished, but his reputation as a soldier without equal in China remains, and it is the belief of foreigners who have been impressed by his military attributes that before long we shall hear of him rallying his scattered force and coming north with a new army again to put the issue before Chang Tso-lin and Tuan Ch'i-jui.¹⁴²

Nathaniel Peffer had a different opinion. He blamed Wu for letting Ts'ao K'un's corrupt election take place under his sway, which showed that he was no different from any other military mandarin. Though admitting that Wu was not as bad as the pro-Japanese clique he had driven from Peking, Peffer seriously doubted whether Wu could have

accomplished much, had he been successful in the war against Chang Tso-lin.¹⁴³ Charles Daily now thought that as a politician, Wu had been an utter failure from the start, for he was never able to get the co-operation of others that was so necessary for his success. But Daily was convinced that Wu would come back once more, and certainly if he did not, then China would never be united again.¹⁴⁴

Although Wu did make a political comeback in late 1925 as the chief of the Anti-Bandits' Allied Army, he had, by that time, completely lost his magic over foreign reporters. Some still admired him as an individual and as a soldier, but most foreign correspondents came to the conclusion that he was an incompetent administrator, unlikely to bring peace and order back to the nation. Rodney Gilbert's comment on 17 July 1926 might reflect their attitude: 'As a soldier he is a phenomenon in China and as a man he is in many ways unique among his fellow-countrymen, but we can no longer believe that he can conquer China nor that it would do any particular good if he did.'¹⁴⁵ J.B. Powell reported in the *China Weekly Review*:

I have had many foreigners, especially Britishers, tell me that Wu P'ei-fu is one of the greatest military tacticians of all times and Rodney Gilbert, who has known Wu for many years calls him China's most courageous soldier ... One man, a foreigner, told me that Wu was surrounded by the worst gang of political rogues to be found in China Another foreigner, connected with a consulate, declared that Wu was little better than any of the other militarists.¹⁴⁶

Neither Wu's anti-Red campaign nor his alliance with Chang Tso-lin impressed the foreign press. 'No one can seriously expect', said the *Peking and Tientsin Times*, 'after previous experience of Wu P'ei-fu's political incapacity and the ruthless methods of Chang Tso-lin's subordinates, that their victory would result in any permanent improvement in the government of the country. There really seems to be nothing to choose between the rival military factions so far as Chinese or foreign interest are concerned'.¹⁴⁷ But, according to the *British Chamber of Commerce Journal*, 'Marshal Wu P'ei-fu, is different from the others in that he was trained as a literary man His literary qualifications and deep study of Chinese military strategy helped him. He has arrived at the eminent position he holds now through the army, yet his literary training has given him an outlook on public affairs which his confederates lack'.¹⁴⁸ So at best, Wu P'ei-fu, though different from other generals, remained in the eyes of the foreign press merely a literary man and a skilful militarist.

Relations with the Missionaries

Wu had very cordial relations with foreign missionaries. He always extended to them every possible courtesy. In early 1923 he ordered his subordinates to take a census of all foreign inhabitants and mission stations in Chengchow, Honanfu and Hankow, for the purpose of detailing special guards for their protection.¹⁴⁹ He held conferences with missionary leaders at Honanfu and discussed his policies with them.¹⁵⁰ On one occasion, he was the guest of honour at one of their receptions.¹⁵¹ For many years, he and Feng Yü-hsiang were supporters of a number of local mission stations and also of the National Committee of the YMCA.¹⁵² It was also reported that in order to show his concern for Christians, he would never enter a battle without a prayer.¹⁵³

Wu was particularly helpful when missionaries and members of their families were taken captives by brigands in Honan and Hupeh provinces. In the latter part of 1923, the Shantung-Chihli-Honan-Hupeh region was overrun by bandits, who raided missionary headquarters and took prisoners. The most famous case was the Lincheng Incident of 6 May 1923, when the *Blue Express* of the Tientsin-Pukow railway was held up by a group of bandits and a group of foreigners was taken captive. In Honan, most of the brigands were ex-soldiers and outlaws who found themselves without a job and were drifting about the province. On 23 September 1923, a group of bandits raided the home of members of the China Inland Mission in the Sihwa district. Misses Darroch and Sharp of the Mission were dragged from their home and taken prisoners. They were finally released on 28 October. Once freed, they travelled to Lungmen and were met by Wu who personally escorted them in his automobile to the mission station. Shortly afterwards, Wu invited them to partake in a feast at his camp.¹⁵⁴

On another occasion, Lao Yang-jen, a notorious bandit chief, attacked Tsao yang in northwest Hupeh on 27 December 1923. Two missionaries, Professor and Mrs Bernard Attoff and members of the Lutheran Brothers Mission were badly wounded. During that raid, Mrs Juline R. Kilan, an American, was kidnapped. Professor Attoff later died and Mrs Kilan was still missing. The bandit stated that Mrs Kilan would not be released until they were reinstated as a regular provincial army as they had formerly been under the command of General Pao Te-chuan of the Hupeh 1st Mixed Brigade. At first Wu offered Y\$10,000 reward for the release of Mrs Kilan. But it was not until the middle of January 1924 that Mrs Kilan was finally released by Honan government troops.

Afterwards Wu immediately dismissed General Pao on the charge of having aided the bandits.¹⁵⁵

On the whole, foreign missionaries were greatly impressed by Wu, at least for the first few years in the 1920s. The *China Christian Advocate* noted in 1920:

At last China has a 'Man of the Hour' ... At least one writer has already gone to the length of comparing the new popular hero with George Washington Wu P'ei-fu had a much better record than most Chinese generals. For one thing, he has been well educated Wu P'ei-fu cannot be ignored he seems bound to become the central figure in China within a few years. If he wins it seems likely that China will find, in the little man who looks more like a scholar than a fire-eater, a man strong enough to give the country a chance to set up for itself a real government of, by and for the people.¹⁵⁶

Like the press, missionaries excused Wu for his seizure of receipts from the railway and salt earnings. They believed that he was actuated by proper motives and had an earnest desire to help his country.¹⁵⁷ Some of them were admirers of Wu and Feng Yü-hsiang. In a letter to the YMCA in Shanghai, G.A. Fitch, the Association's General Secretary wrote: 'it is significant that the only two generals that are universally trusted and admired in China are General Wu, the hero of the present situation and General Feng Yü-hsiang, the man who put down the last monarchist attempt - both loyal Christians'.¹⁵⁸ C.H. McCloy, the executive of the National Committee of the YMCA of China, pointed out in the annual report in 1921: 'We know that the military leaders who at present in the north of China show most political promise, viz. Wu P'ei-fu and Feng Yü-hsiang, are very favourable to the Association'.¹⁵⁹ Robert W. Clark, the General Secretary of the Paotingfu YMCA, who occasionally acted as interpreter for Ts'ao K'un, thought that Wu was the most able of all the military men of the country.¹⁶⁰

O.R. Wold, President of the Lutheran Church Council, addressed the members at the third meeting on 25 November 1921 saying: 'The recent struggle when the province of Hunan surprised all by making a sudden attack upon Hupeh has enabled General Wu P'ei-fu to again become the central figure in China. His personality, his undoubted courage and ability as a military leader, his learning and power to inspire confidence among his followers cause him to be a man looked up to and feared by all who are struggling for leading positions'.¹⁶¹

Wu's success in the First Chihli-Fengtien War was said by L.E.

McLachlin of the YMCA to be 'an achievement second only in value and importance to the Great Revolution of 1911 and '12'.¹⁶² A.M. Gutlery, the General Secretary to the Foreign Department of the YMCA in Wuhan knew that Wu was very unpopular in that area, but nevertheless explained that 'It is probably because he is ruling with an iron hand, but we should still give him the benefit of the doubt because he is facing big odds among the other military leaders of China'.¹⁶³ As late as November 1924, the *Chinese Recorder*, a Christian periodical, still editorialized: 'We have been waiting for a strong man to bring China out of her difficulties. In Generals Feng Yü-hsiang and Wu P'ei-fu, we have two strong men. We trust that irrespective of the various parties involved there may come an alignment of the forces that will bring an honorable and lasting peace'.¹⁶⁴

Apparently out of compassion for all those people, Chinese and foreigners, who suffered constantly from the civil wars in China, foreign missionaries twice intervened and arranged a compromise between Wu and his military opponents. In June 1922 as the victorious Chihli troops were pursuing Manchurian forces towards Shanhaikuan, an important disruptive event occurred in Manchuria. The local money note dropped considerably in value. The British-American Tobacco Company, the British firm with the largest business interests in Manchuria, was reported to have lost \$1/2 million.¹⁶⁵ Thus the Fengtien clique desperately wanted peace in order to prevent a complete debacle.

On 26 May Chang had already sent his special delegate for foreign affairs to approach the American consul at Mukden to mediate between the disputed factions. But the American Consul was instructed by Schurman, the American Minister to Peking, to remain at his post because the mediation plan proposed by the delegate contravened the policy of the United States government.¹⁶⁶ However, British and American missionaries, in the interest of humanity, tried to mediate between the opposing armies. Mr Bunting, a British missionary in Kanchow, took a prominent part by endeavouring to negotiate for peace as the southern troops were attacking the city. In early June, Chang Hsueh-liang, the son of the Manchurian militarist, personally requested Dr Young, a British medical missionary and Mr J.E. Platt, an American in charge of the Mukden YMCA to go to Shanhaikuan to act as intermediaries in arranging a truce between Wu and Chang Tso-lin. On his way to the railway station, Dr Young called upon F.E. Wilkinson, the British Consul-General at Mukden and informed him of his mission. Wilkinson thought that he had no legal authority to forbid any British

subject from offering his service in a private capacity as a messenger between opposing armies. Furthermore, he realized that to prevent Young from mediating would antagonize the Fengtien group and produce the adverse effect, that of arousing anti-British feeling in Manchuria. He therefore did not forbid Young from going, but instead told him that he would be going on his own responsibility.

The first attempt by Young and Platt to bring the Chihli and Fengtien commanders together to discuss conditions for disengagement failed. But on 13 July, Chang Hsüeh-liang again begged them to make a trip to Shanhaikuan to arrange a meeting between the two sides. Bearing Chang's telegram of truce, Platt and Young proceeded to Chinwangtao to negotiate with the Chihli forces. Wang Cheng-pin, acting under Wu's orders, agreed to meet the Fengtien generals if a meeting could be arranged on a neutral warship. Young, thereupon, persuaded Captain Sulivan of *HMS Curlew* to lend his ship for negotiation. An armistice was finally signed between Wu and Chang on board the British man-of-war.¹⁶⁷

The British Foreign Office discovered what happened later. They criticized the missionaries for assuming the role of negotiators and also disapproved Wilkinson's inaction as a 'serious error in judgement'. To deal with this *fait accompli*, the British Legation at Peking issued a circular on 19 July 1922 to all consulates, stating that in future the guiding rule should be to abstain from all forms of mediation and only in very exceptional cases should advice and assistance be offered, and even then always to refer to the Legation before taking part in mediation.¹⁶⁸

On another occasion, in September 1926, as Chiang Kai-shek's southern forces were attacking Wuhan, a group of prominent clergymen, among them Bishop Roots and Bishop Gilman, tried to bring about a peaceful settlement between Wu and the invading forces. Several times they appealed to F.P. Lockhart, the American Consul at Hankow, to intercede with military officers to guarantee the lives of Chinese women and children and to provide facilities for the evacuation from Wuchang. But Lockhart refused to participate in any negotiations, adhering to the American policy of non-intervention. Failing to get his help, the missionaries took up the task themselves. However their attempts to bring about a settlement failed. Wuchang fell to the southern army on 10 September 1926.

In his report to Ferdinand Mayer, the American Chargé d'Affaires in Peking, Lockhart had aptly put it, 'They are assuming a great risk in attempting to bring about the settlement of an issue which is so purely

military. It is difficult to conceive how active participation in such negotiation would have anything but an unfavourable reaction in the end on the missionary cause'.¹⁶⁹

The material gathered in this chapter has clearly demonstrated that Wu indeed had sought favour with the British and Americans. During the years in power, he made every effort to cultivate foreigners and used every opportunity to procure loans and arms from foreign governments. Not only did he seek aid directly from foreign diplomats, he also approached the business community – the International Banking Consortium, the Jardine, Matheson and Company, the British-American Tobacco Company and the Standard Oil Company. Moreover, he tried to procure arms and ammunition from foreign citizens. Throughout his career, he placed great emphasis on cultivating the press, inviting foreign newspaper editors to be his advisers, knowing very well that the influence they had on foreign public opinion would be a useful asset in his bid for power.

The evidence also establishes that throughout the entire period, British and American governments had strictly adhered to a policy of 'friendly neutrality and non-intervention'. The British Foreign Office, nevertheless, was twice on the verge of giving partial support to Wu P'ei-fu. The first occasion happened when Wu turned to the International Banking Consortium for 'reconstruction loans', and the second time came at the end of the warlord period, when British interests were seriously threatened by the southern invasion. Yet in both instances, the British government calmly backed down and hesitantly adopted a wait-and-see policy. The American government not only maintained a strict neutrality toward contending Chinese factions in this period, but repeatedly frustrated the efforts of its nationals in intervening in Chinese politics.

Students of British and American imperialism, therefore, should look for their imperialism theory to the broad Western political, economic and moral expansion in China than rather to the narrow direct foreign financial and military support for individual militarists. To be sure, British and American governments, particularly their representatives in Peking and Hankow, were sympathetic towards Wu, and occasionally their utterances indicated this. Government officials such as Sir Reginald Stubbs, the Governor of Hong Kong, Mr H. Goffe, the British Consul-General at Hankow and Sir R. Macleay, the British Minister at Peking, were favourably inclined toward Wu and at times, favoured a course of intervention. But in practically all cases, they were effectively checked by their home governments.

On the other hand, one cannot deny that there were influential foreigners such as Paul Reinsch and Josef W. Hall who, acting in individual capacity, publicly and actively supported Wu. And despite efforts by the American government to halt the smuggling of arms into China, private merchants such as James Slevin, Murphy and Henry W. Krippendorff, covertly assisted Wu and other Chihli militarists to procure arms or their ingredients, often with the pretext of doing so for commercial use. More important were the statements given by the Western press which unceasingly lionized Wu and his Chihli associates. Their partial treatment of Wu should be regarded as nothing less than intervention in Chinese politics. The fact that so many British and American diplomats, journalists, businessmen and missionaries, who had close connections with their legations and consulates, indulged in unreserved criticism of Wu's opponents and in such patent exaltation of Wu himself, could not but produce a considerable impact on public opinion in China. Their utterances and conduct were often construed by the general public as indications of support for one party or faction in the country.

Although the Nationalist and Communist attacks on warlordism and imperialism as the twin evils are a result of Western support for Wu, these slogans were an integral product of the intense nationalism and xenophobia prevalent in China at the time. The slogan 'Down With Warlordism! Down With Imperialism!' is only another version of the well-known May Fourth nationalistic slogan of 'Internally, Throw Out the Traitors! Externally, Resist Tyrannical Foreign Powers!' (Nei ch'u kuo-tse! Wai chü ch'iang ch'uan). Only this time it has the Marxist-Leninist overtone. It is understandable that in the period of feverish nationalism following May Fourth, any actual or alleged deals between militarists and foreign powers would be politicized by opponents as evidence of traitorous actions on the part of the Chinese and expansionism on the part of foreigners.

Relations with the Soviet Union, the Chinese Communists and Sun Yat-sen

No militarist in the 1920s, no matter how strong he might be, could afford to ignore diplomatic gestures from any foreign nations if he wanted to be successful. In the early 1920s, Wu received diplomatic gestures from the Soviet Union. Since his emergence in the Chihli-Anfu War, Wu became an object of Russian interest. Russian emissaries visited and talked to him in Loyang. A friendship was built up between Wu and the Russian as well as the Chinese communists. Yet, the friendship reportedly came to an abrupt end in mid-1922.

On 19 August 1935, Harold Isaacs interviewed Maring (H. Sneevliet) in Amsterdam. Their conversation was subsequently published in *The China Quarterly* (No. 45 January/March 1971) as the 'Notes on A Conversation With H. Sneevliet: The Chinese Question, 1920–3.'¹ During that interview, Maring told Isaacs of the role he played in the decision of collaboration between Chinese communists and Sun Yat-sen. In connection with that decision, he also explained why the Russians changed their policy and ended their support for Wu P'ei-fu. He told Isaacs that it was the report he submitted to Karl Radek in the summer of 1922 while he was in Moscow that brought about that abrupt change. 'In any case,' he said, 'my report succeeded in breaking down the Chita orientation based on Wu P'ei-fu. That idea was finished.'²

Yet a close examination of materials in Allen Whiting's *Soviet Policies in China 1917–24* or Conrad Brandt's *Stalin's Failure in China* does not bear out Maring's statement.³ Russian commentators, for example, V. Vilensky, continued to publish favourable remarks on Wu far beyond the February Seventh Strike of 1923. Nor did Sun Yat-sen seem to be the

only favourite candidate for the Russians in the summer of 1922. Lydia Holubnychy also indicates that Sun did not enjoy the full support of the Comintern until shortly before the Sun-Joffe agreement of 26 January 1923.

We know that in August 1922, Sun Yat-sen was at his lowest ebb, while Wu P'ei-fu, being a recent victor, was at the pinnacle of his power. Why then should the Russians discard Wu, who had been one of their favourite candidates, and choose to align with Sun alone? Because of Sun's revolutionary tradition? Or because of Maring's recommendation, as he stated it to Isaacs? Was Sun the only candidate at the Hangchow plenum in August 1922? Why did Sun have tremendous difficulties negotiating with the Russians and complain about Joffe's courtship with Wu's government at Peking? What actually happened between Wu on the one hand and Sun Yat-sen, the Russians and the Chinese communists on the other, during this period between August 1922 and January 1923? When were the Russians actually finished with Wu?

Another interesting question was Wu's relations with Chinese labour. Wu is said to have developed friendly relations with the Peking-Hankow railway workers at the beginning and it only came to an abrupt end after he massacred them on 7 February 1923. Why did Wu allow Chinese communists to promote their labour movement in his base area? Why did he all of a sudden crush that movement? Is the massacre in any way connected with the Sun-Joffe agreement? After all the shootings happened only twelve days following the publication of the agreement. Did the massacre completely terminate his relations with the Russians and Chinese communists, as stated in many history texts?

One cannot obtain a clear account of the KMT-CCP collaboration and the subsequent events without going into the quadruple relations between Wu P'ei-fu, Sun Yat-sen, the Chinese communists and the Russians. Although some of these questions cannot be satisfactorily answered until Russian and Chinese archival materials are available to researchers, it is hoped that the findings in this chapter will generate sufficient interest for historians to probe deeper into the problems.

Initial Co-operation

Although in the July 1919 declaration, Karakhan had proposed to annul all treaties entered into formerly by the Tsarist government with China, it was not until 1920 that the Soviet government actually turned their attention to the East and, in particular, to the relations between the

Soviet regime and China. In early 1920, the Kolchak regime collapsed and the Siberian intervention came to an end. In April of that year, the Far Eastern Republic was established in Verkneudinsk (Ulan-Ude). The Second Comintern Congress and the First Congress of the Peoples of the East were held in the summer of 1920. In September 1920, at the Baku Congress, a united front tactic was adopted for the national revolutionary struggle in the Orient, in which the working class was urged to join forces with the national-democratic bourgeoisie. Therefore, following the outlined tactic, the Comintern established a branch bureau in Irkutsk in January 1921, which operated closely with the Far Eastern Republic at Chita, when that city became its capital in October, and began not only to send representatives to Peking but to look for a revolutionary bourgeoisie as an ally in China.⁴

On the other hand, by the summer of 1920, a new situation had arisen in China. The overthrow of Tuan Ch'i-jui and his pro-Japanese Anfu clique had set the stage for new relations between China and Russia. To the Russians Tuan represented Japan, working for the extension of Japanese influence in Manchuria, Mongolia and Russian Siberia. The Anfu government recognized the Tsarist Minister, N.A. Kudashev in Peking, supported General Horvath's control of the Chinese Eastern Railway and continued to pay regularly the Russian share of the Boxer Indemnity. Co-operating with the Japanese in the Siberia Intervention, Tuan turned over the Chinese forces in Siberia to the Japanese command. In Mongolia, he appointed his subordinate Hsü Shu-cheng, Northwest Commissioner of Mongolia. Hsü's duty was to break the Russian influence in Outer Mongolia and to consolidate that area under the Chinese control. Even when Karakhan proposed to annul all treaties entered into by the Tsarist government with China, Tuan and his Anfu government ignored the declarations.⁵

The new Peking government under Ts'ao K'un, Wu P'ai-fu and Chang Tso-lin, however, changed all that and initiated new policies towards the Soviet regime. On 1 August 1920, the new government formally suspended payment of the Russian portion of the Boxer Indemnity and in the following month denied recognition of the Tsarist Minister and Consul at Peking. As a first gesture of normalizing relations with the Russians, Peking in June 1920 dispatched three foreign representatives, John C. Ferguson, Lenox Simpson and George Padoux to meet with Vladimir Vilensky, a Narkomindel (The People's Commissariate of Foreign Affairs) representative in Vladivostok.

It was under this new atmosphere that the Irkutsk Bureau and the Comintern in Moscow started looking for a national democratic

bourgeoisie ally in China. There were at that time three prominent figures in China: Chang Tso-lin, Sun Yat-sen and Wu P'ei-fu. Although Chang Tso-lin was the hero in the overthrow of Tuan, the Russians, however, looked upon Chang merely as a replacement of Tuan as a Japanese protégé and a contender of Russian interests in Mongolia. Following the collapse of Hsü Shu-cheng's control in Mongolia in the Chihli-Anfu War, a Provisional People's Revolutionary government was formed with the assistance of the Irkutsk Bureau in Outer Mongolia. However, in May 1921, after a military conference, Chang Tso-lin was appointed by the militarists to be the Military High Commissioner of Mongolia and Sinkiang with the duty of bringing Outer Mongolia out of the Russian influence back to the Chinese fold. Because of this clash of interests in Mongolia Chang was never considered a potential ally by the Russians.

Sun Yat-sen, on the other hand, was looked upon by the Comintern in Moscow as a favourite candidate. Sun's revolutionary tradition made him popular with Russian revolutionaries. In early 1918, Sun sent a congratulatory telegram to Lenin after the success of the Russian Revolution. In the reply to Sun, George Chicherin, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, called upon Sun and the Chinese people to join the Bolshevik struggle against imperialism. Since then various Comintern delegates visited Sun in China. From March 1920 to May 1922, there were no less than five Russian delegates who contacted Sun: Colonel Popoff, G.N. Voitinsky, N.A. Lesieff, G. Maring and A.S. Dalin.⁶ But Sun's power waxed and waned. At times, he was not even able to control his power base in Canton. Furthermore, Sun had a close rival, his lieutenant, Ch'en Chiung-ming, who also exhibited some kind of socialistic inclination and was favoured by Voitinsky, Vilensky and Khodorov.

Wu P'ei-fu, however, had emerged by the summer of 1920, not only as an opponent of Japanese influence in China but as a democratic leader. Wu played a central role in eliminating the pro-Japanese Anfu government in Peking. After the war, Wu called upon the people to form a National Citizen's Convention to settle the outstanding political questions and to bring the north and the south into a unified nation. Consequently, Wu was highly commended by both his fellow-countrymen and foreign commentators as the 'saviour of the nation'. Therefore the Russians of the Irkutsk Bureau looked upon Wu as the outstanding candidate to lead the Chinese workers in the national revolution.

In early 1920, the Russians were still cautious but sounded hopeful in

assessing Wu's victory over the Anfu clique. Vladimir Vilensky, a Russian commentator, noted in the *Izvestiia* on 23 August 1920 that Wu's victory was not a 'victory of the revolution, but through this victory Chinese society nears the hour of class struggle'. He predicted that from then on, it would be a struggle between the 'militaristic north' and the 'revolutionary south'.⁷ Two months later, in October 1920, when an unofficial Chinese mission under Chang Ssu-lin was in Moscow 'to investigate the situation', the Russians regarded Chang as 'one of the young fellows of Wu P'ei-fu'.⁸ At the same time, Vilensky stated on 9 October 1920 in the *Izvestiia* that Wu had a pro-Russian inclination and Wu's new cabinet would be orientated in favour of Soviet Russia.⁹

Wu's advocacy of the National Citizens' Convention as a peaceful means of settling the outstanding national issues received wide support from intellectual circles at that time, including some communist intellectuals. Chang Kuo-t'ao noted that because of Wu's scheme of endorsing popular organizations, 'Wu P'ei-fu was one person that we could not afford to overlook'. He said that he himself, Lo Chia-lun and others helped to propagate the message of support for Wu P'ei-fu. In Shanghai, they had several talks with Sun Hung-i, a prominent resident in that city and a close friend of Wu P'ei-fu.¹⁰

Wu's proposal of convening a National Citizen's Convention created a favourable environment for the organization of labour in China. According to Wu, the National Citizens' Convention should be composed of representatives of various civic groups such as provincial assemblies, educational, commercial, literary, legal, agricultural and labour organizations. As a result, the labour unions immediately demanded to be represented in the future convention and the labour movement began to gather momentum.

Although Wu P'ei-fu had emerged in 1920 to be, to use Chang Kuo-t'ao's term, 'the favourite son of the time', it was not till late 1921 that Russian and Chinese communists had worked out a policy of co-operation with Wu. An article published on 17 October 1921 in the *International Press Correspondence* signalled the change. In that article, Vladimir Sibiriakoff designated Wu 'a liberal leader of the Chinese bourgeoisie'.¹¹ Despite this favourable comment, the Russian support for Wu was by no means unanimous at this time. A pro-Sun Yat-sen writer, on the other hand, denounced Wu in an article in the *Izvestiia* on 16 November 1921 as an ally of Britain who had fallen into the hands of 'world reaction and Chinese counter-revolution'.¹²

It was in late 1921 that a Russian representative visited Wu in Loyang. We have no evidence to show who he was; he could have been Maring (H. Sneevliet), the Comintern emissary from Moscow, or a delegate from the Irkutsk Bureau.¹³ Anyway, the impression of the Loyang warlord the representative obtained was that Wu was a strong military man but a political novice. It is likely that the representative was introduced to Wu by Li Ta-chao. At the end of 1921, through the influence of Pai Chien-wu, the head of the administrative department of Wu's office and a classmate of Li and through Sun Hung-i, Wu's associate in Shanghai, Li Ta-chao was able to gain access to Wu. He visited Loyang several times. During these visits, an understanding was worked out by Li and Wu, apparently with the endorsement of the Russian representative, that the Peking-Hankow railway workers would co-operate with Wu in the forthcoming war in return for their protection by the Loyang warlord in central China.¹⁴

The control of the Peking-Hankow railroad and the support of the railwaymen were vital to Wu in late 1921 when he was anticipating a major conflict with the Manchurian warlord, Chang Tso-lin. The Peking railroad administration was then dominated by Liang Shih-i, the Premier, and Yeh Kung-ch'o, the Minister of Communications, both members of the Communications clique and Chang Tso-lin's protégés in Peking. They maintained control over the workers by mobilizing them in various organizations such as educational institutes, and provincial associations, organized by the Ministry of Communications.¹⁵ In order to eliminate the influence of the Communications clique in the area, Wu turned to Li Ta-chao and the Chinese communists. Li was interested in eliminating the Communications clique too, thus obtaining a domain for the Chinese communists to promote their labour movement. In the understanding worked out between Wu and Li, the Loyang warlord promised to let the Chinese communists expand their railwaymen's clubs and workers' schools in the area under Wu's policy of 'protection of labour'. In return, the Chinese communists would assist Wu in combating the influence of the Communications clique, and in times of war, help Wu transport his troops.¹⁶ At that time, it was reported by Reuter and quoted by the *No ssu ch'i fu shih*, a leftist newspaper in Harbin, that 'Wu P'ei-fu was sympathetic towards the radicals. If a political conflict should occur, Wu will seize power in Peking in collaboration with the radical party'.¹⁷

When the war did break out between Wu and Chang Tso-lin in May 1922, the Chinese communists and the workers fulfilled their promise

and actively assisted Wu in an efficient transportation of his troops along the Peking-Hankow railway. J.B. Powell, an American journalist, believed that it was the assistance given by the railway workers to Wu that enabled him to win a decisive war against Chang Tso-lin.¹⁸ For their distinguished service in the war, Wu even decorated some railwaymen with medals stamped with his own image. The railway workers, according to Teng Chung-hsia, a communist worker-organizer, took great pride in wearing these medals.¹⁹

Wu's promise to 'protect the labour' was translated into action after the war. In a circular telegram to the nation, Wu included the 'protection of labour' as one of the policies in his political programme. He proposed that the National Assembly should create labour legislation to protect the labour and a Bureau of Labour Affairs should be formed to give better treatment to the workers.²⁰ Furthermore, as a reward for their service in the war, the Chinese communists were given a free hand in promoting labour organizations. At the beginning, Wu suggested that Chinese communists should work as secretaries in the Ministry of Communications under Kao En-hung, Wu's nominee and Minister of Communications in Peking. The communists, however, preferred to be active, organizing labour movements and promoting labour unionism rather than sitting in the office as secretaries. They therefore asked to be assigned to works on the railroads, pleading lack of secretarial experience.²¹ In May 1922, on the recommendation of Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei, a former colleague of Li Ta-chao, Kao En-hung appointed six Chinese communists, Chang K'un-ti, An T'i-ch'eng, Ch'en Wei-jen, Ho Meng-hsiung, Pao Hui-seng and Li Chen-ying as 'secret inspectors' of the Peking-Hankow, Peking-Pukow, Peking-Fengtien, Peking-Suiyuan, Cheng-t'ai and Lung-hai railways. Their titles were later changed to Inspector of Education of these railways. The communists then became salaried employees of the ministry and were authorized to travel freely throughout the network with their expenses paid. They were also allowed to organize labour unions along these railroads, provided they did not use their unions for political purposes. Their principal duty, however, was to investigate the activities of the Communications clique and report directly to Kao En-hung, the Minister.²² Inside the network, they were to be protected by Huang Tung, the head of the Educational Section, a protégé of Wu and a former classmate of Li Ta-chao. Furthermore, Li Chen-ying, who was the Inspector of Education of the Lung-hai line, in charge of the Kaifeng and Loyang stations, was in frequent contact with Wu P'ei-fu and his subordinate Pai Chien-wu in Loyang.²³

Political Co-operation and the Sun-Wu Entente

The initial co-operation with the Peking-Hankow railway was extended into a political co-operation between Wu and the Chinese communists. Li Ta-chao, Chen Tu-hsiu and the Peking branch of the CCP were sympathetic towards Wu's Peking government. Li had a close relationship with Hu Shih, Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei and members of the Research clique. All of them were attracted by the idea of organizing a legal and efficient government in Peking as a first step to bring the north and the south together into a unified nation.²⁴

The idea of such a cabinet first came from Wu P'ei-fu himself. After his victory in the First Chihli-Fengtien War, Wu issued a circular telegram on 14 May 1922, proposing the reconvening of the old parliament as the first measure of easing the constitutional crisis between the north and the south. On 2 June in a joint telegram with Ts'ao K'un, Wu requested Li Yuan-hung to resume his interrupted Presidency, simultaneously suggesting that both Hsü Shih-ch'ang and Sun Yat-sen step down from their presidencies in Peking and in Canton.²⁵ This idea of forming a legal, constitutional government under one president of a unified nation gained wide support from the intellectual circles. On the same day that Wu issued his first telegram. Hu Shih, Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei, Li Ta-chao, Wang Chung-hui, Lo Wen-kan and eleven other prominent scholars jointly published an editorial, 'Our Political Proposals' in the *Nu-li chou-pao* (The Endeavor), exhorting all able men, regardless of their party affiliation, to work together to form a constitutional, public and well-organized government.²⁶

This political movement was reported by Li Ta-chao to the CCP in early June 1922. Li informed the party members in a letter that the Able Men Government policy was the only solution for China in such a tangled political situation. Li wrote that some leaders of the New Culture Movement solicited their support in this political endeavour.²⁷ With this idea in mind, Li brought up the principle of rapprochement with Wu P'ei-fu two months later at the special plenum of the Central Committee of the CCP, which was convened at West Lake, Hangchow on 22 August 1922. Having agreed to collaborate with Sun Yat-sen and the KMT, Li, however, suggested that the principle of collaboration be extended to Wu P'ei-fu. Wu and his Loyang clique, Li told Chang Kuo-t'ao at that time, were composed of 'patriotic militarists who had dealt a blow to the Japanese encroachment in China'. Li also said that 'the practical political situation in China would advance along more progressive lines if Sun Yat-sen and Wu P'ei-fu could be made to co-

operate'. According to Teng Chung-hsia, Ch'en Tu-hsiu also agreed with this idea.²⁸ Moreover, this rapprochement with Wu was endorsed by Adolph Joffe, the Narkomindel representative to Peking, who had already shown an interest in Wu P'ei-fu and Ts'ao K'un during his stay at the capital. Joffe thought that the Sun-Wu co-operation was an 'important' idea.²⁹

Recalled late in an article published in 1927 shortly after his death, Joffe stated that at the time of his mission in Peking in 1922, there were three major groupings in China, Sun Yat-sen, Wu P'ei-fu and Chang Tso-lin. He said that the policy of the Soviet Union, and that of his own, on the whole, was to sympathize with the movement of national unification and national liberation. Thus neither supporting nor severing relations with these major leaders, Joffe maintained that his policy was to keep 'active and friendly relations' with them all.³⁰

Nevertheless, not all members of the CCP favoured this pro-Wu policy. Li Ta-chao's 'New Policy', as it was called, caused the deepest split in the CCP, when the 'left' oppositionists under Chang Kuo-t'ao protested. Chang and the Shanghai branch ridiculed the Able Men Government as an illusory political compromise and resented Li's friendly relations with Hu Shih and Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei. But the 'leftists' could not win the argument. Though they had doubts about the plan, the Central Committee thought it worth trying.

Wu had reasons to be in favour of a Sun-Wu entente. Since the end of the First Chihli-Fengtien War, Wu was actively soliciting a reorganization loan from the foreign powers. A Proposal of a Constitutional Interim Loan was submitted to the International Banking Consortium and there was a certain amount of interest expressed by the British and initially by the Americans to recognize Wu as the 'strong man' of the nation and to assist China in her financial difficulties.³¹ However, the Japanese insisted in August 1922 that no loan should be extended to China until she was completely unified under one government. Obata, the Japanese Minister, pointed out that for the Powers to negotiate a loan with China at this time would be considered by the Chinese people as 'an unwarranted intervention in the internal affairs of their country'.³² Therefore, a rapprochement with Sun, at least on a constitutional principle, would enable Wu to claim that China was on her way to unification, thereby enhancing his chance of obtaining the necessary loan from the International Banking Consortium.

Sun had always been a major opponent of Wu and constantly vowed to have the Loyang warlord and the Chihli clique eliminated from north and central China. But Sun's position had dramatically changed since he

was driven out of Canton by Ch'en Chiung-ming in the *coup* in June 1922. By August, Sun was in Shanghai, seeking his fortune. Therefore, according to Chang Kuo-t'ao, when Li Ta-chao brought up the possibility of a co-operation with Wu P'ei-fu, Sun showed no outward sign of resistance to such an idea.³³ Probably Sun was not in a position to reject the communist suggestion while he was seeking assistance from the Soviet government. Or given his defeat, Sun might have thought that a Sun-Wu entente was politically expedient if he was to return to power. Anyway, from August to December 1922, both the Communists and Sun were trying vigorously to secure Wu in an alliance.

As early as May 1922, Sun had realised that his campaign against the north would be a failure and was ready to negotiate with Wu P'ei-fu. J.C. Huston, the American Consul at Canton, wired Schurman in Peking, 'Commissioner of Foreign Affairs [Frank Lee] admits Northern Expedition hopeless, wants to know what terms Wu P'ei-fu is prepared to offer. If favourable, thinks he can persuade Sun to accept'. At the end of May, Frank Lee again told Huston that 'there was no reason why Dr Sun and Wu P'ei-fu should not come together in order to reach an agreement concerning the unification of China'.

The overture of co-operation between Wu and Sun appeared in a formal exchange of telegrams in early June 1922. On 2 June Ts'ao K'un and Wu wired Sun to step down from his Presidency in the south. Four days later, Sun issued his manifesto, calling for the disbandment of troops as the only solution to the political chaos in China. He argued that the soldiers could be productively employed by the government in the construction of railways. On 11 June, when Li Yuan-hung resumed his Presidency in Peking. Wu wired Sun Yat-sen, Wu T'ing-fang, the Foreign Minister and Provincial Governor of Kwangtung, and Li Lieh-chün, the Commander-in-Chief of the Kiangsi and Yunnan North Expeditionary Force, to come to the north for a conference about the unification of the nation. When Sun arrived in Shanghai on 14 August and Li Yuan-hung, the reinstated President then, sent his personal representative to Shanghai to welcome Sun. On the following day, Sun issued a manifesto again calling for a national unification, the abolition of the military governor system and the disbandment of troops.³⁴

The time was ripe for a Sun-Wu rapprochement. In response to Sun's August manifesto, Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu in late August telegraphed Sun, complimenting him for his efforts in establishing the Republic and his struggle for the 'Protection of the Constitution'. They said they agreed with Sun that the proper solution of the time was a disbandment of troops and they hoped that Sun would set aside their differences in

order to work with them for the betterment of the nation. In a return telegram, Sun restated his political programme and asked Ts'ao and Wu to support that programme.³⁵ Sun admitted publicly in early September that the northern militarists had gravitated towards him. As far as these northern militarists (Ts'ao and Wu) were concerned, Sun said, he would co-operate with anyone so long as that militarist was sincere and agreed with him on his political principles.³⁶

In September 1922, Sun was quite optimistic about the success of his 'Constitution Protection Movement' and the prospect of a reunification of China. In a letter to the members of the Peking parliament on 5 September, Sun said that 'the northern militarists seem to have finally realized the illegality of their action in dissolving the [1917] parliament and consequently have cancelled that order I have recently written to them and laying the case before them'. On 7 September, in a letter to his followers, Ts'ai Chu-yu and Ch'en Ch'u-chen, Sun told them that he had issued a manifesto expressing 'my wish to work with the northern militarists to unify the nation. After my arrival in Shanghai, we have exchanged telegrams discussing these problems' On 18 September, he informed the KMT members in a letter, saying: 'The northern militarists have shown due respect to our movement of Constitution Protection As a result, there was exchange of emissaries'. Sun's opportunistic tactics at this time can best be summarized in his own words. In a letter dated 20 September 1922, Sun stated: 'In our party political activities today, it will not do any harm to be interested and sympathetic to all ideas and possibilities in order to achieve a reunification of the nation'.³⁷

In Shanghai, Sun negotiated with greater and lesser militarists. He sent Wang Ching-wei to Fengtien and Hu Han-min to Fukien. He negotiated with Wang Yung-ch'uan of the Anfu clique and Lu Yung-hsiang, Military Governor of Chekiang, another Anfu man. Moreover, efforts were made simultaneously to get the Yunnanese army in Kwangsi to drive out Ch'en Chiung-ming in Kwangtung.

Contacts between Sun Yat-sen and Wu P'ei-fu began in late August 1922 through Sun Hung-i, who served in a liaison capacity. Sun Hung-i was a friend of Sun Yat-sen, Li Ta-chao and Wu P'ei-fu, and had been working since 1916 for the cause of 'Constitution Protection'. According to Chang Kuo-t'ao, there were talks at that time of 'Major Sun' and 'Minor Sun,' the former referred to Sun Yat-sen, the latter to Sun Hungi.³⁸ Sun Yat-sen also dispatched in August his close friend Hsu-Ch'ien to Loyang, Honan, to seek political accommodation with Wu P'ei-fu. As a

result of this contact, Hsu was later appointed Minister of Justice in a Wu-controlled Able Men Cabinet in Peking.

The formation of the Able Men Cabinet on 19 September 1922 represented the highest achievement of the Sun-Wu co-operation. The new cabinet consisted mainly of Wu's protégé and four sympathizers of Sun Yat-sen: Wang Ch'ung-hui, the Premier and a KMT member, Hsu Chien, the Minister of Justice, also a KMT member and a close friend of Sun Yat-sen, Sun Tan-lin, the Minister of Interior and Lo Wen-kan, the Minister of Finance. Negotiations were held in Peking. Two representatives of Sun, Tsou Lu and Hsieh Ch'ih, tried to get Wu accept the Three Principles of the People through the intercession of Wang Ch'ung-hui and Lo Wen-kan.³⁹ In late September 1922, T'eng T'ien-i, a pro-Sun parliamentarian, visited Sun Tan-lin, the Minister of Interior and Wu's friend. In their conversation, Sun told T'eng that both Sun Yat-sen and Wu P'ei-fu were alike in personality; both stood firmly on their political principles. Sun Tan-lin said Wu fully concurred with Sun Yat-sen on the policy of disbandment of troops and on anti-federalism. But it would be too much to ask Wu to 'throw away his power base and follow an ideal' (meaning Sun's Three Principles of the People). Sun Tan-lin told T'eng that Sun Yat-sen should make up his mind if he was to follow Tuan Ch'i-jui and Chang Tso-lin or to collaborate with Wu P'ei-fu. He advised T'eng to go back to Shanghai to tell the KMT leader to make his political position clear. As far as negotiating with Wu P'ei-fu was concerned, Sun Tan-lin said that he would take care of it himself. He said that Wu had mentioned to him that in any future disbandment programme, Sun Yat-sen could be the chairman of the committee, while Wu would be the vice-chairman. Sun Tan-lin later proved that Wu was sincere in his negotiation by pointing out to a reporter that the very fact that Hsu Ch'ien was already in the Able Men Cabinet clearly indicated that Wu was interested in the collaboration.⁴⁰

In early October, Sun Yat-sen again sent two envoys, Chang Chi and Hsu Ch'ien to consult with Wu in Loyang. Wu at that time told Chang that he and Sun were working for the same goal, the disbandment of troops. If Sun should discard the Manchurian warlord, he and Sun could work together to build up the nation and 'lay the foundation for the next hundreds of years'. In fact, Wu said his 3rd Division would be at Sun's disposal if Sun wanted to carry out his idea of disbandment.⁴¹ In return, Wu sent his subordinate, Sun Yo, the Garrison Commander of Chinan of Chihli province to talk with Sun in Shanghai.⁴² It was reported at that time that in order to seal his friendship with Sun, Wu had allegedly

sent a telegram to his subordinate Hsiao Yao-nan, the Military Governor of Hupeh, informing him that Sun was in 'a most impecunious state in Shanghai' and instructing him to send Sun without fail a sum of Y\$ 100,000 from his Hupeh funds within three days.⁴³

From September 1922, Chinese communists began to declare their support for a Sun-Wu co-operation. In an article published in September in the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao* (The Guide Weekly), Ts'ai Ho-sen commented that the collaboration between Sun Yat-sen and a 'better warlord' Wu P'ei-fu should be considered 'a more progressive phenomenon'. Ts'ai said that it was too soon to say if the collaboration would be a success for he still had doubts that Wu was not simply using the KMT for his pursuit of a reunification loan. Ts'ai, however, castigated Ts'ao K'un as a 'decadent warlord' and urged Wu, 'a more progressive man', to dissociate himself from Ts'ao or else Wu would turn out to be no better than Tuan Ch'i-jui or Yuan Shih-k'ai. Ts'ai explained to his readers that the Sun-Wu entente was an instrument to eliminate Chang Tso-lin, which was 'a necessary step in the revolutionary process'. Yet what Wu's position would be after the Manchurian warlord was eliminated, Ts'ai said, was still to be seen.⁴⁴

After T'eng T'ien-i had talked with Sun Tan-lin, Ts'ai published another article on 4 October entitled 'On what foundation can the Sun-Wu collaboration be built?' He stated that the Sun-Wu entente could only be built on 'anti-imperialism and the struggle of independence of the Chinese people'. He criticized Wu for supporting the 'pro-British, pro-American Foreign Relations clique in Peking and allowing American capitalism to exploit China'.⁴⁵ Ts'ai said that only after Wu had clearly revealed his position on foreign relations and had dismissed the 'treacherous' Foreign Relations clique, could he be qualified to co-operate with Sun Yat-sen. Ts'ai continued: 'Recently, Sun Yat-sen has publicly stated his policy of co-operation with Russia and Germany'.⁴⁶ Does Wu P'ei-fu agree with this policy? Will Wu simply follow Ts'ao K'un like a slave and issue telegram denying his association with Sun,⁴⁷ in order not to arouse any suspicion of the international capitalism?⁴⁸

On 11 October, Ts'ai again attacked the Foreign Relations clique for 'backing the American-British imperialistic control in China'.⁴⁹ A week later, on 18 October, Chang Kuo-t'ao, wrote in an article that the Chinese people only wanted peaceful unification worked out by the people themselves, a unification that would improve the livelihood of the people and not the one jointly worked out by the British and American imperialists and Wu P'ei-fu for a control of the Yangtze Valley.⁵⁰ On 25 October 1922, Ts'ai Ho-sen restated the central theme of a Sun-Wu

collaboration, a total acceptance of Sun's Three Principles of the People. It meant that first of all, Wu should follow Sun's Principle of Nationalism, formulate a foreign policy that would give China national self-determination, and agree with Sun on his policy of collaboration with Germany and Russia. Second, Wu should apply Sun's Principle of Democracy, give the people freedom and abolish his Security Police Law. Third, as for the Principle of the Peoples' Livelihood, the least that Wu should do was to refrain from inviting the army of 'American imperialism' to suppress the Labour strike in T'angshan.⁵¹

In the period between July and November 1922, the Russians were equally enthusiastic about bringing Wu P'ei-fu and Sun Yat-sen together in an alliance. Since the defeat of Chang Tso-lin by Wu in the First Chihli-Fengtien War, the Russians actually witnessed Wu in a position of power and consequently, they became even more articulate in their support for Wu. In an article published on 29 July 1922 in the *Mezhdunarodnaiazhizn* A. Khodorov castigated the coalition of Sun Yat-sen and Chang Tso-lin in the First Chihli-Fengtien War as an 'unholy alliance' and advised Sun to link up instead with central China, where Wu P'ei-fu was in control of the coal and iron resources of the nation.⁵² Khodorov himself, as head of Delta and Rosta News agencies interviewed Wu in his headquarters at Loyang. According to Josef W. Hall, among hundreds of other diplomats, missionaries and tradesmen who made their way to Loyang at that time, Wu had shown a greater interest in this Russian agent. Wu said to Hall later: 'You know, I enjoyed that fellow Hodoroff [i.e. Khodorov] above all my other visitors. He had something else besides flattery, advice and request'.⁵³

Another Russian visitor was Vladimir Vilensky, the Narkomindel representative from Vladivostok and the principal apologist for Wu P'ei-fu. In an article published on 12 August 1922 in the *Izvestiia*, Vilensky reported that Wu had a favourable attitude towards the Red Army. According to Wu's secretary, Vilensky told his readers, that the general would unify China and 'the future combination would find China, Russia and Germany together'.⁵⁴ Three days later, in another article in the *Izvestiia*, Vilensky identified Wu with 'Republican China', a nation backed up by 'strong bourgeois support'.⁵⁵ Again on 1 November 1922, in the *Communist International*, Vilensky said that Wu was a 'liberal, nationalistic and anti-imperialistic, who receives firm support from liberal circles in China'. Vilensky also said that the Chinese communists also considered Wu 'the best of the militarists' and hailed his efforts in abolishing the military governor system.⁵⁶

Georgi V. Chicherin, the commissioner of Foreign Affairs, also had the

same view. On 16 November 1922, he wrote: 'The latest events in China, the downfall of Chang Tso-lin, friendly to Japan, and the strengthening of the supporters of China's national policy, especially Wu P'ei-fu, has greatly complicated Japan's position in China.'⁵⁷

The Narkomindel was not alone in having such a favourable attitude about Wu in the autumn of 1922; the Comintern also supported Wu and considered him a revolutionary bourgeois force in China. Karl Radek spoke favourably of Wu in a speech given to the Congress on 23 November 1922. After briefing members on the initial collaboration between Wu and the CCP in the First Chihli-Fengtien War, and how the Chinese communist railway workers subsequently gained a foothold in north China, Radek said that Wu's struggle against Japanese imperialism was a 'struggle for the revolutionary development of China', and Wu's support of the workers a 'support of the liberation movement'. He told the Congress that he realized a bourgeois like Wu would vacillate between the capitalists and the working class' and might eventually betray the working people. Radek, however, thought that Wu was some sort of a necessary evil if they wanted to create a united front in China.⁵⁸

Breakdown of the Sun-Wu Entente

Since mid-October, Sun Yat-sen had sensed that the Sun-Wu entente might not work. In contrast to his previous optimism, he now showed that he was fed up with the political situation in Peking. He told his friends in a letter: 'The people in Peking are sunken in vice. Righteousness has already dissipated and the capital is nothing but a place of fox and mice.' He pointed out that even Li Yuan-hung, who willingly served the warlords as a puppet, was disgusted with the situation. And Wu P'ei-fu, according to Sun, was completely isolated.⁵⁹

Neither were the Chinese communists hopeful about the prospect of the Able Men Cabinet at this time. It was initially resented by Chang Kuo-t'ao and the Shanghai group. Sometime in October, Chang consulted Ch'en Tu-hsiu and later went to Peking to talk to Li Ta-chao, trying to persuade Li and the Peking branch to dissociate themselves from the Peking literary circles. By that time Li was also greatly discouraged by the split of the Chihli clique into Paoting and Loyang groups. Li then called the Peking branch for a meeting and the question of collaboration with Peking was raised. Some supporters of the Able Men Cabinet criticized Ch'en Tu-hsiu for always bringing up new

issues. But finally an agreement was reached to dissociate themselves from the Peking government.⁶⁰

The first sign of the breakdown came on 19 October when a strike by the Chinese communists at the British Kailan Mining Administration in Tangshan, was crushed by Wu P'ei-fu using force under the direction of one of his lieutenants. K'ao Sheng-teh, a communist labour leader (pseudonym Chun-yu), in retaliation for Wu's suppression of the strikers, denounced Wu's action on 25 October as 'a joint attack of the poor Chinese people by the warlords and the imperialists'. On the one hand, a warlord like Wu P'ei-fu 'barbarously suppressed the strike and threatened to dissolve the workers' clubs'; on the other hand, the imperialists such as the diplomatic corps, with the backing of the American army, threatened to take over the mine rather than settle the dispute with the workers immediately. K'ao said that all this pointed to the simple fact that warlords and foreign powers were allies with the same objective of strengthening the aggression of the imperialists in China.⁶¹

Then came the fall of the Able Men Cabinet, the highest achievement of the Sun-Wu entente, which was brought down by Ts'ao K'un and his Paoting-Tientsin clique. On 18 November Wu Ching-lien and Chang Pai-lieh, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the House of Representatives and both Ts'ao protégés, accused Lo Wen-kan, the Minister of Finance, of bribery. As a result, the Premier resigned bringing the entire cabinet down with him.⁶² In connection with the fall of the Able Men Cabinet, the Chinese communists provide some insight into the Sun-Wu entente and their relations with the Peking government. In an article on 6 December in the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, Ts'ai Ho-sen told his readers that reformism always ended in bankruptcy. He said that no reformist idea could materialize under military politics. Ts'ai then gave two reasons for the collapse of the Sun-Wu entente: (1) The fall of the Able Men Cabinet was a result of the efforts of Li Yuan-hung and Ts'ao K'un to break up the Sun-Wu entente. Ts'ai said that the Paoting clique had lately learned that an agreement had been reached between Sun and Wu, part of which touched upon the 'question of the top' (i.e. the Presidency). Sun was said to be the President, while Wu was the Vice-President.⁶³ Ts'ao K'un also found out that Wang Chung-hui was the liaison between the two. Consequently, the Able Men Cabinet became the target of attack for the Paoting clique; (2) Ts'ai also mentioned that the Sun-Wu entente failed because such coalition was contrary to the wish of the foreign imperialists. The imperialists only supported a 'reactionary force' in

China. They looked upon the Sun-Wu entente as 'a unity of two progressive forces'. On the one hand, there was the KMT which exhibited extreme nationalism. On the other hand, Wu P'ei-fu, a 'progressive warlord', who, because of his worship of the patriotic hero Yüeh Fei, possessed a patriotic anti-Japanese sentiment.⁶⁴

Finally, Joffe was greatly discouraged by his negotiation with Wu's government in Peking. He encountered numerous difficulties with the Peking government and Wu did not help him overcome these difficulties.⁶⁵ Peking under Wellington Koo, the Foreign Minister, demanded a complete return of the Chinese Eastern Railway under Chinese control and asked for a withdrawal of Soviet troops from Mongolia before they proceeded further with the negotiation.

By the end of October, the Chinese communists denounced Wu's foreign policy and accused him of having no sincerity in the Sino-Russian negotiation. In the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao* on 25 October Chen-yu wrote that although Wu was 'patriotic' in his dealing with the Shantung Question, he was however, 'treacherous' in employing the pro-British, pro-American, Wellington Koo. He wrote that, 'Koo spent his time daily contracting treacherous loans from the International Banking Consortium and he was not serious in the Sino-Soviet conference, which might give the Chinese nation independence and equality.' The writer concluded his article by pointing out that 'Wu P'ei-fu, the Big Warlord is protecting a new traitor' (meaning Wellington Koo).⁶⁶

As the negotiations did not seem to be progressing in Peking, Joffe, out of frustration, stated publicly on 5 November that Russia was no longer bound by the 1919 and 1920 declarations in her future negotiations with China. Anyway it was a very unstable time to negotiate. The post of Foreign Minister went from Wellington Koo to C.T. Wang and again to Shih Chao-chi (Alfred Sze). On 8 November, the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao* carried an article by Sun To, denouncing Wu for his collaboration with Ch'en Chiung-ming, who was, according to the writer, 'a traitor and a running dog of the British imperialists'.⁶⁷

On the other hand, Sun was making headway in the military field. By 21 October, Sun's Northern Expeditionary Army under Hsu Ch'ung-chih had captured Foochow city in Fukien, which showed that Sun might recover his power base in Canton soon. It was at the end of November that Sun began to report progress in his negotiations with the Russians. In his letter to Chiang Kai-shek, dated 21 November 1922, Sun strongly stressed the importance of a power base as a bargaining power in his negotiation. He said:

Fortunately, I have found my way. From now on we will have better relations with them [Russians]. But, basically, we have to have a base before we can deal with them. Without anything to bargain, we will fare no better than the young communists. Though they share the same ideology with the Russians, what have these youngsters achieved? No wonder leaders in Moscow advised them to join the KMT. All these point up to one fact that we must secure a base first. Therefore, we must recapture Kwangtung⁶⁸

Sun also mentioned in his letter that his negotiation with the Russians was 'very complicated and difficult, probably ten or a hundred times more so than Chiang's military struggle at Foochow'.⁶⁹ These difficulties may stem from the fact that Joffe was unwilling to grant what Sun was asking of him. According to Chang Kuo-t'ao, Sun dispatched Chang Chi to see Joffe and requested that the Soviet Union assist the KMT to launch military operations against the Peking government in the north. However, Joffe flatly refused, making it clear that 'there was not the remotest possibility of carrying out this plan'.⁷⁰ Sun had been uneasy about the Soviet relations with the Chihli clique, in particular, Joffe's courtship with Peking. In his letter to Joffe, Sun expressed concern about the rumour that Russia was about to enter into an alliance with Wu P'ei-fu's Peking government. Joffe, however, explained to Sun through Chang Chi that after the Revolution, Soviet Russia had to develop diplomatic relations with other nations. Chicherin also told Sun that it would be of interest to both countries if Russia and China normalized their relations as soon as possible.⁷¹

As late as mid-December, Joffe still hoped that the Sun-Wu entente might work out. Writing from Peking on 12 December, Joffe said that he hoped both Wu and Sun 'would march in the vanguard of the Chinese revolution'.⁷² But less optimistic now, he cautioned that the Sun-Wu entente might not work out; however what mattered was that 'dictators come and go, but the masses remain'.⁷³

In December, according to Okano Masujiro, Wu's Japanese adviser, Sun Yat-sen made one more attempt to enlist Wu in an alliance. Okano relates that early that month, Sun instructed Ch'en Chung-fu, his Japan expert, to proceed to Loyang to talk with Wu. Ch'en departed from Tokyo on 1 December 1922 in the company of Okano Masujiro, who had just accepted the position of adviser to Wu. They arrived in Peking in the middle of December. While staying in Peking, Okano was introduced by Ch'en to Chu Ch'i-sheng, said to be 'Sun Yat-sen's Russia

expert', who had recently returned from Russia on a mission for Sun. The three men then chatted over dinner.

Chu first talked about himself. He said that when he was young he lived in the Pu-chiao area in Russia, where he learned Russian. Later he became a friend of Chu Cheng and worked with him in the Second Revolution of 1913 in Shantung. He told Okano that lately he had been several times Sun's emissary to Soviet Russia. After this brief introduction, Chu then tried to impress Okano about how appropriate the Soviet political system was for China, obviously hoping that Okano would later persuade Wu to accept it. Chu said that Wu must have misunderstood the nature of communism when he thought that spreading of communism in China was a Sovietization of the nation and a Russian intrigue. Chu explained that the importation of communist doctrines was a logical step in Chinese history. 'China had adopted various political systems in the past', he said, 'like the "kingly way", the "tyranny" and the "people's rule" etc., but none of these systems worked. Finally, the Chinese nation is like a sick man that becomes even sicker. On the other hand, Russia, like China, had been sick before, but recovered after she had been baptised by communism'. Chu then said that he was impressed by Okano, because the latter had come all the way from Japan to serve Wu P'ei-fu. He told the Japanese adviser that Wu had the great ambition of unifying the nation in his 'kingly way'. Before they parted, Chu asked Okano to take a rice bowl for him to his 'fellow Shantungese', Wu P'ei-fu, saying that this gift would bring Wu long life.⁷⁴

After a brief stay in Peking, Okano and Ch'en Chung-fu on 21 December proceeded by train to Loyang. They finally arrived at Wu's headquarters on 23 December 1922. According to Okano, Wu did not receive his guest cordially. But later Wu agreed to meet with Ch'en. In a secret gathering in which only Wu, Ch'en and Okano were present, Ch'en Chung-fu informed the Loyang militarist of his mission. Sun Yat-sen's idea was that Wu and himself meet in Hankow to work out a proposal for the reunification of the nation. Wu, however, was not interested in the idea. He told Ch'en bluntly that Sun was an idle dreamer, who professed a ten-year railway plan but never constructed a single trackage of railroad. So failing to accomplish his mission, Ch'en hastily left Loyang the next day.⁷⁵

Relations between Soviet Russia and Peking meanwhile were further strained when Chihli militarists and parliamentarians openly criticized the expansion of Russian influence in Mongolia in late December 1922

and early January 1923.⁷⁶ The Sun-Joffe negotiation, however, was progressing and finally Joffe came to Shanghai on 17 January 1923. Joffe's attitude towards Wu had changed completely. In an article written on 18 January and published five weeks later in the *Izvestiia* on 22 February 1923, Joffe signalled 'The Beginning'. He denounced Wu's anti-Sun campaign and imperialism as two obstacles to the unification of China. He referred to Sun Yat-sen with high esteem.⁷⁷ By this time, Sun had already recovered his base and could bargain with the Russians in a position of power. Only two days before Joffe's arrival, Canton was recaptured by Yunnan and Kwangsi troops, the Kwangtung army and various local corps around the city. Sun was invited to come back to the south. Apparently, because of Sun's success, negotiations with Joffe went smoothly. On 26 January 1923, a Sun-Joffe agreement was reached and later published in the newspapers. Though admitting that communism could not be applied in China at that time, Sun agreed to co-operate with Russia and made a compromise by not asking for the immediate evacuation of Russian troops from Outer Mongolia.

Without first hand material at hand, it is difficult to know precisely what went on among the four parties – Wu, Sun, the Chinese communists and the Russians – in their talk for a Sun-Wu co-operation. Perhaps Vilensky's article written in mid-January will give us a hint. Tracing back to the First Chihli-Fengtien War of May 1922, Vilensky wrote in the *International Press Correspondence*:

During his fight against Wu P'ei-fu, Sun Yat-sen understood the advantageous position of the former, who is not only in the industrial centre of China, but is supported by the national Chinese bourgeoisie, which is able to provide the means required by Chinese for fighting for emancipation from the foreign yoke He is of the opinion that his sojourn in the North will strengthen his position in the South just as the success of his southern followers more firmly establishes his whole political position and his influence in China

Up to now Wu P'ei-fu has maintained a very reserved attitude towards Sun Yat-sen, although he does not deny that the latter would doubtless be the most suitable President for China. We believe that the reason for this caution has been the reserve practised by the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie of Central China towards Sun Yat-sen, as this bourgeoisie has regarded him as a leader of the South and therefore as a man infected with Socialist ideas. We have every reason to assume that Sun Yat-sen, who is at present in Shanghai, the real capital of industrial China, has come to an understanding with

the Chinese national bourgeoisie, and that the latter is prepared to be reconciled to his Socialist ideas, the more so, as these ideas do not contain anything in the least dangerous, for they are extremely moderate and agree very well with the national ideas and dreams of a 'Great China'.

There is no doubt whatsoever that if the imperialist bloc and its reactionary Chinese friends realize their plan, and threaten Wu P'ei-fu with isolation, Wu P'ei-fu will come to an understanding with Sun Yat-sen and recognize him as President of China. Sun Yat-sen recognizes this and his actions are based on this supposition. The occupation of Canton thus signifies the strengthening of Sun Yat-sen's influence in the North. It is not for nothing that telegrams report that political circles in Peking are carrying on lively negotiations with Sun Yat-sen regarding the reunion of China. The key to the reunion of Southern and Northern China lies more than ever in the hands of the 'Father of the Chinese Revolution' and we should not be surprised if the reports of his followers' successes in the South, are immediately followed by the news that Dr Sun Yat-sen has become the official head of the Chinese Republic and that he has been aided to his position by the troops of Wu P'ei-fu.⁷⁸

From the Vilensky article and from that of Ts'ai Ho-sen (on 6 December in *The Guide Weekly*), it seems that one important term discussed by Sun and Wu in their negotiation was the 'question of the top': that Sun should be appointed President, while Wu should be Vice-President and in control behind the scenes. Vilensky reiterated this point again in another article published in the *Izvestiia* on 27 January 1923, when he described how Wu would appoint Sun as President in order to unify China.⁷⁹ If that had been the terms, Wu could not comply without violently disrupting the whole Chihli organization. His superior Ts'ao for one could not entertain such an idea, since he himself was seeking the Presidency. After learning the terms of the negotiation, Ts'ao and his protégé immediately put an end to it by staging a cabinet crisis, bringing Wang Ch'ung-hui down with the entire plan of political co-operation with Sun Yat-sen.

To Wu P'ei-fu, political co-operation in the form of a joint cabinet was one thing and accepting Sun's Three Principles of the People and Soviet Russia as a partner was a wholly different matter. A joint cabinet of the north and the south would show the West that China was on her way to reunification and therefore enhance his chance of securing a loan from the International Banking Consortium. Conversely, casting in his

lot with Russia would jeopardize his dealings with the West: something which obviously Wu was not about to risk. Therefore, despite repeated appeals from the Chinese communists, Wu obstinately refused to announce his acceptance of Sun's Principles and the co-operation with Germany and Russia. Both the Chinese communists and Sun repeatedly told him that reconciliation with socialist ideas was not 'dangerous', and that the acceptance of communism did not mean a Sovietization of China or help for Russia in her 'intrigue'. Wu's hesitation to commit himself to co-operate with Russia was what Vilensky referred to as 'the reserve practised by the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie of Central China'.

The Peking-Hankow Railway Strike, 7 February 1923

There is ample evidence to indicate that Chinese communist workers had maintained cordial relations with Wu P'ei-fu up until the end of January 1923. After Li Ta-chao had become an adviser to Wu, communist employees were permitted to organize unions up and down the railway lines. Workers' clubs or *kung-jen chu-lo-pu*, developed in metalworks, mines, powdered-egg, cotton-baling and tobacco factories in Hupeh. Workers began to publish their own newspapers, for example the *Workers' Weekly*, *kung-jen chou-kan*. By the end of 1922, the Communications clique had practically lost their hold in central China.

Under the direction of the Labour Secretariat, communists organized strikes in factories and railways in the Wuhan area. Some of these strikes hurt Wu very much financially. For instance, the strikers at Changhsintien station of the Peking-Hankow railway on 25 August 1922 demanded a suitable increase in pay for those who had endured hardship and dangers in their work during the First Chihli-Fengtien War. After bargaining, their demands were granted in full by Wu. The wage rise alone, as estimated by Teng Chung-hsia, the communist labour organizer, cost Wu roughly Y\$700,000 to \$800,000 extra a year. Consequently, Wu was forced to adopt new measures to control the railways. He ordered all his soldiers to learn how to operate a train. Furthermore, he assigned Feng Yun, the head of the Bureau of Southern Section of the Peking-Hankow railway, to organize 'friendly associations' to replace the communist-dominated 'railwaymen's clubs'.⁸⁰

Wu also suppressed other strikes with force; for instance the Hanyang arsenal strike in August, the Anyuan collieries strike in September and

the British Kailan Mines strike in October of 1922. The most outstanding case was the miners' strike in the British Kailan Mining Administration at Tangshan. It was crushed by Yang I-te, Wu's lieutenant. Kao En-hung, Wu's nominee and the Minister of Communications, charged the communists with instigating the workers and ordered the closing down of the Tangshan College of Engineering as a means to root out the 'Bolshevik propaganda'. Although Chinese communists retaliated by denouncing him as a 'Big Warlord' and 'an ally of the British and American imperialists', Wu did not want to break his relations with the labour. He placated them by issuing a telegram on 25 October, reaffirming his 'policy of protection of labour'. In the telegram he said: 'I strongly urge the National Assembly to create labour legislation in order to give better treatment to the workers and bring them out of their present unstable situation. But for the time being, the labour should remain patient and refrain from any agitations and disturbances'.⁸¹

Despite all these clashes with the militarists, the Labour Secretariat moved ahead with their plan to launch an All China Labour Union Movement. A decision was made to hold a congress in Wuhan in early 1923. Representatives from sixteen railwaymen's clubs along the entire length of the Peking-Hankow railway were asked to meet at Chengchow on 1 February 1923 to form a General Union of the Railway. Delegates were also invited from other railroads and labour units in the Wuhan area to attend the conference. This congress was undoubtedly reported to Wu P'ei-fu by his entourage. The meeting was announced in newspapers and official notification was submitted to the railway authorities, the local military and the police. Chao Chi-hsien, the managing director of the railway, was said to have made 1 February the official holiday and arranged for the delegates to travel on a special train down the Peking-Hankow railroad to Chengchow for their conference.⁸² Thus everything went well. One correspondent reported during his visit to Chengchow at this time that 'there was no special ill-feeling against General Wu P'ei-fu. On the contrary, his name was mentioned somewhat sympathetically'.⁸³ However, on 28 January 1923, Wu suddenly sent a telegram to Chin Yün-e, the Chengchow Garrison Commander, and ordered him to ban the meeting at all costs.

Wu's sudden outburst of tyrannical frenzy should be understood within the context of his relations with the Chinese communists and with Sun Yat-sen as a whole. Chinese communist workers were allowed to operate in the Wuhan area because of the Wu P'ei-fu-Li Ta-chao understanding that in return for their help in eliminating the Communications clique, permitted them to organize labour clubs

provided they did not use these clubs for political purposes. But by January 1923, Wu had received reports from his subordinates that the labour movement had become an international radical movement, probably under the direction of the Soviet Union. In his report of the investigation of the labour problems to Wu, Chao Chi-hsien traced the labour activities in the Wuhan area to Wang Tsun. He wrote that Wang was a labour leader, who 'travelled frequently between Tientsin and Shanghai and who made trips to the Soviet Union and Japan. Wang was attempting to link the labour circle in China with that of the other nations in order to strengthen the whole movement ...'⁸⁴ On 25 January Chao wired Wu recommending the suppression of the movement and requested assistance from Wu to prevent the workers from holding a union meeting. Chao denied that local officials had given permission to the workers to hold their conference. He warned that if the movement was not suppressed, 'people will make this into a rule and become even more radical in the future. Eventually, the masses will exceed the legal limit without even realizing what they have done themselves'⁸⁵

The publication of the Sun-Joffe agreement on 26 January may have been the final straw. J.C. Huston, the American Consul-General at Tientsin, stated in his report to the Department of State that when news reached Wu P'ei-fu that Li Ta-chao had fallen in with the plans of the KMT, Li became *persona non grata* to Wu, who then ordered his arrest.⁸⁶ Li escaped arrest, and hid himself in Sun Hung-i's residence in Shanghai.⁸⁷ Later when he explained Wu's drastic decision to Chang Kuo-t'ao, Sun Hung-i gave the same reason. Sun said that Wu was provoked when he learned of the connection between the labour unions and Sun's southern government and became very angry when the CCP publicized their alliance with Sun Yat-sen as a means of overthrowing him.⁸⁸

Ts'ao K'un also thought that the labour movement and the CCP-KMT relations were one and the same scheme to sabotage the Peking government. Ts'ao, in the latter part of February, in justifying the suppression, warned the government of the danger of a nationwide labour movement, which on the surface demanded troop disbandment and the abolition of militarism, but in reality was a political scheme against the administration. Ts'ao added that if a careful investigation was made it would be clear that it was Sun Yat-sen who furnished these workers with ideas of a general strike all over China under the guise of a petition for troop disbandment.⁸⁹

It was the fear of the new alignment between the Chinese communists and Sun Yat-sen, the increase in labour activities in the Wuhan area,

coupled with the pressure from Ts'ao K'un to suppress it, that led Wu to make his decision to ban the inaugural congress only two days after the publication of the Sun-Joffe agreement. On 29 January Wu wired Chin Yün-e, the Garrison Commander of Chengchow, Hsiao Yao-nan, the Military Governor of Hupeh, Chang Fu-lai, the Military Governor of Honan and Wang Huai-ch'ing, the Garrison Commander of Peking, and instructed them to take the necessary military precautions.⁹⁰

Wu's sudden move against the labour obviously caught the Chinese communist workers by surprise. Li Chen-ying, the secretary of the General Union and the Inspector of Education of the Kaifeng and Loyang stations of the Lunhai railroad, suggested that the problems could easily be settled in a meeting with Wu P'ei-fu. Therefore, on 30 January Li and four others proceeded to Loyang to consult with Wu. Wu told them that he had always been sympathetic towards labour. But the political situation in Peking at that time was very unstable. There were reports of conflict between students and the Ministry of Education and also rumours of a *coup* to overthrow President Li Yuan-hung. Since Chengchow was a military zone, Wu said it was absolutely impossible for them to hold a conference there. However, Wu gave them the impression that they could form their General Union even though they could not have their conference for reasons of military security.⁹¹

After an emergency meeting on 31 January, labour leaders decided to hold their inauguration conference as planned. The next day on 1 February they marched in a parade to their meeting place in a theatre. On the way, they were stopped by the military under the command of Chin Yün-e. They managed to go past the guards, but when they arrived at the theatre, they found that the door was guarded and sealed. They were refused entry by soldiers armed with loaded guns and fixed bayonets. However, the workers broke the seal and entered the theatre. Huang Tien-ch'en, the head of the Chengchow Police Bureau, ordered them to disband immediately. Labour delegates then argued with him, saying that freedom of assembly was guaranteed by the provisional constitution; but Huang insisted that he had to obey his military instructions. The labourers, however, ignored his order and shouted 'Long live the Peking-Hankow Railway General Union.' After declaring that the Union had been formed they immediately dispersed. Afterwards, the police occupied all Union premises and destroyed all the complimentary banners and scrolls of the parading workers.

The workers' delegates then met and decided to issue a circular telegram putting forward their demands: the removal of the railroad managing director and the chief of police, the return of the

complimentary banners and scrolls, the reimbursement of the Union, a day of rest weekly with pay, and a week of paid vacation during the Lunar New Year days. Since the police were looking for them, the leaders found it necessary to move their headquarters out of the newly established General Union to Kiangan station at Hankow. A general strike throughout the network was called by the Union on 4 February.

On 4 February the entire Peking-Hankow railway came to a standstill. Terror and counter-terror were used by both sides in their confrontation at three main stations, Kiangan, Changhsintien and Chengchow. In Kiangan in Hankow, Hsiao Yao-nan, the Military Governor of Hupeh, tried to repress all agitators by force. His subordinate, Chang Hou-sheng, seized four railway workers in an attempt to force them to operate a train. The Union immediately assembled two thousand or more workers. Hsiao had to release them after a clash. At Changhsintien, troops were sent by Ts'ao K'un to keep the place in order. On 6 February in order to bring back some traffic, Chao Chi-hsien dispatched 120 new workers and 500 soldiers to the spot to learn to operate a train. Chao also gave an ultimatum to the railwaymen to the effect that all would be deported if work was not resumed immediately. At Chengchow, a clash occurred between Chin Yun-p'eng and the railway workers, resulting in the arrest of a number of workers.

At this stage, Chihli militarists received more reports of connections between the labour and Sun Yat-sen. It was reported that a labour organizer of Sun Yat-sen was in Peking on a secret mission. The military surrounded two houses where he was supposed to be hiding. There were also rumours that these agitators attempted to subvert the Peking gendarmerie.⁹² On 5 February Wang Huai-ch'ing, the Garrison Commander of Peking, submitted a report saying that the strike was supported by students of Peking University and it was a movement against the Chihli militarists. Wang stated that this strike of the labour students was 'obviously instigated by someone. The purpose was to disrupt public order and, if not suppressed immediately, it may turn out to be a threat to local security'.⁹³ Wang also reported that he had dispatched a battalion to Changhsintien, in view of the emergency situation. In order to bring back some traffic, Wu ordered his soldiers to operate a few trains.

Finally, Wu and other militarists decided to use force to end the strike. On 7 February 1923, the military closed in on the Union offices in all three stations. In Kiangan, a clash occurred in and around the headquarters, resulting in heavy casualties: thirty-seven dead and many

wounded. Lin Hsiang-ch'ien, the chairman of the Kiangan Union, was beheaded in front of the union headquarters for refusing to order workers back to work. Shih Yang, a member of the KMT and a legal adviser for various unions, was arrested and finally executed on 15 February. In Changhsintien, the massacre by the military resulted in four deaths and more than thirty wounded. In Hankow the *Chen Pao*, a newspaper run by the KMT members, sympathetic to labourers, was closed and the newspaper staff were arrested by Hsiao Yao-nan, the Military Governor of Hupeh. The government authorities censored all telegrams and cables.⁹⁴

By coercion, the militarists were able to bring back a few trains into operation under military escort. At last on 9 February unable to withstand the armed strength of Chihli militarists, the General Union was forced to order its workers back to work. Other sympathetic strikes were launched by railwaymen and labour organizations in the Wuhan area but were also suppressed. Martial law was declared in many cities. Although the massacre brought forth strong protests and denunciations from members of parliament, chambers of commerce and students associations, Wu and other militarists were determined to restore order by force. All worker club-houses within Wu's jurisdiction were closed and many labour leaders were driven underground. The *Kung-jen chou-kan* (The Workers' Weekly) was banned.

The brutal suppression of the Labour Union was the result of an escalating situation that finally came to a head in February. Although we can only speculate on Wu's motives for this suppression, it seems that his drastic decision had been motivated by a number of factors. First, to Wu the vital strategic importance of the railways was evident. He was appropriating more than 1,100,000 taels annually from the southern section alone to support his troops. The Changhsintien strike in August 1922 alone cost an annual \$800,000, a loss he had to share with Ts'aok'un, who controlled the northern section, and a sum he could not afford to overlook. As the Peking-Hankow railway was the main communication system between Peking and Wuhan, political unrest among railwaymen in that area would be detrimental to troop mobilization. His reason for forbidding the meeting at Chengchow was that the city was a strategic military zone. Secondly, the final suppression can be seen as the climax of a series of demonstrations, strikes and negotiations, stretching back to August 1922. Wu had previously suppressed by force the Hanyang arsenal strike in August, the Anyuan collieries strike in September and the British Kailan Mine strike in October. The escalating events in early February – the Chengchow

meeting on 1 February, the calling of a general strike on 4 February, and the breakdown of negotiations resulting in clashes around union headquarters – obviously led Wu to resort to his usual practice of using coercion. The shootings were therefore a result of the labour leaders' refusal to accept Wu's order which triggered a chain of events that built up to a head on confrontation.

Thirdly, the suppression grew out of the increasing fear among Chihli militarists that labour unrest was in some way related to the Sun-Joffe manifesto. The timing of Wu's decision to forbid the Chengchow meeting and the subsequent reports and exchanges among leading Chihli militarists might be indications of the Chihli suspicion that the South might have a hand in the whole affair. The attempted arrest of Li Ta-chao, and the explanation given by Sun Hung-i to Chang Kuo-t'ao that Wu was angry at the way the communist publicized the KMT-CCP-Russian alliance as a means to overthrow him, might indicate that Wu's suppression of the labour movement was a reprisal for the new alliance between the communist labour leaders and the nationalists.

The massacre finally put an end to whatever cordial relations the communist workers had enjoyed with Wu P'ei-fu. Out of anger and frustration, Li Ta-chao wrote to his classmate, Wu's subordinate, Pai Chien-wu, condemning him for betraying their friendship and terminating all personal contact.⁹⁵ Later, Li found it necessary to leave Sun Hung-i's residence, where he was hiding, because the communists objected to Sun Hung-i's relations with Wu P'ei-fu.⁹⁶ On 27 February the Central Committee of the CCP issued a manifesto in the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, denouncing Wu as a 'treacherous and malicious military demon, who disguised himself with a mask of "Protection of Labour"'. To justify their previous accord with Wu, the Central Committee explained that sometimes the Party had to give limited support to 'a more enlightened and more progressive force' in order to promote the welfare of the labourers. That was why they supported Wu before. But when Wu had revealed his true nature in the 7 February massacre, the only course for the Party to take was to call upon all people of the nation to 'struggle against this Warlord, Wu P'ei-fu, who has become not only the enemy of the proletariat, but also the enemy of everyone who seeks freedom'.⁹⁷

The Chinese communists later explained further the re-adjustment of their relations with Wu. Sun To, a communist commentator, gave his reasons in an article in the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao* on 9 May 1923. According to Sun To, Wu P'ei-fu was no politician, no diplomat, nor

was he ideologically more enlightened than any other warlords. In foreign affairs, Wu had no knowledge of China's international position in the world; in internal affairs, he did not understand the suffering of the people. He was merely a military man. His strength came from his powerful army. Yet a man like Wu with his military power, Sun said, could make China a strong and independent nation. However, Wu was not able to do so for the following reasons. First, because he lacked any revolutionary ideas. He could not join any national revolutionary movement because he could not shake off the domination of foreign imperialism. Second, Wu had a narrow mentality; militarism was his only goal. He could not make friends with the people because he had to exploit the workers and tax the people for military purposes. Therefore, he denied them rights of assembly and suppressed all their new organizations. As a result, Wu could only turn out to be a 'second Yuan Shih-k'ai' or a 'military autocratic demon'. Therefore, he was 'the most dangerous enemy of the Chinese people'. Sun concluded by telling his readers that from then on their efforts in the national revolution should be directed towards destroying Wu P'ei-fu, 'who was trying to make himself an autocratic emperor'.⁹⁸

In June 1923, the CCP denounced Wu's policy of reunification of the nation by military means and began propagating the twin slogans, 'Down with Warlordism' and 'Down with Imperialism'.⁹⁹ Throughout the rest of 1923 and the whole of 1924, communists justified these slogans by repeatedly demonstrating that 'the Big Warlord', Wu P'ei-fu, and other Chihli militarists were contracting loans and receiving arms and ammunitions from the 'British, American and Italian imperialists'. They also called for the overthrow of these two evils – warlordism and imperialism – in their national revolutionary movement.¹⁰⁰

The massacre of the Peking–Hankow railway workers also came as a shock to the Russians. They reacted by denouncing Wu's strike-breaking activities immediately. In March 1923, one month after the shootings, the Executive Committee of the Comintern condemned the massacre, and extolled the strike as a 'heroic struggle against the military servants of English, Japanese and American capital', and called upon the workers to wage 'a ruthless war against the imperialists and their Chinese allies'.¹⁰¹ In the following month, the February Seventh Incident was reported in greater detail to the Russian audience. The massacre, according to the report, was done by 'bloodhounds, who organized these atrocities on the instructions of Wu P'ei-fu'. It went on to tell how Sze Yang was arrested and shot on Wu's orders, how a warrant was issued to arrest eleven editors and contributors of the weekly periodical of the

CCP. It also stated that the Prime Minister in Peking declared Li Ta-chao and Ch'en Tu-hsiu responsible for the unrest and ordered them to be arrested and put to death.¹⁰² Musin, a profitern commentator of the *Novii Vostok*, accused Wu of receiving support from the Americans and condemned the shootings.¹⁰³

On the whole, Russian denunciations seemed to be milder than their Chinese counterpart. Except in a couple of articles depicting Wu as an agent of the foreign bourgeoisie and reprimanding his shootings, the Russian press in general gave little space to the event. Some simply remained silent about Wu for the moment. In fact, Maring complained in an article that the strike was a disaster because the shootings went unreported outside China and were only briefly mentioned in the KMT papers.¹⁰⁴

The Russians by no means regarded the suppression of the 7 February strike as an end to their relations with Wu. M.N. Roy said that Leo Karakhan, the Narkomindel negotiator, began his China mission by trying to win the support of Wu P'ei-fu.¹⁰⁵ Soon after his arrival in Peking in December 1923, Karakhan immediately made his way down to Loyang to seek Wu's accommodation.¹⁰⁶ Karakhan's pro-Wu theme had some success. By the time he arrived, Wu's relations with Western Powers had changed. Britain and the United States had turned down Wu's requests for loans on account of strong opposition from Japan. Wu was in financial difficulties in the face of the coming war with Chang Tso-lin. A normalization of Sino-Soviet relations would enable him to look into the hitherto untapped source of money, the Russian portion of the Boxer Indemnity.

The Chinese negotiator with Karakhan, Wang Cheng-t'ing, was Wu's man. During the entire course of negotiation from September 1923 to March 1924, Wang was in direct consultation with Wu and made several trips to Loyang to win the general's support.¹⁰⁷ In November 1923, the Russian commentator again sounded hopeful about the improvement of their relations with Loyang. V. Vilensky, Wu's main protagonist, in an article in the *Izvestiia* on 28 November 1923, advocated that the Narkomindel extend their influence in central China. He stressed that the 'strategic centre' of central China, 'has the most favourable position and possesses the greatest natural resources'. He predicted that Wu's party, 'the sufficient firm bourgeoisie power', would 'hold power firmly in her hands' and 'consolidate different parts of China into a single unit'. Vilensky's view of Wu at this time is apparent in his book, *Wu P'ei-fu (kitaiskii militarizm)* [Wu P'ei-fu: Chinese Militarism]; published in 1925. He denied that Wu was a British

agent, or that Wu was under the influence of imperialism. Vilensky contended that Wu was a 'great nationalist', and that because his domain was in central China, far away from the coastal area, he was less subject to direct imperialistic pressure. Furthermore, as a nationalist, Wu undertook to unify China against 'Japanese imperialism', in connection with which, Russia could be helpful as an ally. Vilensky saw Wu's support for the Sino-Soviet Treaty as a strategic move against Chang Tso-lin. In defying the opinion of the diplomatic corps by supporting the Treaty, Wu, he said, was actually demonstrating his sense of nationalism and anti-imperialism. According to Vilensky, Wu, like Sun Yat-sen, was an advocate of a triple alliance of Russia, Germany and China. The rivalry between Wu and Sun, however, he explained, was purely a personality conflict. Sun would not submit to Wu or Ts'ao K'un nor vice versa. But the hard fact remained, as Vilensky told his readers, that there could not be more than one president in China.¹⁰⁸

On 26 January 1924, A.I. Ivanov, Karakhan's interpreter in the Russian embassy, visited Loyang and talked with Wu.¹⁰⁹ Finally in late January 1924, a draft agreement was reached between Wang Cheng-t'ing and the Russians. Wang immediately dispatched his secretary, Lu Han, with the agreement to Loyang to obtain Wu's approval.¹¹⁰ Wu went over it with Lu and finally put his stamp on it. Wang then went ahead and signed the understanding with Karakhan on 14 March 1924. However, Wang ran into trouble with the Peking cabinet, which refused to ratify the agreement on the grounds that: (1) Soviet Russia did not renounce the Mongolian-Soviet treaties; (2) the agreement was vague about the withdrawal of Red troops from Mongolia; and (3) it confirmed the transfer of former Russian property in China to the Soviet government.

However, Wang received strong support from the Loyang warlord, who demanded the prompt conclusion of the Sino-Soviet Treaty. Wu only sent his personal representative to Peking to express his viewpoint but wired the capital no less than six times between 18 and 26 March insisting that Peking fulfill her promise to Karakhan without conditions. In the fourth telegram, addressed to the Council of State, Wu argued that the 'Peking government should not be pedantic and lose the chance of striking a good bargain'. He reasoned that Russia had recognized Outer Mongolia as an integral part of the Republic of China and agreed to work out the troop withdrawal in later conferences; she was therefore not intriguing on Chinese national sovereignty. Regarding the transfer of former Russian property to the Soviet government, Wu said that it was stipulated in international regulations and cited the example of the return

of German property to the defeated Germany after the War.¹¹¹

Finally on 31 May 1924, the Sino-Soviet Treaty was concluded between Karakhan and Wellington Koo, who replaced Wang Cheng-t'ing as the negotiator. In early July, Wu issued a circular telegram proposing that the returned portion of the Russian Boxer Indemnity amounting to over Y\$200 million be used in building railways and exploring the resources of the northwestern regions of China. Although the Sino-Soviet Treaty specified that that sum should be devoted to educational purposes, Wu insisted that it would be more beneficial to the nation if it was diverted to railway construction first; later the earning from these railways could be used for the promotion of education. Wu even directed his subordinate Sun Tan-lin to draw up a scheme for the construction of two railroads leading to Inner Mongolia and building a bank in the financial centre at Chengchow, Honan, to plan the use of the money. Nevertheless, because of the opposition from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the sum remained unappropriated pending further discussion and decision.¹¹²

Communist Rapprochement with Wu after Wu's Re-emergence at Wuhan

Wu's relations with Soviet Russia went into eclipse after he was defeated in the Second Chihli-Fengtien War in the autumn of 1924. In early 1925, Wu was marooned on Chikungshan along the border of Hunan and Hupeh. But his fortune took a turn in the autumn of 1925. By August of that year, he had re-emerged again as Commander-in-Chief of the Anti-Bandits Allied Army in Wuhan. Wu once again dominated central China.

The political situation in China had undergone great change since Wu's fall from power. By August 1925, the Peking government under the Chief Executive, Tuan Ch'i-jui, was not working well. Chang Tsolin, the Manchurian warlord, and Feng Yü-hsiang, the head of the Kuominchün, were competing for control of the capital. Both sounded out Wu as a possible ally. In April 1925, Feng Yü-hsiang had already come to an agreement with Russia, in which the Russians agreed to provide Feng with material aid and military instructors. Therefore Wu looked upon Feng Yü-hsiang not only as a military enemy who had staged a *coup* against him but also as a communist agent. Between August and December 1925, Wu evinced many anti-Red statements against the Kuominchün leader. On 22 October 1925, Wu said he

opposed communists and Bolsheviks for they 'were destroyers of the country'. When he was asked by a newsman if Feng Yü-hsiang was seeking a reconciliation with him and what was his standing with the Kuominchün and the KMT, Wu replied that he would not allow them to exist.¹¹³

Russian and the Chinese communists were indeed promoting a Wu-Feng rapprochement at this time. In late 1925, Karakhan was authorized by his government to come to an understanding with Wu. Should Wu be victorious, Karakhan should confirm Wu as ruler of the Chihli province and head of the Peking government, while the central government itself should be formed of supporters of Feng Yu-hsiang and Canton.¹¹⁴ Suhoroukoff, Vice-Consul in Mukden, reported at this time that Seifulin was interested in Wu P'ei-fu and spoke highly of both Wu and Feng Yu-hsiang.¹¹⁵ On 12 December 1925, Peter S. Jowe wrote in the *China Weekly Review* that Wu's headquarters in Hankow had been frequented by several Russians.¹¹⁶ According to the report of a secret agent 1301, a Russian by the name of Ni-po-kuo-erh-no-i was in contact with both Wu P'ei-fu and Feng Yü-hsiang.¹¹⁷

Chinese communists also assisted in promoting a Wu-Feng alliance. In late 1925, Ch'en Tu-hsiu went to Hankow to consult with Wu P'ei-fu and Hsiao Yao-nan. With T'ang Shao-i, a former Prime Minister, as the intermediary, Ch'en hoped to bring about a triple entente of Wu P'ei-fu, Feng Yü-hsiang and Canton. On the other hand, Wu showed good will towards the Nationalist government. As a token return visit, Wu dispatched Pan Tsan-hua, with two letters of introduction from Ch'en Tu-hsiu and T'ang Shao-i, to Canton to meet with Wang Ching-wei and Chiang Kai-shek.¹¹⁸

However, in January 1926, Wu decided to patch up his differences with Chang Tso-lin rather than those with Feng Yu-hsiang. There are reasons why Wu should choose the Manchurian warlord rather than the Kuominchün as an ally. First Feng had betrayed him in a *coup* during the Second Chihli-Fengtien War and Wu was not willing to forgive and forget such an action from his subordinate. Second, at this time, Wu was actively seeking British support through the Hong Kong government, the British consulate in Hankow and the Jardine, Matheson and Company. He used the communist threat to pressure the British government to support him financially.¹¹⁹ It was not in his interests to be a friend of the Soviet supported Feng Yü-hsiang. Therefore, on 5 January 1926, he turned to Chang Tso-lin and completed an Anti-Red United Front with the former Manchurian enemy.

In order to destroy the Anti-Red United Front, the CCP evolved a

policy of drawing elements from the Chihli clique to set up a temporary 'grey' government in Peking for the purpose of opposing Chang Tso-lin.¹²⁰ But before the policy could be executed, Wu showed his determination to carry out the anti-Red campaign and invaded the Kuominchün stronghold in Honan on 19 January. In January and February, the Chinese communists launched a vigorous attack on Wu in the two publications, *Hsiang-tao chou-pao* and the *Lao-kung jih-k'an* (Workers' Daily). In an article on 3 February 1926 in the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, Peng Shu-chih called the Anti-Red United Front of Wu and Chang 'an alliance between two warlords and Japanese imperialism'. He urged the masses to participate in all anti-Wu activities such as organizing a national demonstration and helping the Kuominchün defend against Wu's attack in Honan etc.¹²¹ Peng also called upon the railwaymen to avenge themselves and assist the Kuominchün to transport troops in a war against 'the demon who suppressed the workers'. On 7 February 1926, in a commemoration of the February Seventh Strike, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Youth Corps issued a statement with these slogans; 'Down with the alliance of Wu and Chang! Down with Wu P'ei-fu! Down with Chang Tso-lin! Down with British and Japanese Imperialism!' The Peking-Hankow General Union, the Honan Provincial General Union and the Chinese National Union also sent a joint telegram denouncing Wu as the 'treacherous bandit, who gathered all other bandits in Honan and threatened the life and property of the common people'.¹²²

Wu responded to these denunciations by issuing a public telegram calling Feng Yü-hsiang 'a traitor to his superior'. Wu said that since Feng had covertly entered into a secret understanding with Soviet Russia, he was compelled 'to take up arms again to suppress this traitor'. He appealed to all other militarists to give up their factional strife and to join him in a United Front against the 'Reds' and to make the Bolshevik issue the major issue of the time.¹²³ On the battlefield, Wu P'ei-fu had splendid successes. Honan was recaptured by him in January; Tientsin was in Wu's hands in March and the Loyang warlord was marching with his troops towards the capital.

In view of Wu's imminent success, Russians were forced to renew their contact with him. On 25 March 1926, the Committee on China of the Politburo in Moscow resolved that a compromise should be made with Wu, should the latter achieve military hegemony in north China.¹²⁴ On the scene, Karakhan immediately put this plan into practice. As a measure of saving the Kuominchün from complete defeat, Karakhan appealed to Wu for a Chihli-Kuominchün alliance. He sent a letter to

Wu by special delivery through the Soviet Consulate-General in Hankow. In that letter dated 29 March 1926, Karakhan praised Wu for his 'liberation of China'. He said Wu had always been admired by the Russian people, in the past, at present and in the future as 'a great Chinese patriot'. People in Soviet Russia had always followed his 'herculean efforts with unbounded admiration'. He told Wu that Chang Tso-lin was 'the greatest usurper China has ever had', 'a tool of Japan', and also 'scheming with Great Britain and the United States'. He cautioned Wu that Chang Tso-lin might promise him a great deal of things today but would turn against him at the first opportunity. He then advised Wu to combine with the Kuominchün. He said:

I advise you as a friend and as the representative of a friendly nation. The resources of the USSR are always at the disposal of leaders of liberation movements. We will stand by you if we could persuade ourselves that you would not unwittingly become the tool of unscrupulous political factions under the control of imperialistic powers.

Is it moral support you want? You have had it already. Is it material assistance you needed? It is yours for the asking! Our countries are contiguous, our borders are not diminutive. We are in a position to rush assistance to you at any time.

Why not co-operate with Marshal Feng Yü-hsiang? He is also a great leader of the liberation movement in China. I have sounded him and he has declared himself anxious to work with you. Between you two, China could be freed everlasting from pernicious capitalistic encroachments.

Karakhan concluded by appealing to Wu to accept Russian assistance and liberate his 'Great Nation'.¹²⁵

Wu received the Russian envoy cordially but replied that the Kuominchün must first surrender their arms and recant their Bolshevik principles before they could talk of co-operation.¹²⁶ On 31 March 1926, a Kuominchün representative also met with T'ien Wei-ch'in, Wu's field commander, in an attempt to get a compromise.¹²⁷ Lu Chung-lin and Chang Chih-chiang, two Kuominchün leaders, openly invited Wu to come to Peking. However, the negotiation broke down when Wu insisted on the disbandment of the Kuominchün itself.¹²⁸ In a reply to Karakhan's letter, Wu flatly refused to take the Russian advice and called it bluntly 'the disturbance in China'. Wu said he wondered whether Karakhan's profession was 'diplomacy' or 'agitation', and advised the Russian Ambassador 'to clear out of our country so long as

you are able'.¹²⁹ In order to show he meant what he said, Wu pressed home his attack on Peking. By 15 April, the Kuominchün had to withdraw from the capital and form a defence at Nankow. Liu Chi, the Chief-of-Staff of the Kuominchün later informed Henkel, a Russian adviser, that the withdrawal would have been ordered sooner had there not been hope of a compromise with Wu.¹³⁰

Out of desperation to save the Kuominchün, Karakhan intervened again. In late April 1926, he sent the secretary of the Hankow Consulate, Mr Hassis, with a telegram to Wu, requesting again that the Chihli militarist shake hands with the Kuominchün leaders. In the telegram, Karakhan thanked Wu for receiving his previous envoy and apologized that the Consul-General could not come to Hankow himself this time because of sickness. Instead he was sending Secretary Hassis, the temporary Consul-General, to convey the message. Karakhan repeated that he admired Wu as 'a patriot', and said that it was the duty of a patriot to exterminate the 'red beard' Chang Tso-lin. Karakhan then said:

I am offering you good advice and should my plan be followed you may rest assured that it will be for the welfare of China which you seem to have at heart. It is that first of all you should shake hands with the Kuominchün leaders for these without exception are ardent admirers of you and moreover to do so would be of great advantage to your friend Ts'ao K'un, of whom I am a great admirer too. If you will conclude a peace in the north, then there will be no hostility from the south and you will be able to devote your full strength to your old enemy Chang Tso-lin ... I am personally anxious to take advice from you. Certainly the present situation is such that the victory you have gained will render it possible for us to meet very shortly in the north.¹³¹

Hassis's visit was confirmed by J.C. Huston, the American Consul in charge at Hankow. In a visit to Wu's headquarters on 29 April 1926, Huston inquired about the authenticity of Karakhan's telegram. Wu admitted that he had received the telegram but had told Hassis that 'it was a gratuitous assumption to suppose that his [Karakhan] advice on any question would be acceptable'. Wu said that he had told the Russian representative that the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1924 only permitted the Russians to conduct trade and commerce in China and not to propagate Bolshevism. He accused them of causing trouble in China and said that the civil strife was 'the direct result of Soviet activities in supplying arms, ammunition and money to Feng Yü-hsiang for the propagation of

Bolshevik doctrine in China'. Finally, Wu stated to Hassis again that he could not shake hands with Feng and he considered Karakhan's telegram 'in the nature of a threat' rather than some sort of friendly advice.¹³²

In order to show the Russians and the Western power where he stood, Wu made public Karakhan's telegram and his own reply, to the press. He branded the Russian proposal as an attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of the Chinese Republic. In May 1926, he gave instructions to his subordinates to curb all labour movements and dissolve all labour unions on government railways. He said this was because the workers were being forced into the unions by 'professional agitators'.¹³³

On 6 June 1926, the Nationalist government under Chiang Kai-shek launched a Northern Expedition against Wu. Chiang marched with his Nationalist Revolutionary Army towards Hunan province. On 11 July Wu openly denounced communism in his news interview. He compared communism to tribalism, which lacked any legal and moral systems. He said that the friendliness of Soviet Russia towards China was merely a cover-up for aggression and for 'Red Imperialism'. He assured the people that with the collaboration of Chang Tso-lin, he would eliminate all these 'Reds' from China.¹³⁴

The Russians and the Chinese communists immediately mobilised their people to assist Chiang in his National Revolution. Their help fell mainly into two categories: (1) gathering intelligence information and trying to corrupt Wu's army; (2) conducting the Red Spears Movement in Wu's base area.¹³⁵

In June and July 1926, while Wu was still fighting Feng Yü-hsiang at Nankow, communist agents were negotiating with some wavering generals of Wu, who were hesitating about whether to support Feng Yü-hsiang. A general policy of corruption of enemy troops was finally formulated on 4 August in a meeting of the Moscow Chinese Commission under the chairmanship of Unschlicht. A resolution was passed 'to renew the negotiations with Mukden in order to have a respite and to obtain freedom of action in order to start again an active struggle against Chihli, particularly against Yen Hsi-shan; to enter at the same time, into negotiations with some of the wavering generals of the Wu P'ei-fu group'¹³⁶ Simultaneously, the Military Section of the Central Committee of the CCP also decided to disorganize the enemy by planting representatives and forming communistic nuclei within various units of their army.¹³⁷

The overall policy of infiltrating enemy troops was directed by the

Soviet Military Centre in Peking. However, special groups of Soviet instructors were assigned to take charge of local operations. The Kaifeng group, whose work was carried on later by the Kalgan group that replaced it in February 1926, for example operated in Hupeh and Honan and concentrated on winning over local units of Wu's generals.¹³⁸ Intelligence information was gathered by an intelligence department. In Hankow, in Wu's power base, there were an intelligence bureau and intelligence branch bureau. Secret agents were planted in the headquarters of the Hupeh military governor, the army, the arsenal, the diplomatic corps and in various cities like Hanyang, Wuchang, Anching etc. Similar organs though smaller, were set up in Changsha and Ichang. Twelve Chinese secret agents were employed (with a monthly salary of Y\$40) to gather information in Hankow and Changsha; half of these were members of the CCP.¹³⁹

Each project had a code name; the one for Wu P'ei-fu was 'En'. Regarding Wu's project, the secret agents were told to carefully investigate: (1) the relations between Wu P'ei-fu and Sun Ch'u'an-fang; (2) the attitude of Chin Yün-e, the Deputy Commander of Wu's Anti-Bandits' Allied Army, and his subordinates; and (3) Wu's relations with the 'capitalists and foreigners', particularly his relations with Britain and the United States.¹⁴⁰ Some agents were given specific assignments. For instance, Chu Hsiao-t'ing (No. 1346, assumed name, Li Mou-sen) and Wang Yu-shan (No. 1344) were to work in the Hanyang arsenal. Hsu Hui-chih (No. 1372) was to infiltrate the 15th Army of Liu Tso-lung, one of Wu's subordinates. The information gathered by these agents was forwarded to Chang Chien-fei (No. 1363), who in turn took it to Li Feng-hsiang (both Chang and Li were students of the School of Law and Administration in Peking), and finally to the Soviet embassy.¹⁴¹ We find in the captured documents of the Soviet embassy no less than 166 items which related to the Chihli clique or directly to Wu P'ei-fu.¹⁴² Most of these are reports of the politico-military intelligence; others touched upon Wu's relations with the Fengtien clique and with Britain.

With the plan to disorganize Wu's army, the Russians and the communists, on the whole, had notable success. On 7 September 1926, Chin Yün-e and Li Tso-lung, the Deputy Commander and the Commander of the 15th Division of Wu's army respectively, defected to the Nationalist Revolutionary camp.

As for the promotion of the Red Spears Movement against Wu, the Central Committee of the CCP had passed a resolution at the Second Enlarged Plenum in Shanghai on 18 July 1926, to organize peasant associations to oppose the military government. The policy towards the

bandits in Honan. Shantung and Chihli was to 'carry out propaganda to the effect that all local Red Spears groups should join together to form a secret communications organ for exchanging information and mutual assistance The second step after the establishment of a communications organ is to find means of the Red Spears and Black Spears associations to form a single organization and formulate a political platform for common action'¹⁴³

Under the direction of first the Kaifeng group and later the Kalgan group, the Honan committee set to work among peasants and Red Spears. They used propaganda to arouse the local population and circulated proclamations along railways and in villages. Some communicated information orally to students, Red Spears and peasants. They instigated peasants to rise against Wu P'ei-fu. Peasants, therefore, refused to pay taxes, irregular levies and any kind of collection in advance. Red Spears were stirred up to make trouble near Kaifeng and to attack the rear of Wu's army. Chinese communists organized and created special detachments of peasants for self-defence. They conducted minor destructions of railways and telegraph lines in both Chengchow and Hsueh-chang. They also made every effort to provoke some of Wu's units under Ch'en Yin-chi, Li Chen-ya and Liang Shou-k'ai to revolt.¹⁴⁴

Thus unable to stand against Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Revolutionary Army and with his generals deserting him, Wu's defence in Hupeh collapsed. Chiang's army took the Wuhan area. Wu therefore retreated to Honan. Feng Yü-hsiang then moved out from his stronghold in Shensi and pushed southward towards western Honan. Unable to face the enemies on two fronts, Wu retreated to Szechwan. In June 1927, when Honan fell to the south, he declared his retirement from politics.

The findings here indicate that Wu had been in contact with Russians and Chinese communists throughout the period between 1920 and 1926. He allowed the Chinese communists to promote their labour movement in his area because he needed the communists' assistance in transporting his troops efficiently along the Peking-Hankow railway. In mid-1922, he was deeply involved in the formation of the Sun-Wu entente. Both these programmes seem to have been approved by the Russians. In 1924, he actively supported the signing of the Sino-Soviet treaty, for he had in mind the returned portion of the Russian Boxer Indemnity. From mid-1925 till the very eve of the Northern Expedition he was talking with the Russians and Chinese communists for a possible rapprochement with Feng Yü-hsiang.

All these demonstrate that Maring must have made a false statement

when he told Harold Isaacs in August 1935 that it was his report to Karl Radek in the summer of 1922 that brought about a breakdown of the Chita orientation based on Wu P'ei-fu. Obviously, Maring was exaggerating his role in the CCP-KMT collaboration by claiming credit for a change of Moscow policy from a pro-Wu orientation to a definite pro-Sun theme. But the Russians were far from finished with Wu in mid-1922; on the contrary, they were actively promoting, with the help of the Chinese communists, a Sun Yat-sen and Wu P'ei-fu alliance. The resolution for a Sun-Wu entente was passed in the same Hangchow plenum in August when they got the Chinese communists to join the Kuomintang.

As this chapter has shown, Russian courtship of Wu lasted till May 1926. It is understandable that they should seek Wu's accommodation because, despite an eclipse in 1925, Wu had always remained a dominant military figure in north China. Furthermore, between 1922 and 1924, he was the actual power behind the government in Peking. In order to normalize relations and sign a treaty with China, Wu's support was absolutely necessary. Moreover, in late 1925 and early 1926, the military position of their ally, Feng Yü-hsiang had been so weak. The only way to prevent a complete defeat of the Kuominchün was to renew negotiation with Wu.

As for the shootings in the February Seventh Strike, they should not be looked upon as a sudden outburst of tyrannical frenzy on the part of Wu, which is often depicted in most historical texts. The publication of the Sun-Joffe manifesto must have been a factor in Wu's decision to forbid the organizing meeting on 1 February. His brutal suppression of strikers was a result of the escalation of an uncontrollable situation. Wu must have had the financial and strategic factors of the railway in mind. And the crushing of the T'angshan strike demonstrated his readiness to use violence in dealing with workers. The fear of the Chihli militarists that the spread of the labour movement was in some way linked with Sun Yat-sen or possibly Russia only made the situation more vulnerable. But the 7 February massacre only momentarily dampened Russian enthusiasm for Wu. It never ended their effort in seeking Wu as an ally.

Relations With Japan

A militarist who intended to wage war in an area where a foreign power had direct political and economic interest must find a way to gain their political sympathy. This was often done through diplomatic talks and negotiations. Diplomatic visits and talks could be a convenient forum for an exchange of information and favours. Through diplomatic talks, a militarist could gain, if not the co-operation, at least the neutrality of that nation. He might be able to dissuade that power either from obstructing his own military plans or from assisting his military opponent.

Negotiations could allow a militarist to buy time to look into other alternatives. Sometimes, a flat refusal might prove to be a bad tactic, and might not even work, if he was under strong pressure to come to an agreement. Then, by giving a counter-offer, which he knew the other side could not meet, he might deceive them into believing that he was bargaining in good faith, although he might have no intention of coming to terms with them. But such action could ease the pressure for the moment.

Throughout his career, Wu kept up his diplomatic talks and negotiations with the Japanese. He did it out of necessity. In the early part of his career, he had to maintain diplomatic relations with Japan in order to obtain the necessary convenience in conducting a war against Chang Tso-lin in Manchuria. Later, he used negotiation as a diplomatic manoeuvre in order to frustrate the Japanese efforts to force him out to head a puppet government in north China.

Early Contacts and Relations

Contacts and relations between Wu P'ei-fu and the Japanese

government began on the eve of the First Chihli-Fengtien War of 1922. The policies of the Japanese government concerning the conflict then were: (1) to support Chang Tso-lin actively with financial and military aids; (2) that such support be restricted to preserve Manchuria only; and (3) to approach Wu P'ei-fu simultaneously, and, in the coming hostility, to adopt a bystander attitude while ready to negotiate with the victor.¹ In an instruction, Uchida Yasuya, the Japanese Foreign Minister, noted that Wu was not merely a military figure but a real power worthy of Japanese attention. He believed that in order to win over Wu from the British and American sides and soften his anti-Japanese disposition, the Japanese government must establish contacts with the Loyang militarist immediately. Accordingly, he directed Obata Yūkichi, the Japanese Minister in China and A. Segawa, the Japanese Consul-General at Hankow, to select suitable personnel for such an operation.²

Following Uchida's instruction, Obata ordered Teranishi Hidetake, one of Wu's acquaintances, to approach the Chihli militarist to clear up the 'misunderstanding' over the alleged support of the Japanese to Chang Tso-lin. Wu, however, as Obata later reported, treated the Japanese signal with mistrust and at times with outright contempt. Obata therefore advised his government to stall the negotiation. Despite Obata's advice for caution and the opposition to such Wu orientation by Akazuka Shōsuke, the Japanese Consul-General at Fengtien, the Japanese government, nevertheless, reaffirmed the Uchida suggestion. In 'The Japanese Government Policy Towards China at the Time of the Fengtien-Chihli War,' adopted by the cabinet in April 1922, the Japanese government instructed the officials 'to devise a proper method for the future contact with Wu P'ei-fu.'³

Although Wu had slighted the Japanese approach before, the First Chihli-Fengtien War made him realize the weight of Japanese influence in China, in particular in Manchuria, which he was in no position to ignore. In the pursuit of the retreating Manchurian army, Wu intended to stay in Tientsin to conduct his campaign, but he soon ran into difficulty with the Japanese authority in that area. Major Suzuki Kazuma, the Japanese Commander at Tientsin and Obata Yūkichi, the Japanese Minister at Peking, promptly launched a protest and demanded his departure, stating that the Boxer Protocol prohibited the use of Tientsin as a military base by any Chinese army. It was not until after much argument, with indirect help from Britain and the United States, that Wu was finally allowed to remain. Both the British and the Americans insisted that to force Wu to depart would mean a partial treatment for Manchuria, since Chang had already violated the Protocol

by sending troops into the area.⁴

Moreover, Wu's relations with Japan were further strained once Josef W. Hall published his article 'On To Tokyo, Says Wu P'ei-fu', in the *China Press*, an American newspaper in Shanghai. Hall quoted Wu as having said in an interview that Tokyo would be his ultimate military goal. The Japanese reaction was instantaneous. A Japanese government representative promptly called on Wu in Loyang with an invitation to march on Tokyo at any moment, assuring him that Japan was ready. The Japanese press ridiculed him as 'a timid dog barking from a distance.' On account of these outcries, both Wu himself and Peking found it necessary to repudiate the statement, asserting that it was only a misunderstanding.⁵

This experience taught Wu that it was necessary to maintain some kind of diplomatic dialogue with Japan which would allow flexibility and political manoeuvring in the future. As the Chihli-Fengtien War finally drew to a swift conclusion in May, Wu immediately invited Okano Masujiro to be his adviser in charge of Japanese relations. The Wu-Okano friendship went back to the days of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-5, when they were carrying out espionage activities together under Major Morita Rien in Manchuria. They met again later in 1906, when Wu's 3rd Division was transferred to Changchun on a mission of bandit suppression. Okano then was working in the South Manchurian Railway in the city. For seven years, Okano was a close friend of the Wu family, occasionally doing favours such as arranging for the casket of Wu's deceased mother to be transported by the South Manchurian Railway to Penglai, Shantung, for proper Confucian burial. Afterwards they parted but they kept in touch until Okano finally took up the advisory post in Loyang.

Before taking his trip to China, Okano paid many diplomatic visits to Tokyo on behalf of Wu in order to obtain an understanding with the Japanese government. He had a conversation with General Uehara Yusaku, the Chief-of-Staff of the Army Headquarters on 24 November 1922. Uehara, apparently following the general policy laid down by the cabinet in April, remarked to Okano that he placed great emphasis on the 'strong central power' in China. According to him, Japan would associate with any 'real power', regardless of its factional affiliation, to help unify the Chinese nation and to oppose the British and American influence in that area. Should Wu P'ei-fu be interested, Uehara told Okano, Japan could send military officers to Loyang to help him strengthen his position there.⁶ The next day when Okano called on the

Japanese Foreign Ministry, Foreign Minister Uchida told him to keep in constant contact with the Ministry.⁷

After making these visits, Okano left Tokyo and arrived in Loyang on 23 December 1922. Thereafter, a steady stream of Japanese visitors came to Wu's military headquarters. By Okano's count, in the twenty-six months from March 1922 through to April 1924, there were no less than forty-seven Japanese callers at Loyang. Wu received them formally, but never entertained them lavishly as he often did with the British and the Americans. Among the Japanese visitors was Major Itan Matsuo, the head of the 2nd Division of the Japanese army. Itan, an envoy of Uehara, came to Loyang in January 1923 in the company of several staff officers. Having been cautioned by secret telegram from Peking to keep Itan's party under surveillance, Wu therefore only received the delegation formally. As it turned out, Itan's mission was to offer Wu, on behalf of Uehara, twenty Japanese staff officers with a supply of arms for retraining and re-equipping his army. Wu, however, pleaded that financial stringency forbade him to hire so many officers and therefore he gracefully declined the offer.⁸ The same proposition was brought up again by Major Suzuki Kazuma in his visit on 4 March 1923 but Wu again turned it down.⁹ Okano concluded that Wu had missed his chance and his arrogant refusal to accept Japanese help only led him to his own defeat by Chang Tso-lin a year later.

Sometimes, Wu acceded to Japanese requests. For instance Hayashi Kyūjiro, Consul-General at Hankow, beseeched Wu to exert pressure on Peking to curb the anti-Japanese sentiment, then prevalent in central China. A month later, Mizuno Baigyo of the Japanese newspaper, *Shina Jijo* visited him for the same purpose. On both occasions, Wu agreed and subsequently cabled Peking imploring Ts'ao K'un to suppress the anti-Japanese movement so as to reduce the Sino-Japanese tension.¹⁰

In return, Wu asked the Japanese navy if he could purchase two ships to be used in his forthcoming campaign against Szechwan. In 1923, he sent Okano to Admiral Tsuda Seishi, a 'China expert', and the naval attache of the Japanese Legation in China, to negotiate the purchase of the *Hsun-tzu* and the *Hu-fa*. (These vessels were initially ordered by the Japanese Tenka Company from the Kiangnan Shipyard in Shanghai.) Wu also wanted the Japanese to arm the ships for future sea combats. Having obtained clearance from the Japanese naval authority, Okano went to Shanghai to sign the contract with Inoue Masashi, director of the Nisshin Shipping Company. The vessels were later delivered in mid-January 1924 and renamed *Chueh-ch'uan* and *Chun-shu*.¹¹

After this transaction, Wu's relations with the Japanese navy were greatly improved. There were frequent exchanges of visits. Okano and Hsieh Han-yo, Wu's secretary, attended a gathering on 26 November 1923, given by Admiral Nomura Kichisaburo of the Japanese 1st Squadron and S. Yada the Japanese Consul-General at Shanghai. Afterwards they took a tour on board a Japanese cruiser. Two days later, Okano and Hsieh in return gave a party for the Japanese officers. With the permission of the Navy Ministry, Nomura called upon Wu in Loyang on 4 May 1924. They discussed Sino-Japanese friendship as well as the problem of the navigation of Japanese gunboats along the internal waterways of China. The Japanese officer assured Wu that he would notify the responsible officials in the localities before proceeding with his gunboats up the river. Wu requested Nomura's assistance in the repair of his Chihli fleet, which consisted of six gunboats built in the days of Li Hung-chang in the late Ch'ing period, and now badly in need of repair and inspection works. The Japanese Admiral consented for Wu to hire technicians from the Mitsubishi Shipping Company to do the job. Wu accordingly dispatched Okano to Tsingtao to make the necessary arrangement. The work reportedly cost Wu a little under Y\$2 million, approximately Y\$100,000 for the repair of two cruisers and about Y\$1,600,000 to put the others in order.¹² This meeting built a lasting friendship between Wu and the Japanese officer. Later, Nomura, having retired from his position in China and about to sail for Japan, made another trip to Loyang to bid Wu farewell. Wu by then had already fallen from power as a result of Feng Yü-hsiang's *coup d'état* in late 1924.¹³

Wu twice attempted to do business with Japanese merchants. On one occasion, he tried to purchase Y14,400 worth of equipment from a Japanese firm at Hankow for dredging a portion of the Yangtze River. On another occasion in the summer of 1923, he was approached by Kitamura, a Japanese merchant, with a project for transporting panlownia wood on shallow-water steamers down the Yellow River from Shenchou in Honan, to Chinan in Shantung. Kitamura proposed to furnish the initial capital of Y150,000 with an additional Y\$150,000 of compensation for the inconvenience incurred in the increase of inland waterway traffic. The Japanese merchant however wanted Wu to take the project under his name as a sign of Sino-Japanese co-operation. Both these plans did not materialize as a result of Wu's debacle in the war of 1924.¹⁴

In late 1924 as the Chihli-Fengtien conflict was approaching, Wu

began to make his diplomatic moves. First he appointed Banzai Rihachiro, then military adviser to President Ts'ao K'un, to be his adviser of the Anti-Bandits' Allied Army. However Banzai had to turn down the offer on account of Japanese criticism.¹⁵ Secondly, he had Okano call a conference of the Japanese press in Peking to explain his intention to unify China and to give assurances to the Japanese that their lives, property and privileges in Manchuria would be protected. Simultaneously, he instructed Wang Yung-po, Chinese Minister at Tokyo, then on leave in Peking, to return immediately to Tokyo to conduct the necessary negotiation.

In order not to make the same mistake and also to ensure the use of the Japanese-controlled South Manchurian Railway, Wu had to secure, if not the co-operation, at least the neutrality of the Japanese Legation in Peking. His tactics combined both protests and negotiations. On 16 September 1924, he dispatched Sun Jun-yu, secretary-general of his staff office, to Yoshizawa Kenichi, the Japanese Minister, protesting against the release of unfavourable comments on the Chihli clique by the Japanese press. He also demanded the Japanese government to apply pressure on Chang to stop his mobilization of troops in the north. On 19 September 1924, in a meeting between himself and the Japanese Minister, Wu formally protested against the Japanese support of Manchuria.¹⁶

Through Okano and Yen Hui-ch'ing, the Chinese Premier, Wu sent more than sixty personal letters to such high officials in the Japanese government as Prince Saionji, Funazu Shin'ichiro, the Consul-General at Fengtien, Shirakawa Yoshinori, Commander of the Kwantung Army and Yasuhiro Banichiro, director of the Manchurian Railway, preparing them for his possible entry into Manchuria.¹⁷ He further ordered Yen to host a dinner for the Japanese diplomats including Yoshizawa Kenichi, the Japanese Minister, Yoshida Isaburo, the Japanese Counsellor, Yano Shigeru, the secretary of the Japanese Legation, Harada Kumao, the Japanese interpreter and Lieutenant Banzai Rihachiro of the Japanese army. On 25 September 1924, at the dinner, Wu tactfully emphasized to Yoshizawa the cordiality of the Sino-Japanese relations, asked the Japanese to give him the needed assistance in the coming war and hoped that Japan would only deal with the 'proper authority' in Peking. Yoshizawa responded that Japan would definitely negotiate with the sole authority in Peking if Wu could extend his influence to the frontier in the forthcoming operation.¹⁸ On 9 October in a meeting with Yoshida Shigeru, the Japanese Consul-General at Tientsin, Wu reaffirmed the

Chihli respect for all Japanese privileges in Manchuria and hinted to the Japanese Consul-General that he would be willing to give Japan treaty privileges not granted by Chang Tso-lin in Manchuria.¹⁹

The Japanese officials, on the other hand, had mixed feelings for Wu in 1924, ranging from admiration to contempt. In February 1924, in a report of his trip to central China, Colonel Matsui Nanaō depicted Wu as an idealistic man who wished to succeed Ts'ao K'un and unify China and who had lately moved toward a better understanding with Japan.²⁰ At about the same time, Major Hayashi Yasakichi, Military Attaché of the Japanese Legation in China, recommended the absolute necessity of a negotiation with Wu if Japan were to solve the Manchurian problems and to normalize relations with China. Hayashi dismissed Wu's anti-Japanese feeling as nothing but the natural sentiment of a Chinese nationalist and claimed that Wu was recently leaning towards a policy of friendship with the Japanese government. He concluded that a conciliatory approach to Wu would ultimately draw him closer towards a policy of co-operation in the future.²¹

But Major Kishi of the Japanese army in Fengtien had a different view. After a visit to Loyang in August 1924, Kishi said that Wu was a pro-British and pro-American 'fool', who was interested only in using the remitted portion of the Boxer Indemnity to construct railways and in seeking American investment for the building of highways in Shantung province.²²

Funazu Shin'ichirō, the Japanese Consul-General at Fengtien, however, took a middle path and advised his government in the following way. Should Wu win in the coming conflict, he suggested, Japan should check the Chihli invasion east of the Liao River on the pretext of the preservation of order and the protection of Japanese special interests in Manchuria. On the other hand, in the event of a Chihli debacle, Japan should outpace Britain and the United States to be a mediator so as to thwart any attempt by the West to help Wu to avoid a complete fall from power.²³

Thus, throughout the Second Chihli-Fengtien War, the Japanese policy, on the whole, was one of non-intervention. Shidehara Kijuro, the Japanese Foreign Minister, following Funazu's suggestion, argued that the winner, be he Wu or Chang, would definitely respect Japanese privileges in Manchuria therefore Japan should take a neutral stance. Nevertheless, it did not prevent part of the Japanese army in China, with the tacit understanding of a branch of the Foreign Ministry, from covertly promoting an accord between Chang Tso-lin and Feng Yü-hsiang, which finally resulted in Feng's *coup d'état* of 23 September.²⁴

The news of the *coup* was related the following day to Wu by Okano, who gathered it from three telegrams despatched from the Japanese Legation, the Japanese garrison at Peking and the Japanese army headquarters. By then, Yoshioka Kensaku, the Japanese Commander at Tientsin had already issued orders advising the Chihli forces not to use Ch'inhuangtao in their retreat. On 26 October, Wu tried personal diplomacy. He made his way back to Tientsin to seek Japanese help personally for a ceasefire. A mission of Chihli elders was sent to Yoshida Shigeru, requesting the Consul-General at Tientsin to communicate Wu's desire for a truce to Tokyo. Yoshida, implementing Funazu's suggestion of outpacing Britain and the United States as a mediator, met with Wu at the Chihli military headquarters on 2 November. He proposed to the Chihli leader a Wu-Tuan Ch'i-ju collaboration and later told Okano that Japan could afford Wu asylum in the Japanese concession. Unwilling to step down at that time, Wu declined the proposal and the offer.

As the Shанhaikuan front collapsed, Wu sailed with his troops southward. Cheng Shih-ch'i, an Anfu sympathizer, and Military Governor of Shantung, refused to let Wu land at Tsingtao without being disarmed. The Japanese immediately backed Cheng, asserting that the best way to protect foreigners was to prevent Wu's landing. If Wu desired to enter Tsingtao, the Japanese Consul-General said, he would have to anchor in the outer harbour and negotiate with Cheng on a Japanese cruiser. Wu stubbornly refused to be disarmed, and finally decided to sail with his three transports and 10,000 troops directly down to Hankow without stopping in the Shantung area.²⁵

Wu's defeat at the hands of Chang Tso-lin forever destroyed his image in the Japanese eyes as a real power although he later made a comeback in October 1925 to head an Anti-Bandits' Allied Army. Despite Hsiao Yao-nan, the Military Governor of Hupeh who repeatedly asserted that Wu was in direct command, Funazu Shin'ichiro was dubious of the amount of power Wu actually possessed.²⁶ On 31 January 1926, he concluded that Wu was only an empty name with no substantial strength. He reported that Wu's subordinates kept their distance from him and the relations between them could best be described as a group 'sharing the same bed, each having his own dreams'.²⁷

When Chiang Kai-shek launched the Northern Expedition in 1926, Wu was driven out of his territorial hold in Honan. In 1927 as the Nationalist Revolutionary Army was pushing northward, he further retreated to the west. Evading the forces of Feng Yü-hsiang in Hupeh, he reached the Szechwan border on 13 July 1927, seeking the protection of

Yang Sen, his former subordinate. Although Yang, by then, had joined the Nationalist Revolutionary Army as the Commander of the 20th Army, he still retained, to a great extent, independence from the Nationalist government at Nanking. He was therefore able to provide sanctuary for his former superior. However, Wu's stay in Szechwan caused a strain in the relations between Yang and the central authority, since Nanking urged Yang to arrest his former superior and bring him to the central government. In view of his long friendship with Wu, Yang was unwilling to comply with the Nanking instruction. He repeatedly ignored the orders; instead of putting his former chief under arrest, Yang wired Nanking saying that Wu's trip to Szechwan was only for travel and had no political implications. He further assured the central government that he would assume responsibility for all Wu's activities in the province. Wu, on his part, also sent a circular telegram announcing his retirement from the political arena.²⁸

At that time many stories circulated, alleging that Wu was supported by Yang to reorganize an army and stage a comeback. As these rumours reached Nanking, the central government sent out special representatives to investigate and report on the situation. In order to show his allegiance to Nanking, Yang had his former leader disarmed on 4 January 1928.²⁹ From 1927 till the autumn of 1931, Wu was able to stay in Szechwan first under the protection of Yang, then under Liu Hsiang, another former subordinate. During his stay in Szechwan, it was reported that Chiang Kai-shek offered him a post in Nanking but Wu turned down the offer.³⁰

Wu moved frequently, first from Wanhsien to Taichou then to Suiting, and finally settled in a temple on the pinnacle of a mountain near Tahsien, a town on the northern border of Szechwan. He spent his time studying the Buddhist canons and the Confucian classics. He practised calligraphy, wrote poems and took up drinking. Thus with these pastimes to occupy himself, he spent four years in Szechwan province.

Wu and the Organization of Puppet Governments

As early as February 1929, a group of Chinese diplomats and Japanese *ronin* were seeking Wu's support for the formation of a Japanese puppet government in Manchuria. In a secret meeting at the residence of Tseng Yü-chün, one of the schemers, the conspirators drew up two plans for the setting up of the new government. The first one called for the

establishment of a government directly under P'u Yi, the last Manchu emperor, with the assistance of Tuan Ch'i-jui, the Anfu leader. The second plan, however, was to get Tuan to form a government and then support P'u Yi to be the head of the government. In connection with the second plan, it was designed to have Tuan assume the presidency while Wu P'ei-fu would be asked to be the Commander-in-Chief of the 1st Division, heading the entire army. The plan was then communicated to Wu, who was still in retirement in Szechwan. But Wu had reportedly expressed pessimism and consequently the second plan fell through.³¹

Wu apparently was more interested in his new appointment. In the autumn of 1931, he was invited by the National government to be an adviser in Peking. Accordingly, he left Szechwan with his family. Taking the northern route from Chengtu to Lanchow in Kansu, then via Mongolia to Tat'ung in Shansi, Wu finally arrived in Peking in February 1932.

By then, the Mukden Incident had occurred and the Japanese had rapidly advanced to occupy the whole of Manchuria. On 1 March 1932, the state of Manchukuo was formed with P'u Yi as the Chief Executive and Cheng Hsiao-hsu, his teacher, as Premier. When Manchukuo was formally inaugurated on 9 March 1932, Wu had Chang Ping-lin, the famous Chinese scholar and stylist, draft a circular telegram, condemning the Japanese action, which Wu signed and issued on the following day. He maintained in the telegram that Manchuria had been an integral part of China ever since the Han dynasty. He then charged the Japanese with conducting 'treacherous and aggressive activities' in that area. Finally, he appealed to his fellow-countrymen to resist these aggressors, to punish the internal 'usurpers', and to save the country from national extinction.³²

Wu, as seen from some of his speeches, seemed to be anti-Japanese and very firm about recovering Manchuria at this time. In an address to a group of middle school students at Peking in the spring of 1932, Wu told them they should not be intimidated by the sheer size of the Japanese army. He assured them that if they joined forces with the volunteer corps of other schools, they could defeat the Japanese like Yueh Fei defeated the Ju-chen in the northern Sung dynasty.³³ In another address given at the Hall of Martial Arts in Peking in the summer of 1932, Wu strongly criticized the government for lacking 'benevolence' (*p'u-jen*) and 'wisdom' (*p'u chih*) because they neither resisted the Japanese aggression nor tried to save the people from being 'trampled by the Japanese Army'.³⁴ On another occasion, in a speech given at the Northeastern University at Peking, Wu went a long way to

assert that Manchuria had historically been part of China and that the Chinese had heroically defended that area against Russian encroachment in the Ch'ing dynasty. He earnestly urged his audience to strengthen themselves so as 'to develop Manchuria, to defend Manchuria and to recover Manchuria.'³⁵

In spite of his anti-Japanese pronouncements, Wu was frequently contacted by Chinese and Japanese conspirators, and quickly drawn into the intrigue about the creation of puppet government in China. By 1933, some of Wu's former subordinates had already become active promoters of a Sino-Japanese-Manchurian compromise. Pai Chien-wu, for instance, at one time Wu's head of the Political Department, attempted to bring about an understanding between China and Manchukuo. Pai was in favour of a ceasefire between China and Japan, the creation of a neutral 'North China Political Authority' and a return to the pre-1928 Presidential politics with the provisional constitution as the basis.³⁶ Equally active in the Sino-Japanese compromise was Chang Pao-kun, formerly Wu's head of the Social Relations Department. Chang and his son, Chang Ch'ing-chao, were leaders of an anti-Chiang Kai-shek force in Honan called 'Peoples' National Salvation Army of Chihli, Shantung and Honan', created mainly from members of secret societies in Honan province. When this force was crushed by Chiang in 1932, Chang and his son fled to Tientsin and finally reached Dairen, the stronghold of Japanese conspirators. From that city, they worked for the comeback of their chief, Wu P'ei-fu, as head of the north China government.³⁷

In May 1933, Chang Pao-kun sent his son to Tokyo to see Okano Masujiro. They met at Kamita Nikka Gakkai in Tokyo on 1 June 1933. Chang Ch'ing-chao claimed that he was under Wu's instruction to contact Okano and to present the Japanese government with a proposal. Chang, however, apologized for being unable to obtain a written statement from Wu, as his chief was under close surveillance by the Kuomintang intelligence service, the Blue Shirts. He therefore had to relate it orally. According to Chang, Wu would like the Japanese army to occupy Peking and Tientsin, to supply him with arms and loans and to help him and Tuan Ch'i-jui set up a north China government. As for the new government, Chang continued, Wu suggested that Tuan be the Chief Executive while he himself wanted to take command of military affairs. Chang said Wu's proposal also stipulated that the Japanese army should retreat outside the Wall after the government was formally established. But in return for their favour, Wu pledged to rally the militarists in the north, the northwest and Szechwan and launch a campaign against Chiang and the Nationalist government. After the new

government had been recognized by the Powers, Chang told Okano, Wu would issue a statement to recognize the Manchukuo. China and Japan could then move towards friendship, understanding and mutual non-intervention. This Sino-Japanese Alliance, Wu allegedly promised, would give Japan an opportunity to develop Manchuria, to aid China in developing her natural resources in the northwest and would deter any Russian and American expansion in the Pacific area. As a step in the opposition to the Nanking regime, Chang himself suggested that a 'North China Peoples' Anti-Kuomintang National Salvation Self-Defense Force' should be created out of their former army in Honan and placed under the command of his father.³⁸

Okano however told Chang that he believed Wu's proposal came too late as Nanking had already named Huang Fu as Chairman of the Peiping Political Affairs Council and the Tangku Truce had already been signed on 1 May. But he suggested that Wu should wait for future opportunities. Later when he found out that Dairen had shown some interest in the proposal, he submitted it separately to General Uehara Yusaku, the Chief-of-Staff of the Japanese army and Uchida Yasuya, the Japanese Foreign Minister. The Japanese response was decisively negative. The decision of the government was to give no assistance to any Chinese warlord or clique; some high officials regarded Wu's proposal as nothing but 'exaggeration and imagination'; others even sneered at him as a 'powerless spirit,' one who had been in political retirement for almost ten years.³⁹

Nonetheless, Chang Ch'ing-chao on his return to Dairen on 9 June, contacted Manchukuo. Through the intercession of Okano and Ota, a Japanese activist in Darien, Chang met with Cheng Hsiao-hsu, the Manchukuo Premier, and tried to work out some sort of China-Manchukuo co-operation. In June, he sent Okano a letter. He said he had a meeting with Yuan Tzu-min, one of Wu's aides and from Yuan, he learned that Wu wanted Okano to go ahead with the negotiations in Japan. Wu, Chang reported, also wanted either Japan or Manchukuo to provide him with a secret Y\$5 million loan, which he needed in order to conduct the anti-Chiang campaign in China.⁴⁰

On 24 August 1933, in less than three months, Chang made a second trip to see Okano in Tokyo. He pointed out that as a war in north China would soon break out Wu would be the logical candidate with sufficient prestige in his command to take control of the situation. By this time however, Chang was more concerned with his own interests than those of Wu. As part of the package, he requested permission from the Japanese army headquarters to form a police force under the command

of his father within the demilitarized zone to be used in future conflicts. He also wanted the consent of both the Manchukuo and the Kwantung Army to extend the Peiping P'u Li Confucian Charity Organization into the Shenyang and Chinchor areas, apparently for intelligence and propaganda purposes.⁴¹

Okano subsequently forwarded Chang's proposal to the Japanese army: to lieutenants-general Ono Toyoshi and Uehara Heitaro as well as Lieutenant-Colonel Suzuki Seiichi. Regarding the creation of a police force in the demilitarized zone, all these army officers agreed that there was no need for another police force there since Pai Chien-wu, a competitor of Chang, had already under his command a 'Peace-Protection Police Force' in the region. The idea of extending the Peiping P'u Li Confucian Charity Organization did not receive a favourable response from the Japanese military. But Uehara told Okano that Tuan Ch'i-jui, Wu P'ei-fu and Feng Yü-hsiang had all been considered by the Japanese army as possible candidates before the signing of the Tangku Truce. Uehara said that Tuan was under close surveillance by the Kuomintang, and therefore unavailable, Wu was too weak militarily and Feng lacked sufficient popularity; the Japanese therefore had no choice but to come to terms with Ho Ying-chin and Huang Fu. He conceded that the idea of creating a strength in the neutralized zone under the Changs was still feasible and might well be used to assist Wu in forming a new government if there was renewed conflict in north China in the near future.⁴²

All these proposals, however were submitted to the Japanese by a third party, Chang Ch'ing-chao. Did Wu draw them up or did he acquiesce in Chang's action? We have no knowledge of the role, if any, Wu played in the whole conspiracy. It seems that these plans were conceived by his subordinates, particularly Chang Pao-kun, Chang Ch'ing-chao and Yuan Tzu-min, who wanted their chief to head a new government. The available material indicates that Wu at least at this point was strongly opposed to the Japanese activities in Manchuria. In late 1933, he wrote a letter to the Showa Emperor, a copy of which had been obtained by the Japanese Port Arthur Naval Station and later forwarded by the Japanese army to Tokyo on 13 December 1933. In the letter, Wu charged the Japanese action in Manchuria as 'tyranny' (*pa*) and denounced their coveting of the Three Eastern Provinces as 'lack of righteousness' (*i wu cheng-i*). He categorically refuted the argument the Japanese supposedly gave for their Manchurian occupation. According to Wu, the Japanese justified their actions on the following grounds: (1) being an island nation and unproductive, Japan had to rely on

Manchuria as their life line. Wu argued that Japan had already obtained in China too many privileges that were undisputed by other nations. She could guarantee her life line by trading and exchanging products with China. Wu maintained that her occupation of Manchuria was unjustified and, to quote a Chinese saying, 'injuring others in order to benefit oneself'; (2) overpopulation in Japan required the resettlement of Japanese people in Manchuria. Wu saw overpopulation as a domestic problem of Japan to be solved by the Japanese themselves. He nevertheless suggested they could try the modern method of birth control; (3) since Japan had made so much sacrifice for China in the Russo-Japanese War, she had the right to claim Manchuria as a reward. But Wu doubted this line of reasoning. If her action in the War was self-defence and self-protection, Wu contended, Japan had no reason to ask for compensation at all. But if she acted out of righteousness to save her neighbour, there was no justification for reward either, for, he argued allegorically, no one would ask for remuneration from a woman after saving her from molestation; (4) to keep peace in East Asia and to prevent further Soviet Communist expansion, Japan had to make use of Manchuria as a line of defence. Wu admitted that a common policy of defence against Soviet expansion was necessary for China and Japan but insisted that such a policy should be executed bilaterally on the basis of mutual agreement. Occupation of Manchuria, Wu noted, had only the adverse effect of creating dissension among the Chinese, thus making it possible for further foreign encroachment in the area.

Wu therefore reminded the Showa Emperor that Japan was a member of the Nine Power Treaty and should abide by the agreement. Japan could bring herself out of international isolation if she negotiated with Chiang's government. By coming to terms with Nanking, Wu asserted, Japan would save the Chinese from war and suffering. On the other hand, by arousing the enmity of the Chinese people, Japan would only forfeit her trading privileges in China which she had had for some years. Wu further told the Emperor that China and Japan were 'brothers'. Japan should realize her mistake, withdraw from China and come to a peaceful agreement with the Chinese government. 'Fleeting bravery', Wu concluded by warning the Emperor, 'can entail calamity for hundreds of years.'⁴³

Although Wu's letter had antagonized some Japanese officials such as Akizuki, the former Japanese Ambassador to Austria, who condemned it as 'childishness,' 'empty talk of a drunkard' and 'stupidity,'⁴⁴ Wu's expressed disapproval of Japanese activities in Manchuria never discouraged the Japanese army from looking to him as a possible

candidate in the new government. For instance, Doihara Kenji, the veteran conspirator of the Kwangtung army, was very much interested in the former Chihli militarist.

In the 1930s the Japanese army through special agencies was conducting intelligence work and 'dirty tricks' on Chinese candidates for the formation of a puppet government. The work on Wu P'ei-fu was known by its code name 'orchid work.' It was headed by Doihara Kenji. His agency thus came to be known as the Doihara Agency.⁴⁵ Doihara himself regarded Wu was the 'best candidate in contemporary China to uphold the political order in China'.⁴⁶ When the Japanese army attempted to incite a separate movement to make Shantung, Hopeh, Shansi, Chahar and Suiyuan into a puppet Hua-pei Kuo (North China Land) in 1935, Doihara had Wu in mind as leader. Doihara's grandiose scheme, as worked out by him and Chiang Chao-tsung, a former Chinese militarist, was to create a five province autonomous region with the support of generals Sung Che-yüan, Han Fu-chü and Yen Hsi-shan and to top it with Wu P'ei-fu's leadership.⁴⁷ In July 1923, Chang Ch'ing-chao, apparently involved in the scheme, made his third trip to see Okano in Tokyo. Chang offered Okano Y\$1,000 and said Wu wanted him to make a trip to Peiping in connection with the formation of a new government. Okano, bogged down by some business, was unable to leave the city.⁴⁸ However, in September 1935, Doihara himself approached Wu to ask him to head such a regime, but Wu turned it down.⁴⁹

In January 1937, Chang Ch'ing-chao made his final attempt to induce Wu to come out of retirement. This time he was able to obtain a personal letter from Wu inviting Okano to come to Peiping. Okano thus left Japan on 23 January, travelled via Changchun, the capital of Manchukuo, and Tientsin and arrived in Peking on 19 March. After a separation of fourteen years, Okano finally met his mentor on 29 March. Their conversation however never touched upon politics. Instead Wu lectured him on Buddhism and Chinese poetry. At one point, Wu even loudly recited the *Cheng Ch'i Ko*, a poem written by Wen T'ien-hsiang, a Sung scholar-official, about righteousness. A few days later, Okano met with Fu Ting-i, a former subordinate of Wu. Fu, in their conversation, predicted that there would be renewed hostility in north China in the near future and suggested that Japan should support Wu as head of the next government. Having failed to persuade Wu out of retirement, Okano, very disheartened, returned to Tokyo on 2 May 1937, without accomplishing anything.⁵⁰

The Wu P'ei-fu Movement

It was not until the outbreak of full-scale war on 7 July 1937 that concerted efforts were again made to get Wu to emerge from retirement. At the end of the war, General Terauchi Hisaichi of the North China Area Command of the Japanese Army wanted to establish a regime in Peking. It was planned that at the beginning a transitional government would be formed with Ts'ao K'un as President, serving out his unexpired term of office that Feng Yü-hsiang had abruptly terminated by his *coup* in November 1924, with Wu P'ei-fu as Premier and Ch'i Hsieh-yüan, another Chihli militarist, as Minister of War.⁵¹ The plan failed partly because of Ts'ao's unpopularity and the exorbitantly high price he asked, and partly because of Wu's refusal to be part of the plan.⁵² The Japanese North China Army therefore turned to Wang K'o-min instead and a puppet 'provisional government of China' was set up at Peking in December 1937. Ch'i Hsieh-yüan, however, was retained in the new regime as a member of the Executive and Legislative Committee and also as Minister of Public Security.

In February 1938, a new plan was drawn up. It asked for the creation of a Chinese Republican Urgent National Salvation Assembly (*Chung-hua min-kuo kuo-min chin-chi chiu-kuo hui-i*) in the provinces, with the purpose of pressing T'ang Shao-i, a former Premier and a Kuomintang leader then retired in the French concession in Shanghai, and Wu P'ei-fu to come out from retirement. The Japanese believed that T'ang, because of his party affiliation, might draw some support from the Kuomintang while Wu was the only man able to get the support of the Szechwan militarists for the new regime. They also hoped that a government under T'ang and Wu might eventually be recognized by Europe and America. In that month, General Kanda Masao made a trip to central China to sound out Wu on the matter but was unable to get him to co-operate.⁵³

The 'Wu P'ei-fu Project' (*Go Hai-fu kōsaku*) or the 'Wu P'ei-fu Movement' (*Go Hai-fu undō*), the scheme to induce Wu to come out of retirement, was not actually formulated until after Konoye reshuffled his cabinet in May 1938. By then, another rival puppet 'reformed government' under Liang Hung-chih had been set up at Nanking by the Japanese Central China Area Army. There was an urgent need to unify these two regimes under a new central government in China. The idea of recruiting T'ang Shao-i and Wu P'ei-fu thus became even more attractive and was debated by Japanese officials in June 1938. The advocates strongly emphasized T'ang's reputation among the Kuomintang members in south China and Wu's close connection with

the anti-Chiang forces in Szechwan. The opposition, particularly Ishii Itarō, chief of the Asia Bureau of the Foreign Ministry, argued that they had overestimated the influence of these leaders. T'ang, he said, could not even get the respect of the people in his own district, where he served as magistrate, and was physically thrown out of the area. Wu's ties with the Szechwanese, Ishii pointed out, were loosely dependent on jealousy and opportunism and he would not be surprised if these militarists moved closer to the Kuomintang should Wu decide to collaborate with the Japanese in the formation of a new government.⁵⁴

Despite some objection, the project on the whole received strong support from high officials in the government. On 8 July 1938, at the Five Ministers' Conference, a decision was made to bring the National government down. The Japanese agents in China were instructed to recruit anti-Chiang elements for this work. On 26 July, in a subsequent meeting, the government created a Special Commission on Chinese Affairs (*Zaishi Tokubetsu Iinkai*) to work out important political and economic stratagems against China. Doihara Kenji was chosen as the number-one man of three leaders (Doihara himself, Tsuda Shizue and Banzai Rihachiro representing the Army, Navy and Foreign ministries respectively) for this group. Doihara immediately started to work on T'ang Shao-i, Wu P'ei-fu, Chin Yun-p'eng, a former subordinate of Wu, and some of the men of the Kwangsi army.⁵⁵ Different agents were assigned by him to contact different candidates: Oseki Michisada was responsible for Wu P'ei-fu, Wachi Takaji for the Kwangsi army and Doihara himself, for the moment, concentrated on T'ang Shao-i, the main leader.⁵⁶

In late July or early August, the Japanese agent advised Wu of the T'ang-Wu collaboration plan. Instead of giving a flat refusal this time, Wu changed his tactic, saying he would only consider the plan after T'ang had agreed to emerge. T'ang eventually presented his terms to the Japanese and even drew up a 'peace telegram' for publication; however in September he was assassinated.⁵⁷ T'ang's death created some complications. But on 7 October, another Five Ministers' Conference was held. Subsequently an order was issued directing Doihara to work on Wu P'ei-fu, Chin Yun-p'eng, the Kwangtung and Kwangsi armies and the followers of T'ang Shao-i.⁵⁸

Doihara was unable to persuade Chin, who had become a Buddhist monk, to abandon his holy order. He therefore pinned his hopes on Wu P'ei-fu. From Shanghai, he came to Peiping to direct the operation. His two agents, Oseki Michisada and Kawamoto Yoshitarō, were ordered to put pressure on the Chihli chief. As the pressure mounted from the

Japanese side as well as his own former subordinates, Wu put forth his counter proposal, knowing it to be unacceptable to the Japanese. He demanded: (1) the liberty to recruit an army of 300,000 of which he would be Commander-in-Chief, (2) the withdrawal of Japanese troops from China and, (3) no interference by the Japanese in his civil government.⁵⁹ Major-General Kita Seiichi of the North China Area Command immediately rejected the first condition. As a result Wu refused to serve.⁶⁰

Between November 1938 and January 1939, Doihara tried all his 'dirty tricks' on Wu to get him away from his literary pursuits and to emerge as head of the central government. He had Chang Yen-ch'ing, the son of Chang Chih-tung and Minister of Industry and of Foreign Affairs in the Manchukuo, set up National Peace Salvation societies throughout China, purporting to represent the voice of the people and to send public telegrams to Wu earnestly requesting him to come out of retirement.⁶¹ Chang, representing Wu without his knowledge, signed an agreement with the Japanese for the creation of an army, supposedly under Wu's command. In Shanghai, the conspirators printed an anti-war National Salvation Telegram ready to be signed by Wu upon re-emergence.⁶² They also formed a Suiyuan Pacification Military Committee in Kaifeng, Honan, formerly Wu's power base, with the aim of rallying all old soldiers of the northwest and organizing a 'peoples' conference' in Shanghai, Nanking, Hong Kong and Kwangtung and requesting Wu by telegrams to take office.⁶³

Throughout December, the Japanese press gave a great deal of publicity to Wu's 'expected emergence.' On 1 December the *Japan Times* ran a special story, predicting that Wu would take up the position of President of the Federal Republic of China in an area under Japanese occupation. A couple of days later, the Japanese newspapers announced that the Japanese Premier would make an important declaration on 11 December. Then on that day, it was reported that the Premier was not able to give the speech on account of ill health. On the following day, the declaration reportedly 'had been indefinitely postponed'.⁶⁴ In late December, the *Nichi Nichi*, a Japanese newspaper, again prophesized that Wu would shortly circulate a statement denouncing communism and seeking support from the people to 'unite solidly behind the race movement'.⁶⁵ On 24 December, apparently as part of Doihara's plan, it was announced that Wu would soon take up the post of Pacification Commissioner. The *Asahi* reported that Wu's headquarters would be in Kaifeng along the Lunhai railway and he would first devote his attention to the suppression of guerrilla and Chinese Nationalist troops in the South Yangtze area.⁶⁶

It is clear that Wu hardly came close to an agreement with the Japanese, although he did listen to their suggestions politely without giving them a flat refusal. The counter-proposal was simply a tactic of delay intended to reduce the intense pressure put upon him by the Japanese conspirators as well as by his former subordinates. By December 1938, Wu had already established telegraphic communication with Chungking and in early January, Chiang Kai-shek's secret emissary had been in touch with him. K'ung Hsiang-hsi, the head of the Administrative Yuan in Chungking, had dispatched Liu Hsi-ying, formerly Wu's confidant, with a personal letter to Peiping in December 1938. Liu arrived on New Year's Day 1939 and had a secret meeting with Wu. In his short reply to K'ung dated 10 January 1939, Wu assured the Nationalist official of his personal safety but advised Chungking to adopt both hard and soft lines in her foreign policy.⁶⁷

In late January 1939, intense pressure was put upon Wu, but as Imai Takeo, who met with him frequently, noted that they found him 'an obstinate fellow who had absolutely no notion of the changing times'.⁶⁸ On 24 January, Wang I-tang and Wen Tsung-yao, both members of the United Council, called upon him. Doihara himself also came and pleaded with him to take the job of Pacification Commissioner. Wu insisted on the evacuation of Japanese forces from China as a precondition. Doihara conceded and promised a retreat of Japanese forces outside Peiping before Wu's assumption of office which would be followed by the actual withdrawal of Japanese troops on the Wuhan front.⁶⁹

Under pressure, Wu finally agreed to hold a press conference and on 31 January 1939, gave an interview to a group of journalists. Before his appearance, the Japanese distributed a written text in both English and Japanese to reporters. The written statement conveyed the impression that Wu had already agreed to accept the position, but like a humble Chinese statesman, asked the public for their co-operation. It condemned the Third International for conducting 'its sinister plots' in China. It reads:

The Third International, however anxious to avail itself of an opportunity, has done its utmost to carry on its sinister plots. If things go on like this, they will not only endanger the very existence of our nation, but also bring about widespread Communist influence. As a result people of farsighted and broad vision have come together to plead for peace. Fortunately, I have not been abandoned by my fellow-countrymen and have been asked to take the responsibility of pacification. I am afraid I might be too old and in declining health to

do any good to remedy the national crisis, but as I am a citizen, I have to do my duty. ...⁷⁰

Wu's address, however, differed markedly from the written text. He remarked to the newsmen:

Because the people know I have always believed in peace, many, including my friends, have asked me to lead a peace movement. There are three prerequisites to any successful effort to achieve a real peace: real force, a suitable place and real political power. The place undoubtedly is Peiping. There is no doubt I can show real force. There remains the question of real political power. I have heard that the Japanese military headquarters will return real political power to the Chinese. After this is done my aim in making peace and saving the country can be realized.⁷¹

The oral version hardly suggested a leader who had already been won over. It was so evasive and non-committal and couched in humble style that one correspondent described it as 'a pleasant collection of harmless aspirations' and 'a masterpiece in the art of diplomatic evasion'.⁷² Wu stubbornly insisted on the condition that there should be a 'return of real power to the Chinese'. The Japanese and Chinese conspirators, however, thought that by forcing Wu's hand, by announcing his agreement to the plan first, they could monitor him into acceptance. They were wrong.

The Wu P'ei-fu Project created endless disputes between the North China Area Command and the Doihara Agency on the one hand and between Wang K'o-min and the Chinese supporters of Wu on the other. Lieutenant-General Kita Seiichi, chief patron of the provisional government and head of the Koain (Asia Development Board), was not enthusiastic about Wu. Colonel Imai Takeo regarded Wu as an 'old warlord, incapable of commanding respect from the people'. The provisional government under Wang K'o-min maintained a pretence of co-operating with Wu but actually restrained the project covertly. Although Tokyo issued repeated orders to the provisional and the reformed governments instructing them to co-operate with the Doihara Agency, leaders of these regimes tried to restrict Wu's activities to the Hankow and south China area. When Wu's press interview became a complete failure, Chang Yen-ch'ing hastily disappeared from the scene. That drew heavy criticism from the provisional government as well as from other Japanese opponents. The whole affair, as Imai concluded years later, was 'the most ridiculous entertainment in the whole world'.⁷³

Wu, for his part, promptly assured foreign diplomats that he did not intend to accept the Japanese offer. On 1 February 1939, he sent an adherent to call on Lockhart, the counsellor of the American embassy in China, to repudiate the report that he had definitely accepted office. His position, the caller said, had been grossly misinterpreted by the publication of the written statement. The caller also told Lockhart that Wu did not intend to accept any such office until the Japanese met his conditions particularly with respect to the withdrawal of their troops.⁷⁴ In the same month, Wu also sent a message to Sir A. Clark-Kerr of the British consulate in Shanghai, expressing gratitude for what Britain was doing to help the cause of China but assuring the British that he was not going to come out of retirement.⁷⁵

Simultaneously, in Chungking, Dr T. T. Li of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told Everett F. Drumright, Second Secretary of the American embassy, that Wu had been in communication with the Nationalist government and that he himself had seen a letter from Wu to the Generalissimo a month ago. He stated that Wu had been under constant pressure from his immediate subordinates and from the Japanese to participate in a new regime. Li further asked the assistance of the American embassy to facilitate Wu's departure from Peiping; however Drumright's opinion was that it was not the policy of the American government to intervene in such a matter.⁷⁶

In the spring of 1939, the 'Wu P'ei-fu movement' subsided a little for the moment, but rose to a new height the following summer, this time with the collaboration between Wu and Wang Ching-wei. By then the Japanese had switched their attention to Wang Ching-wei. But Wang had no army at all. The Japanese realized that it was necessary to have the support of someone such as Wu P'ei-fu who had the military power.⁷⁷ Since his departure from Chungking in the winter of 1938, Wang had been in communication with Wu, who supported his appeal for peace.⁷⁸ On 1 February 1939, K'ao Tsung-wu, one of Wang's colleagues, reported to Wang that the Japanese wished him to secure support from the provisional and reformed governments as well as from Wu P'ei-fu.⁷⁹ On 18 May, Section 8 of the Army Headquarters in Tokyo drew up a 'Guiding Plan for the Wang-Wu Work' (O-Go kōsaku shidō fukuan) which urged Wang to solicit support from Wu and specified that the creation of a Wang regime be preceded by a period of 'Wang-Wu co-operation'.⁸⁰

Wang Ch'ing-wei immediately put it into action. In late May, he dispatched his emissary Chao Shu-yung to Wu for negotiations. In a letter to the former Chihli militarist on 22 May, Wang said that China

should have a 'united, powerful, and independent government' for the 'restoration of peace in the nation'. Wu, playing the same game as he did half a year before with his Japanese pursuers, remained vague and evasive in his reply of 7 June, agreeing that peace should be restored 'if national sovereignty could be preserved'. He went on to say that he was in complete accord with Wang that a 'united, powerful and independent government' be formed to win peace but implied that the Japanese should withdraw their armed forces from China as 'the Germans had done in Spain in the restoration of political power to Franco'.⁸¹

Both the Japanese conspirators and Wang apparently thought that preliminary communication had been established. Kagesa Sadaaki, the chief of the Wang Agency, duly reported the Wang-Wu exchange to Tokyo on 23 May.⁸² On 27 May the proposed 'Guiding Plan for the Wang-Wu Work' was put before a Five Ministers' Conference. After the consent of the Foreign Ministry had been obtained, the plan was passed in June 1939. The final version ordered the new government to be established in the Hankow and Kwangtung area. The new Wang-Wu government as it was called, was to direct their efforts to draw Kuomintang followers away from allegiance to Chiang Kai-shek. Wu P'ei-fu was given the command of a newly created army. The plan further instructed that the 'Wang work' (O kōsaku) and the 'Wu work' (Go kōsaku), though two different operations, should be executed in co-ordination.⁸³

Subsequently, a decision was made on 23 June at a meeting of the Koain, the China Affairs Board, on expenses required for the 'Wu P'ei-fu Project'. According to the decision, funds were to be appropriated from the surplus funds of the maritime customs. The amount required for five months from June onwards was not to exceed Y10 million, not more than Y2 million a month. When utilizing the surplus customs funds, a Japanese name would be used to maintain secrecy. The name for the 'Wu P'ei-fu Project' was to be Oseki Michisada, who was the responsible Japanese personnel on the spot of this project. The money would be granted as a loan to Oseki from the Yokohama Specie Bank and adequate measures would then be taken for the Chinese government to settle this debt.⁸⁴

Therefore from June to December 1939, the Japanese government and Wang renewed their campaign to prevail on Wu to play a prominent part in the new central government. Since Doihara's failure last winter, the Wu P'ei-fu Project was left to Oseki Michisada and Kawamoto Yoshitarō who got some assistance from Imai Takeo of the Kagesa Agency. On 18 June Oseki got in touch with Wu whose reply

was little short of a flat refusal. Wu asked for sovereign power with himself as the head, equal to that of the Japanese emperor, and with Wang playing a secondary role. Japan, Wu said, should pay humble respect to the 'elder brother' China.⁸⁵ It was reported that in order to induce Wu to assume office, Kawamoto even went to the extent of acknowledging the former Chihli chief to be his 'master'.⁸⁶

During the six months, Wang and Wu were in correspondence. Negotiations were done through emissaries. But they were hindered by two major obstacles: (1) Wu's refusal to meet with Wang, and, (2) his insistence on being the head of the regime. At the beginning, Wang intimated, through the envoy, that he and Wu should meet at the headquarters of Sugiyama Gen, the chief of the Japanese North China Area Command. Wu refused on account of his principle not to enter the foreign concession. He suggested that Wang call on him at his residence. When Wang agreed on condition that Wu return his call, Wu declined. Furthermore, Wu refused to move from his stance that he should be the head of the new regime. Wang had reserved that position for Lin Sen, Chairman of the Nationalist government, obviously as a means of drawing in the Kuomintang followers.⁸⁷

By October 1939, all parties were tired of the negotiation. A compromise offer was suggested to Wu, giving him a six-province power base, but he turned it down. The Doihara Agency was on the verge of collapse. Oseki and Kawamoto, instead of trying to persuade Wu out of retirement, now used his name to recruit militarists in Honan province. When Wang sent him a letter on 9 October, reasoning with him about the political significance of having Lin as the head of the government, Wu lost all patience, and replied telling Wang to return to Chungking and bargain with Japan from the Nationalist capital. Wu was convinced that only the Nationalist government had the authority to negotiate and it was illegal to have two governments simultaneously in China.⁸⁸

In the midst of all this, Wu developed blood poisoning from an infected tooth. Efforts were made to get him into a hospital but he was firm in his attitude and stubbornly refused to enter the foreign concession. As his condition became serious, he was operated on by a Japanese dental surgeon Ishida. On 4 December 1939, he died from septicaemia at the age of sixty-seven.⁸⁹

Conclusion

By the 1920s, Wu P'ei-fu possessed the characteristics of a warlord. He commanded an army personally loyal to him. He became a regional militarist exercising a hegemony over Honan, Hupeh and Shensi, and with an indirect influence over Hunan, Szechwan, Kweichow and Fukien. The base of his power was military force. Backed up by his army, Wu was able to appoint his protégés to important posts in these provinces and he exacted as much money as was feasible from his base area. Force, therefore, became the final arbiter. Towards the civilian authority, he was repressive and authoritarian. Thus Wu was a warlord, not very different from other warlords of his time.

Yet, what kind of a warlord was Wu? In what respects was he different from the others? Wu was a high military commander and an Inspecting Commissioner. He was ambitious and aspired to unify China. He should be classified as a mobile warlord, like Feng Yü-hsiang. He ruled Honan, Hupeh and Shensi for only three years (1921–4.) During this short period, he did not have the time nor energy to 'modernize' his area, as Yen Hsi-shan did with Shansi province. Nor did Wu try to introduce social reform as did Feng Yü-hsiang. Wu's energy was mainly occupied first by his dream of expanding his territory and unifying China, then by inter-clique politics. It was natural that these two aspects should call for most of his attention, since he became the military head of the Chihli organization. And simply because his sphere of influence lay in the troubled area between the north and the south, he had to spend much of his time planning and conducting wars against his rivals.

Wu was a traditional warlord. He valued Chinese tradition and customs highly. This was the result of the education he acquired in his formative years. Wu never went abroad, nor did he enroll in any modern civil school. Therefore, Western values had less influence on him than on other warlords such as Ch'en Chiung-ming, also a *sheng-yüan*, but who studied in the Academy of Law and Administration in

Canton, or Yen Hsi-shan, who was a graduate of the *Nippon Shikan Gakko* (Imperial Military Academy). Thus, Wu was more conservative. Ideologically, Wu resembled Feng Yü-hsiang. Perhaps this was due to their similar lack of modern education. Both Wu and Feng were influenced by traditional concepts, conceiving that good government depended on the morality of political leaders. Both of them had a distrust for political institutions. Wu was sceptical about Yüan Shih-k'ai's constitution and he had no faith in federalism, which he thought might lead China back to tribalism. He thought that the only way to bring China out of its chaotic situation was to give authority to elderly, upright and moralistic men. In the same way, he looked for moral virtue and uprightness in his military officers rather than merely military skill.

Though a deep attachment to Confucian doctrine and the Chinese tradition did not make Wu different from several other warlords, his attachment to Chinese values was an outstanding aspect of his personality. He had his own personal code, never to seek sanctuary in a foreign settlement, to go abroad, or to be a coward. He defended Chinese tradition, tracing Western technology to Chinese origins. This love for tradition made him very Chinese; it also made him anachronistic in the eyes of his May the Fourth contemporaries. Because of his worship of the two sage-militarists, Yüeh Fei and Kuan Yü, he was loyal to Ts'ao K'un even when at odds with him on particular issues; and he demanded the same kind of loyalty from his own subordinates. Such a concept of loyalty seemed to blind him to the fact that his subordinates did not think of loyalty in the same way. It was the insubordination of one of his most powerful subordinates, Feng Yü-hsiang, that shattered his dream of reunifying the country.

Despite Wu's strong attachment to Chinese tradition, Western military technology, to a certain extent, had its effect on him. As a military man, Wu realized that he needed modern arms and ammunition to conduct his wars. He had to build arsenals, telegraphs and telephone stations, and highways, and to buy aeroplanes from abroad. He understood that sound military strategy, superior tactics, efficient communications, well worked-out diplomatic relations and adequate supplies of arms were essential to modern warfare. And he believed that the only certain way to 'win a hundred victories in a hundred battles' was to adopt part of the Western military art while still retaining the Chinese traditional theories taught by Sun Tzu and Hsü Tung.

Aside from Western military technology, Wu acquired a rudimentary sense of modern nationalism. His nationalistic feeling came from two sources. First, for a large part of his career before 1928, Wu's main

enemies were those he considered to be Japanese underlings, for example Tuan Ch'i-jui and Chang Tso-lin. In denouncing the pro-Japanese policies of Tuan and Chang, Wu manifested a sense of love for his own nation. He also accused Feng Yü-hsiang of serving Russian interests and fought against him. Secondly, Wu's love for Chinese tradition and his stress on Chineseness made him nationalistic. By identifying Chinese tradition and customs with the Chinese nation and defining China as a nation with a boundary and a distinct culture of her own, Wu thought in terms of a nation or *kuo*. He equated the preservation of the Chinese tradition with the salvation of the nation. His pride in China as a 'big nation' as distinguished from the other countries as 'small nations' was a revelation of his modern nationalistic sentiment.

It is dangerous to generalize about the warlord period simply from the biography of one warlord. Yet sometimes generalization is necessary to help us understand militarism as a system. Wu's rapid rise to power illustrates the fact that the military profession was increasingly becoming an attractive avenue of upward mobility for the lower classes during the latter part of the Ch'ing dynasty. Yüan Shih-k'ai's training of the New Army at Hsiaochan initiated the process of drawing manpower from the lower strata of the Chihli-Shantung area. Later, the breakdown of the old order and the provincial wars that followed provided further opportunities for soldiers to move up the social ladder rapidly. Consequently, we find that by 1920 many highly-ranked military officers of the Peiyang army were men of humble origin. Without rapid expansion of the army and without these internecine wars, it might not have been possible for a man of such low social background as Ts'aò K'un to move up to the position of presidency of the Chinese Republic.

Wu's rule in Honan, Hupeh and Shensi is an example of how a warlord operated in his territorial base when he had virtually become a viceroy in that area. Wu exerted a tight control over lucrative posts in these provinces, appointing his own men to these positions. He exercised his authority to intrude into the sphere of civilian officials. He managed assets such as railways, banks, maritime customs, *likin*, stamp duties, and opium, and contracted loans from banking and commercial circles. Merchants were the people who filled his war-chest. Since Wu always had to raise a great deal of money in a short time, the only persons who had ready cash to lend were merchants. It would take him longer to extract the same amount from the peasant.

Wu operated within a clan-structured Chihli military system. It was composed of elders, a main stem, branches, 'adopted sons', quasi-Chihli members, and allies. Seen from Wu's vantage point, the relationship

between members of this system varied according to their respective distance from Wu's stem. Moreover, the reward system within the clique was geared to the clan structure. Since Wu was the one who parcelled out territories, it is obvious that he took care of his stem members first and thereafter members closest to his stem. Branch members naturally received less attractive rewards. Because stem members obtained the lion's share of the spoils, they remained loyal to Wu and tried to ease the tension when a conflict occurred between them. 'Adopted sons' and branch members, on the other hand, were difficult to deal with. They were ambitious, always on the alert to restore and expand their power. Their conflicts with Wu were harmful to the whole organization. Feng Yü-hsiang's *coup d'état* was a good example.

After the Second Chihli-Fengtien War of 1924, the relations between Wu and his subordinates deteriorated. Wu lost all his territories; therefore he had very little with which to make bargains with others. The only thing he could do was to rely on his former subordinates, Hsiao Yao-nan and Sun Ch'u-an-fang, who, by this time, had built their own centres of power. Since Hsiao, Sun and Feng Yü-hsiang had newly split from the Chihli clique, they were relatively weak powers. They had to strengthen themselves through alliances in order to check the aggression of their enemies. Thus, the time between the end of the Second Chihli-Fengtien War in 1924 and the success of the Northern Expedition in 1928 saw a period of inter-organizational conflicts and chess game alliances among these militarists. It was a time of intrigues and double-crosses. All power-holders calculated the power of others, evaluated the political atmosphere, always remained ready to shift allegiance or patch up differences with other militarists, whenever there was a chance to increase their power. These shifts of alignments and the attempts to make short term gains in power made the whole period highly unstable. Even when Chiang Kai-shek was moving up the Yangtze with his army in mid-1926, northern militarists were still unable to resolve their differences and unite against their common foes. Instead they took advantage of the misfortune of their allies to make a short term gain of power. This made it easier for Chiang to sweep them off the political map of China.

In the area of foreign relations, Wu's diplomacy was, to a large extent, dictated by his military needs. Throughout his career, he always tried to procure arms, loans and to win foreign support from the British and the Americans. At times, he clearly went out of his way to win favour with foreigners. He considered the British and the Americans to be his principal allies and continually won their confidence and affection. He

granted them interviews, dined with their diplomats, invited their military officers and newsmen to be observers during his wars and asked newspaper editors to serve as his advisers. He cultivated relations with various levels of foreigners: the diplomats, businessmen, the press and the missionaries, hoping that they might exert some influence on their home governments. Except for their moral support and sympathetic attitude, the British and American governments on the whole adhered to their policy of neutrality and non-intervention. Yet, they failed to prevent their press and some private individuals from directly intervening in the troubled politics of China.

Although Wu regarded Britain and United States as his principal allies, he nevertheless maintained cordial relations with the Russians and the Japanese. This stems from the fact that no militarist could ignore any foreign power, if he wished to wage wars to unify China. Maintaining amicable relations with less friendly nations, if it did not enable him to win their support, at least it afforded him their neutrality. He had to keep his options open. Talking to the Russians might improve his relations with the Chinese communists. And he did so throughout the period between 1920 and 1926. His relations with the Japanese were mainly designed to gain their neutrality at the time of conflict with Manchuria. Occasionally, he was assisted by the Japanese navy in the repair of his cruisers.

The Russians and the Japanese, on the other hand, were compelled to adopt multi-choice foreign relations with Chinese militarists. The very unstable Chinese political situation made it impossible to back one single faction or party. The Russians negotiated extensively with all major military-political figures: Sun Yat-sen, Feng Yü-hsiang, Wu P'ei-fu, Ch'en Chiung-ming and probably Chang Tso-lin. The Japanese undoubtedly leaned towards Tuan Ch'i-jui and Chang Tso-lin. But the very nature of 1920s politics taught them that Chinese military powers waxed and waned and that it would be in their own interests to win favour with Wu P'ei-fu.

After his debacle in 1927, Wu's diplomatic style changed a little but not very much. In Peiping, he once again became the object of contact by the Japanese. Unwilling to serve them as puppet, unless they agreed to all his terms, Wu kept up the negotiation, nonetheless without giving them a flat refusal. When he came under strong pressure from his subordinates and from Japanese conspirators to come out of retirement, and be head of a puppet government Wu made a counter-offer, which he knew would be unacceptable to them. He stubbornly refused to serve the Japanese till his death in 1939.

Appendix 1

The 24 Division Commanders of the Chihli Clique in 1924

Name	Division Commander	City and Native Province
Ts'ai Cheng-hsun	Central 1st Division	Tientsin, Chihli
Sun Ch'u'an-fang	Central 2nd Division	Wancheng, Shantung
Wu P'ei-fu	Central 3rd Division	Penglai, Shantung
Kung Pang-to	Central 6th Division	Kiangning, Shantung
Wang Ju-ch'in	Central 8th Division	Miyun, Chihli
Lu Chin	Central 9th Division	Tientsin, Chihli
Tung Cheng-kuo	Central 9th Division	Chimo, Shantung
Feng Yü-hsiang	Central 11th Division	Ch'aohsien, Anhwei
Chou Yin-jen	Central 12th Division	Wuchiang, Chihli
Wang Huai-ch'ing	Central 13th Division	Ningchin, Chihli
Chin Yün-e	Central 14th Division	Chining, Shantung
P'eng Shou-hsin	Central 15th Division	Pingtu, Shantung
Wang T'ing-chen	Central 16th Division	Tientsin, Chihli
Lu Chin-shan	Central 18th Division	Ch'inghai, Chihli
Yang Ch'un-p'u	Central 19th Division	Tientsin, Chihli
Yen Ch'ih-t'ang	Central 20th Division	Chinghsien, Chihli
Wang Cheng-pin	Central 23rd Division	Hsingcheng, Fengtien
Wang Wei-cheng	Central 23rd Division	Jench'in, Chihli
Chang Fu-lai	Central 24th Division	Chiaoho, Chihli
Hsiao Yao-nan	Central 25th Division	Huangkang, Hupeh
Ts'ao Ying	Central 26th Division	Tientsin, Chihli
Hu Ching-i	Shensi 1st Division	Fuping, Shensi
Chang Ch'ih-kung	Shensi 2nd Division	unknown
Sun Chung-hsien	Central 5th Division	unknown

Appendix 2

Chihli Militarists other than the 24 Division Commanders

Name	City and Native Province	
Feng Kuo-chang	unknown	Chihli
Wang Shih-chen	Chengting,	Chihli
Hsü Shih-ch'ang	Tientsin,	Chihli
Chang Huai-chih	Tung-a,	Shantung
Ch'en Kuang-yüan	Wuching,	Chihli
Li Shun	Tientsin,	Chihli
Wang Chan-yüan	Kuant'ao,	Shantung
Ch'i Hsieh-yüan	Ningho,	Chihli
T'ien Chung-yü	Linyü,	Chihli
Sun Yo	Kaoyang,	Chihli

Appendix 3

List of Generals among the 24 Division Commanders and 2 Allies in 1922 and 1924

Name	1922	1924
Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun	X	X
Sun Ch'u'an-fang		X
Wu P'ei-fu	X	X
Kung Pang-to		X
Wang Ju-ch'in	X	X
Lu Chin	X	X
Tung Cheng-kuo		X
Feng Yü-hsiang		
Chou Yin-jen		X
Wang Huai-ch'ing	X	
Chin Yun-e	X	X
P'eng Shou-hsin		X
Wang T'ing-chen		X
Lu Chin-shan		X
Yang Ch'un-p'u		X
Yen Ch'ih-t'ang		X
Wang Ch'eng-pin	X	
Wang Wei-cheng		X
Chang Fu-lai		X
Hsiao Yao-nan		
Ts'ao Ying		X
Hu Ching-i		X
Chang Ch'ih-kung		
Sun Chung-hsien		
T'ien Sung-yao		X
T'ang T'ing-mu		X

Notes

BCCJ	<i>British Chamber of Commerce Journal</i>
CIR	<i>The China Illustrated Review</i>
FER	<i>Far Eastern Review</i>
HKHTJP	<i>Hsiang-kang hua-tzu jih-pao</i>
HTCP	<i>Hsiang-tao chou-pao</i>
NCH	<i>North China Herald</i>
TFTC	<i>Tung-fang tsa-chih</i>
sh.	<i>sheet</i>

Part One Internal Politics

Introduction

- 1 The term *chün-fa* or 'warlord', was first borrowed from Japan (*gunbatsu* in Japanese) and later popularized by both the Kuomintang and the Chinese communists in the 1920s. See Winston Hsieh, 'The Ideas and Ideals of a Warlord: Ch'en Chiung-ming (1873-1933)', *Papers on China*, Vol. 16, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. 1962, p. 198.

To many Chinese, words like 'soldier' or 'militarist' had an unpleasant connotation. As a group the military was looked down upon as a lower class associated with violence.

The term *chün-fa* had a particularly bad connotation. The word *fa* (lord) suggests a person who uses his power indiscriminately to suppress other people. As defined by a recent Chinese philosopher, Wu Chih-hui, the word *fa* referred to a militarist who: (1) possessed a territorial base, (2) had an army, and exacted taxes from the people and administered civil affairs in the province at his own wish, and (3) maintained his position by military power. Furthermore, Wu maintains that the militarist had little concern with civilian administration and authority and that was anachronistic in his ideology. This definition first appeared in an article written by a Mr Wang in *Ching P'ao* (Peking Gazette) 20 February 1925. Wu Chih-hui, in his answer to Kao I-han's article concerning the problem of warlords cited Wang's definition and said that he agreed with Wang on that definition. *Hsien-tai ping-lun*, Vol. 3, No. 64, 1925, pp. 5-9.

From the arguments of Wu Chih-hui and Kao I-han concerning the term 'warlord' in 1925, we may get a rough idea of what '*chün-fa*' meant to the intellectuals of the 1920s. Both Kao and Wu were of the opinion that revolution had to be accomplished by military power. Hence there was nothing wrong in being a militarist, but not a *chün-fa*. They agreed that Chiang Kai-shek was a 'militarist and not a warlord' (*chün erh sei fa*). However, there was a basic difference between Wu and Kao in their attitude towards warlords. Kao had a strong dislike for warlords. Though Wu was doubtful what a warlord could accomplish in a revolution, he tolerated them and said that warlords should be given a chance to try. He thought that eventually they would 'change from a warlord into a militarist'. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, No. 62, 1925, pp. 6-8; No. 64, pp. 5-9 and No. 65, pp. 3-5.

Essentially, a warlord was a militarist with regional power, as opposed to a national figure such as Napoleon. His rule in his area was based on force, actual or threatened. He exerted greater influence in domestic politics than that allowed by his status as a militarist. I do not agree with Wu Chih-hui that a warlord must have territorial base. He could be a minor commander always on the move, laying his hands on whatever funds he could obtain from provinces that he happened to pass through, or he might be a commander stationed with his troops in a certain province as *k'e chün* (guest army), drawing his funds from his superior. Nevertheless, Wu Chih-hui is correct in pointing out that a warlord was a soldier who had little concern for civilian authority.

- 2 Warlords differed markedly in their social backgrounds, education, personalities, political ideology and aspirations. Peculiarities of cultural-geographical areas would produce warlords of different sorts. Therefore, the word *chün-fa* is a generic term referring to many types of militarists. It is highly difficult, if not impossible, for us to work out a typology of them. On the whole, one should take the following five factors into account. (1) Their rank within a military establishment. A regiment commander stationed in a small village differs enormously from a high inspecting commissioner such as Wu P'ei-fu or Chang Tso-lin. (2) Whether mobile or stationary. Feng Yü-hsiang, who moved from place to place, is different from Yen Hsi-shan who had a regional orientation and ruled Shensi for a prolonged period. (3) Educational background, whether traditional or modern. Those who rose through the ranks or graduated from the Tientsin Military School and the Paoting Military Academy did not have the same political ideas and aspiration as those who had their education in *Shimbu gakko*, a preparatory school for Chinese students and the Imperial Military Academy (*Nippon Shikan Gakko*) in Japan. (4) Geographical area. Yang Tseng-hsin, the Sinkiang warlord, is different from Sun Ch'uan-fang, ruler of the Lower Yangtze, or Li Tsung-jen of south China. (5) Period. Warlords of the 1920s varied in many ways from warlords in 1930s. By the same token, Lo Jui-ch'ing, a communist militarist, who was designated by the editor of the *Jen-min jih-pao* on 31 July, 1967, as a *ta chün-fa* (big warlord) is certainly a different kind of warlord from those of 1920s and 1930s
- 3 Wu Chih-hui also says that warlordism was a by-product of a transitional

period, the result of a collapse of a political system or of a change of dynasty. In China in the 1920s, warlordism was a by-product of a transformation of the imperial system to a system of democracy. Warlordism in itself, Wu said, was a transitional political system. The takeover of the government by militarists was a logical consequence of the failure of Chinese political leaders to create democratic institutions for their new nation

- 4 James E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yü-hsiang*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1966. Donald G. Gillin, *Warlord: Yen Hsi-shan in Shansi Province, 1911-49*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1967. Gillin and Sheridan have each written a biography of one kind of warlord. It is therefore logical that their findings should differ. Donald G. Gillin, 'Warlordism in Modern China: a review article of James E. Sheridan's *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yü-hsiang*', *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 26, No. 3 (May 1967), pp. 469-74
- 5 It must be pointed out that the 'kinship' structure mentioned in this study indicates a network of social ties rather than actual biological bonds. Though kinship terminology was employed within the group to place an individual relative to each other within the structure, this structure cannot be equivalent in every way to the actual Chinese clan or lineage. The role and status of an 'elder' in this structure, for example, cannot be equated exactly to that of an elder in a Chinese clan, even though they both perform the same role as a mediator. We may therefore call the 'kinship' in a military organization a 'simulated kinship' or a 'pseudo kinship'.

The major relationships that bound the group together were provincial ties and tutor-student relations which gave the group a corporate identity. The name of the clique was derived from the province of Chihli as most of the militarists came from the Chihli-Shantung area. This provincial tie is very similar to the patrilocal nature of a Chinese clan. Since immediate superior was supposed to be one's 'mentor' the tutor-student relations developed through a chain of command, closely resembling the line of descent in a Chinese lineage.

All personal relations mentioned by Hsi-sheng Ch'i and Andrew J. Nathan which are functional in many Chinese organizations, for example, Chinese bureaucracy, merchant guilds, etc, obviously are functional in a military organization. In general, they can be divided into three types:

- (1) Familial relations (father-son, brothers, affinal kin relations etc)
- (2) Institutional relations (classmates, graduates from the same school or of the same year, patron-protégé, superior-subordinate, host-advisor, that is *mu-fu*, etc)
- (3) Regional bonds (same province, district or village and temporary residence, etc)

However, one must be cautious in using personal relations *alone* in measuring group cohesion and conflict. First, unless the relation of every member is mapped out relative to all other members of the group, the sociometric diagram is of limited use. Power, conflict and cohesion are

not measured simply by one's relation with one member of the group but the position in which one stands relative to all members of the group. The question is who will support him and who will not if intra-organizational conflict does occur. Second, under certain conditions one type of relation may appear to be more significant and may be less significant under other conditions. Third, in a military organization particularly in the warlord period, personal relations are but one of the variables in measuring cohesion and conflict, the other important variable being personal interest.

See Andrew Nathan, *Peking Politics 1918-23: Factionalism and the Future of Constitutionalism*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1976. Also Hsi-sheng Ch'i, *Warlord Politics in China, 1916-28*, Stanford University Press, 1976

Chapter 1 From Humble Origin to National Prominence

- 1 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp.267-8
- 2 The district examination is the first of a series of examinations that a Confucian scholar had to take in order to attain prominence. After he passed the district examination, the scholar would be given the first degree, *sheng-yüan* and be admitted as a gentleman
- 3 Yueh Fei was a heroic warrior and patriot of the northern Sung dynasty. See Helmut Willhelm, 'From Myth to Myth. The case of Yueh Fei's Biography'. A. F. Wright and D. Twitchett, *Confucian Personalities*. Stanford University Press, pp. 146-61.
- 4 Kuan Yu was an exemplary hero of the Three Kingdoms. See A. F. Wright, *The Confucian Persuasion*. Stanford University Press, pp. 173-6
- 5 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp.268-9
- 6 Jacob G. Schuman's letter to the President dated 8 April 1924. I wish to thank Dr D. Borg for the letter
- 7 T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün chuan*, Chung-hua shu-ch'ü, Shanghai 1941, pp 1-4. Chu Chi, 'Lo t'i hsiu-ts'ai chu wan p'ing fu - Wu P'ei-fu wai chuan chih i', *Ch'un Ch'iu*, Vol 1, No. 3, Taipei, pp.23-5
- 8 Okano Masujiro, *Go Hai-fu*, Banseikaku 1939, p.1269
- 9 Ida Pruitt, *A Daughter of Han: The Autobiography of a Chinese Working Woman*. Stanford University Press 1967, pp.87-93. The first printing of this book was by Yale University Press in 1945
- 10 Jerome Ch'en gives us a good description of the educational background of many militarists. Jerome Ch'en, 'Defining Chinese Warlords and Their Factions', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*. Vol.31, Pt.3, University of London 1968, pp.563-600
- 11 Morton Fried observes that although military status was regarded by Western and Chinese literati to be low, there is evidence from contemporary China and from traditional Chinese literature that military status was not as inferior as we think. The masses and the peasantry looked upon the military as an avenue of upward mobility. Morton Fried, 'Military Status in Chinese Society', *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol.57, No.4 (January 1952), pp.347-55. Also see Shu-ching Lee's comment and Fried's rejoinder, *ibid.*, pp.355-7

- 11 Ida Pruitt, *op cit.*, pp.74-86
- 12 Chang Chung-li, *The Chinese Gentry*, University of Washington Press, Seattle 1967
- 13 Liu Feng-han, *Hsin chien lu-chün*, Chung-yang yen-chiu-yüan chin-tai shih yen-chiu so, Taipei 1967, p 109. Liu, in his work, has traced the background of the militarists of the New Army. The degree holders included Hsü Shih-ch'ang, Yin Ming-shou, Lu Hsiao-ch'ien, Chen Yen-ch'ang, Wu Li-ta and Hsü K'o-chou. Jerome Ch'en also has a list of militarists who possessed examination degrees. In his list there were eight *sheng-yüan*, Ch'e Ch'ing-yün, Ch'eng Ch'i'en, Chu Jui, Feng Kuo-chang, Kao Shih-tu, Ni Ssu-ch'ung, Po Wen-wei, Wu P'ei-fu (in addition to this list we should add two more, Hsiao Yao-nan and Hsü Shu-cheng), one *yin sheng*, Sun Tao-jen, one *lin sheng*, Liu Hsien-shih, one *chien sheng*, Ts'ao Jui, one *pa kung*, Ch'en I, six *chü-jen*, Chang Chih-ying, Ch'en Chiung-ming, Hsü Shao-chen, Ma Fu-hsiang, T'ang Hsiang-ming, Yen Hsi-shan, three *chin-shih*, Chang Chen-fang, T'an Yen-k'ai, Yang Tseng-hsin, and one Hanlin compiler, T'an Yen-k'ai. See Jerome Ch'en, 'Defining Chinese Warlords and Their Factions', *op.cit.*, p.589
- 14 Ida Pruitt, *op cit.*, pp.120-1. Chang Chun-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol.1, pp.14-27. Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p.205
- 15 Sonoda Kazukki, *Hsin Chung-kuo jen-wu chih*, pp.108-41
- 16 Chang Chun-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol.1, pp.45-51
- 17 Yüan Shih-k'ai, *Hsün lien ts'ao fa hsiang hsi t'u shuo*, Wen hai ch'u-pa she, Vol.2, Taipei 1966, pp.991-1022
- 18 *Ibid.*, Vol.2, p.1145
- 19 *Ibid.*, Vol.2, p.189-95
- 20 This assignment was not in line with the anti-Japanese sentiment that Wu had learnt in the military academy. Yet more research is needed to explain why Yüan Shih-k'ai assisted the Japanese during the Russo-Japanese War. Perhaps it was part of the Ch'ing foreign policy of 'using the barbarian to counter the barbarian'. For his part, Wu had to carry out the orders of his superior
- 21 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp 307-9. T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün ch'u'an*, p.8. Ting Shih-yüan, 'Meileng-chang ching pi-chi', *Chung-kuo hsien-tai shih ts'ung-k'an*, (ed) Wu Hsiang-hsiang, Vol. 5, Cheng chung shu-chu, Taipei 1961, p.246
- 22 Tuan Ch'i-jui was born in Hofei district, Anhwei, in 1864. He graduated from the Tientsin Military Academy in 1885. In 1889 he was sent to Germany where he worked for one year in an arsenal and also studied artillery science. Upon his return to China, he joined Yüan Shih-k'ai's camp. In 1895, when Yüan started to train modern troops at Hsiaochan, he allocated one artillery regiment to the command of Tuan. At the same time Tuan became the Director of the Military College at Hsiaochan. During the Boxer Rebellion, Tuan rendered valuable service in assisting Yüan to prevent the movement from spreading southward. Beginning from 1902 Yüan devoted his full energy to training modern army divisions. The training headquarters was established at Paoting, and consisted of three departments: ordinance, staffs and education. Tuan was the chief of the staffs department. In 1903 he was promoted to be

- Senior Commandant of the Training Headquarters and was given the brevet rank of Lieutenant General. In 1904, Tuan became concurrently a brigade commander of the 3rd Division. See Wu T'ing-hsieh, *Ho-fei chih-cheng nien-p'u*, Chung-kuo hsien tai shih-liao ts'ung shu. Wen hsing shu-tien, Taipei 1962. Hsü I-shih, 'Kuan Yu Tuan Ch'i-jui', *I Ching*, No. 20 (December 1936), pp.19-23
- 23 The *China Weekly Review* (hereafter cited as *CWR*), 29 July 1922, p.344. Wu continued the marriage with his first wife, the daughter of a P'eng-lai gentleman. She did not produce children. She was mentally deranged by Wu's marriage to Chang and later died in 1920. Chang Chun-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol.1, pp.113-14
- 24 A division in the artillery was not the same as a division in the infantry. Division was lower than regiment in the artillery. Usually one artillery regiment was made up of three divisions
- 25 Sun Yat-sen (1886-1925), the 'father of the Chinese Republic', was born into a peasant family in Hsiang-shan county in Kwangtung province. When he was young, he joined his brother in Honolulu but later returned to China. He studied medicine in Canton and Hong Kong and practised in Macao. Keenly aware of the foreign encroachment in China and the inefficiency of the Ch'ing administration, Sun was determined to save his country by staging a revolution to topple the Imperial government. In 1895, he founded the Society to Restore China's Prosperity (Hsing Ching Hui). The following year, he staged an abortive uprising in Canton. He fled to Japan after the failure and travelled extensively in the West to promote the revolutionary cause. In London, he was kidnapped by the Chinese embassy and released only after his teacher James Cantlie interceded on his behalf. In 1905, Sun and other revolutionaries organized the Revolutionary Alliance (T'ung Meng Hin) in Japan. After this the Revolutionary Alliance organized a number of unsuccessful insurrections in China until finally, the Wuchang uprising broke out on 10 October 1911. See Harold Z. Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1970
- 26 Li Chien-nung, *The Political History of China, 1840-1928*, Van Nostrand 1956, pp. 269-71
- 27 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p.210
- 28 After the founding of the Chinese Republic in 1912, the Revolutionary Alliance (T'ung Meng Hui) was reorganized accordingly into the Kuomintang (The National Party)
- 29 Yuan Shih-k'ai began to expand his power after being elected president of the Republic. First he curbed the powers of the Kuomintang in the parliament, then had Sung Chiao-jen, a political theorist of the Kuomintang, assassinated and then contracted a military loan with Japan. Led by Li Lieh-chun, the Kuomintang rose in revolt on 12 July 1913, and declared Nanking independent from the central government. But the Kuomintang was militarily weak. The revolt came to a complete failure on 1 September when Yuan's army captured Nanking city. This anti-Yuan campaign of 1913 is usually referred to as the Second Revolution, the First Revolution being that of 1911
- 30 After having crushed the power of the Kuomintang in the Second

Revolution, Yüan proceeded with a plan to elect himself first the life-time President of the Republic then the Emperor. His protégés launched a monarchical movement and manufactured a nationwide 'people's petition' to have Yüan enthroned. In December 1915, after gracefully declining it three times, he finally accepted the throne. His new reign, 'The Grand Constitutional Era', was to begin in 1916.

- 31 Wu P'ei-fu, *op.cit.*, pp.212-13
- 32 David Krech, Richard S. Crutchfield and Egerton L. Ballachey, *Individual in Society, A Textbook of Social Psychology*, McGraw-Hill, San Francisco 1962, pp.422-38
- 33 Many of the Japanese-trained cadets joined the revolution once the Wuchang uprising broke out. Yen Hsi-shan, a graduate of the Military Officers Academy in Japan and a member of the Revolutionary Alliance immediately moved his troops to guard the Niangtze Pass, the gateway to eastern Shansi. As a counterbalance, Yüan appointed Wu Lu-chen the Commander of the 6th Division, and also a Japanese-trained cadet, Governor of Shansi, and ordered him to quell the 'rebels' with his army. Wu, being a revolutionary himself, instead of going to Shansi with his forces, conferred with Yen about a joint attack on the Manchus. Yüan had to take immediate action to have Wu executed in his headquarters. Other Japanese-trained military officers who turned against Yüan and the Manchus at this time, were Chang Shao-ts'eng and Lan Tien-wei, then the Commander of the 20th Division and Commander of the 2nd Mixed Brigade respectively.
- 34 Jerome Ch'en, *Yüan Shih-k'ai*, Stanford University Press 1961, p.198
- 35 These two cliques, Chihli and Anfu, later developed to become two of the most powerful military factions in China. Each clique had a military force of hundreds of thousands of soldiers in strength. Each had a sphere of influence. Under its control the Chihli had Kiangsu, Kiangsi, Hupeh, Chihli, and in the main the Yangtze and north of the Yangtze River. The Anfu dominated Anhwei, Shantung, Chekiang and the Fukien area. The Chihli clique was headed by Feng Kuo-chang and later by Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu, while the Anfu clique had Tuan ch'i-jui as its leader. They were later competing not only with the Fengtien clique headed by Chang Tso-lin but also with the southern military factions in Yunnan and Kwangsi headed by T'ang Chi-yao and Lu Yung-ting.
- 36 For the career of Li Yuan-hung, see Shen Yun-lung, *Li Yuan-hung p'ing chuan*, Chung-yang yen-chiu yüan chin-tai shih yen-chiu so, Taipei 1963
- 37 Paul S. Reinsch, *An American Diplomat in China*, Doubleday, Page 1922, pp.245-67. Shen Yun-lung, *Li Yuan-hung p'ing chuan*, pp.106-8. Yün Nung, 'T'an Li Yuan-hung', *Hsin Chung-kuo p'ing lun*, Vol.16, No.5 and Vol.17, No.1
- 38 Those provinces were Anhwei, Fengtien, Shensi, Honan, Chekiang, Shantung, Heilungkaing, Chihli, Fukien, Shansi and Suiyuan. Note that in Anhwei, Ni Ssu-ch'ung, the Civil Governor of the province supported Tuan Ch'i-jui while Chang Hsün, the Military Governor, supported Li Yuan-hung.
- 39 R. F. Johnston, *Twilight in the Forbidden City*, Gollancz, London 1934, pp.131-46. 'Tuchün ch'eng-ping yü fu-p'i', *Hsin ch'ing-nien*, Vol.3, No.

- 6; Vol.6, No. 7. P'u Yi, *Wo ti ch'ien pan sheng*, Wen tung shu-tien, Vol.1, Hong Kong 1964
- 40 Wen Kung-chih, *Tsui-chin san-shih nien Chung-kuo chün-shih shih*, Vol.2, pp.79-82
- 41 In May 1917, after the First World War broke out, Tuan Ch'i-jui favoured a war with Germany and used the mob to pressure, without success, the parliament into a declaration of war. President Li Yüan-hung exercised his Presidential powers and dismissed Tuan from his position as Premier. When the Anfu military clique accused Li of taking 'illegal action' and then declared independence from the central government, Li enlisted the support of General Chang Hsun as a mediator. Chang brought his troops to Peking but instead of mediating, he, with the support of K'ang Yu-wei, the reformer, announced the restoration of the last Ch'ing Emperor, Pu-yi, to power. Tuan and his military clique condemned the 'imperial restoration' and brought their troops back in an expedition against Chang. When the Anfu army was approaching Peking, President Li fled the capital and later was forced to relinquish his power as President
- 42 The list of appointments is obtained by combing through the chronological events in Kao Yin-ts'u's work, *Chung-hua min-kuo ta shih chi*, Tai-wan shih-chiai she, Taipei 1957
- 43 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol.6, pp.1-8
- 44 *Ibid.*, Vol.4, pp.38-100. Tsou Lu, *Chung-kuo kuo min-tang shih-k'ao*, Vol.3, pp. 1077-80
- 45 Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.*, pp.319-23
- 46 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p.215
- 47 Paul Reinsch, *op.cit.*, p.293
- 48 Ting Wen-chiang, *Liang Jen-kung hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'ang-pien ch'u-kao*, Shih-chiu shu-cheh, 1958, pp.532-4
- 49 Wei Yung-hei, 'Min-kuo shih shang chung-yao ti i yeh: "Anfu hsi" ti ch'an-seng yü hsiao-mieh chi pi', *Ch'un Ch'iu*, No.117 (16 May 1962), Hong Kong, pp.2-4. Ch'en Tu-hsiu, 'Tuan P'ai, Ts'a Lu, Anfu chü-lo-pu', *Hsin ching-nien*, Vol.7, No. 1 (1 December 1919), pp. 119-20
- 50 Chow Tse-tung, *The May Fourth Movement*, Stanford University Press 1967
- 51 In 1898 Germany leased from the Ch'ing government the Kiaochow naval base in Shantung. During the First World War, Japan occupied the German possession in Shantung and imposed the Twenty-one Demands on China. Subsequently, she bolstered her claim on Shantung with a series of secret agreements with Russia, Britain, France, Italy and the United States. Thus in the Paris Peace Conference, Japan won her case and the allies acknowledged Japan's 'special interest' in China in the Versailles Agreement
- 52 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol. 6, pp.145-55
- 53 *Ibid.*, p.156
- 54 *Wu-szu ai-kuo yün-t'ung tzu-liao*, (ed) Chung-kuo k'o-hsüan li-shih yen-chiu-so ti san so chin-tai shih tzu-liao pien chi tsu, K'o-hsüeh ch'u-pan

- she, Vol.2, Peking 1959, p. 273
- 55 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 216
- 56 T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün chuan*, p.21
- 57 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol.5, p.82
- 58 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 335-7. *The North China Herald*, 29 May 1920, p. 509 and 12 June 1920, p. 648 (hereafter cited as *NCH*). J. W. Hall, *In the Land of the Laughing Buddha*, Putnam, New York 1924, p. 85
- 59 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 344
- 60 Under Chang Ching-yao, Hunan suffered from robbery and confusion. Both the gentry and the organizations in Hunan constantly petitioned Peking to have Chang dismissed, but their effort was in vain. Therefore, it is not surprising that when the southern army came into Hunan, the Hunanese rose up in mutinies. They actually drove Chang out of the province. T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün chuan*, p. 25. Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 30-2
- 61 *NCH*, 3 July 1920, p.20; 17 July 1920, p.150; and 26 June 1920, p.779
- 62 According to J. W. Hall, at first Ts'ao K'un did not approve Wu's action of challenging the Anfu leader. He did not know if Wu was able to defeat the Anfu faction. It was only after Chang had agreed to join in the fight that Ts'ao was sure that they could topple the Anfu government. Therefore he gave his consent to Wu and ordered him to mobilize the troops to fight against Tuan and his Anfu clique. J. W. Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 90
- 63 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol. 5, pp. 130-5. *NCH*, 26 June 1920, p. 776
- 64 Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.*, Vol 2, pp.95-9. Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 345-8

Chapter 2 Wu P'ei-fu's Political and Military Ideas and His Realpolitik 1920-22

- 1 Sung Chiao-jen was the ideologue of the Revolutionary Alliance, and ranked after Sun Yat-sen and Huang Hsing as leader of the 1911 Revolution. After Yüan Shih-k'ai got the Manchus to abdicate and inaugurated the representative system of government in China, Sung persuaded four other small parties to join the Revolutionary Alliance to form the new party, the Kuomintang. He was critical of Yüan's policy in his campaign in central China. Yüan therefore hired an assassin who shot Sung on 20 March 1913 at the Shanghai railway station
- 2 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p.348
- 3 *Ibid*
- 4 The joint telegram reads, 'After reading your message our hearts have been filled with thanks for we know that your army has risen against the traitors for the citizens and for the good of the country. We know that you have no aims of selfishness, or self-aggrandisement. Your eight points for the calling of a National Convention are so sound and so excellent that we cannot but heartily congratulate you and agree with all of them' *NCH*, 14 August 1920, p. 413

- 5 *Ibid.*, 21 August 1920, pp. 481-2; 28 August 1920, p. 539 and 11 September 1920
- 6 T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün chuan*, p. 40
- 7 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 349-50
- 8 *Ibid.*, pp. 285 and 287
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 287
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 283
- 11 By value, I mean principles of behaviour, the general standard and quality considered worthwhile and sometimes cherished by members of a group. These members have a strong emotional commitment to these generalized principles and often use these values as a yardstick to measure and judge specific acts and goals. It is a conception that establishes a concerted direction of action
- 12 Wu P'ei-fu, *op.cit.*, pp. 271-80
- 13 *Ibid.*, pp. 275-6. I have not been able to identify Dr Lanton
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 Okano Masujiro, *op.cit.*, p. 327
- 16 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 275, 283 and 293
- 17 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu cheng shu*, Chung-yang hsin-wen she, Shanghai 1922
- 18 Yüeh Fei has been glorified as the heroic warrior, the patriotic and tragically frustrated saviour of the country, who devoted himself to the cause of the restoration of the Sung dynasty. Due to the southward invasion of the Ju-chen, the northern Sung dynasty was approaching its end. In 1126, with his brave army, commonly known as Yüeh-chia-chün (the Yüeh family army), Yüeh Fei struggled to recover the territories that had been lost to the barbarians. Yet, in the midst of the campaign he had launched against the Ju-chen, the Sung court, under the domination of Ch'in Kuei, decided upon a policy of retrenchment. An understanding had been reached with the Ju-chen, by which the Sung court surrendered its claim to the territory north of the Huai River. Probably under the influence of Ch'in Kuei, Emperor Kao-tsung sent Yüeh Fei twelve urgent messages in one day and ordered him to withdraw. Since these messages came from the Emperor, Yüeh had to obey, and so ended abruptly his dream to restore the Sung dynasty. Later he was allegedly murdered by Ch'in Kuei.

Yüeh Fei exemplified the warrior, who not only died as a sacrifice to the empire and his duty, but also a hero who displayed the shining virtue of complete loyalty to his superior, in this case Emperor Kao-tsung. Yüeh Fei was widely praised by historians as well as writers of fiction for his absolute obedience to the Emperor. He became a model of patriotism, a patriot who committed himself to drive the barbarians out of his country and restore the original frontiers of his motherland. In the eyes of Wu P'ei-fu, Yüeh was the very symbol of both loyalty and patriotism. See Hellmut Wilhelm, 'From myth to myth: the case of Yüeh Fei's Biography' in Arthur F. Wright's *Confucianism and Chinese Civilization*, Atheneum, New York 1964, pp. 211-26.

Another historic character whom Wu admired was Kuan Yü, a warrior-scholar. The legend of Kuan Yü emerged out of the history of the

- Three Kingdoms (A.D. 222-280), and, in the reign of Emperor K'ang-hsi of the Ch'ing dynasty, Kuan Yü was elevated to the position of an official god. Kuan Yü exemplified the virtues of loyalty and filial submission. In addition to examples showing Kuan Yü as a filial son, the literature reveals that he was particularly loyal to his superior, Liu Pei. The legend goes that Kuan Yü was captured by his enemy, Ts'aō Ts'aō, the Lord of I. Ts'aō tried to win him over with lavish presents. Kuan Yü resisted all temptations. He was later magnified by the T'ang poets and storytellers as a hero of loyalty and filial piety. See *ibid.*, pp.122-57
- 19 Hsü Tung, *Hu ch'ien ching*, in the *Ts'ung shu chi ch'eng*, (ed.) Wang Yün-wu, Shang wu yin-shu kuan, Vols.0945 and 0946, Shanghai 1936
- 20 Like Hsü, Wu classified his generals into: (1) heavenly general, (2) earthly general, (3) human general, (4) divine general, (5) awe-inspiring general, (6) brave general, and (7) good general
- 21 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu cheng shu*, pp.76-89
- 22 Li Chien-nung, *The Political History of China 1840-1928*, pp.402-5
- 23 Ting Wen-chiang, *Liang Jen-kung hsien-sheng nien-p'u ch'ang-pien ch'u-kao*, Vol.2, Shih-chieh shu-chü, Taipei 1958, pp.583-4
- 24 For the details of the Hunan provincial constitution see Wu Hsiang-hsiang (ed), *Chung-kuo hsien-tai shih ts'ung-k'an*, Vol. 1 Cheng-chung shu-chü, Taipei 1961, pp. 272-300 and Liu Li-weng, *Min-kuo cheng-shih shih-i*, Ko-t'ai shu-chü, Vol.1 Taipei 1954, pp. 59-61
- 25 Ting Wen-chiang, *op. cit.*, Vol.2, pp. 583-4
- 26 Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, *Liang Jen-kung wen-chi*, Vol.1, San ta kung-szu, Hong Kong, pp. 311-16.
- 27 *Hsiang-kang hua-tzu jih-pao*, 1 September 1921, sh. 2, p. 2 (hereafter cited as *HKHTJP*). Other members of the Progressive Party such as Chou Chü-mu, Hsiung Hsi-ling, T'ien Wen-lieh, Fan Yüan-lien, Chang Kuokan, Liu K'uei-i, Ch'en Huan and Mou Hsin-chih also sent letters to Wu P'ei-fu, asserting that federal government was the form of government desired by the people. *HKHTJP*, 8 September 1921, sh. 3, p. 1 and 22 November 1921, sh. 2, p. 1
- 28 *NCH*, 12 November 1921, p.431
- 29 *HKHTJP*, 15 September 1921, sh.3, p.1; 27 September 1921, sh.2, p.2; 6 October 1921, sh.3, p.1; and 18 November 1921, sh.3, p.1
- 30 Even this limited base in Shensi was not obtained without difficulty. Although Yen Hsiang-wen had been appointed *tuchün* of Shensi by Peking, Ch'en Shu-fan, former *tuchün* of the province, refused to surrender his office. Wu P'ei-fu, therefore, ordered Feng Yü-hsiang to lead the Chihli troops to conquer Shensi and to eject Ch'en from his office. After several days of severe fighting, Sian, the provincial capital, fell and Ch'en had to flee. On 8 July 1921, Yen Hsiang-wen assumed office as the new *tuchün*. Unfortunately he died a few months after having taken up the post. Peking thereupon appointed Feng Yü-hsiang *tuchün* of Shensi in September 1921. See James Sheridan, *op. cit.*, pp.97-120
- 31 Li Chien-nung, *op.cit.*, pp.401-8
- 32 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol. 6, pp.39-61 and Wen Kung-chih, *op.cit.*, Vol.2, pp.104-14

- 33 The Progressive Party (*Chin-pu tang*) under the leadership of the famous scholar-reformer, Liang Chi-ch'ao. The party was formed after the revolution in 1912 by Liang, who merged the Unification Party (*T'ung-i tang*), the Republican Party (*Kung-ho tang* of K'ang Yu-wei, another reformer) and his own Democratic Party (*Min-chu tang*)
- 34 *HKHTJP*, 5 August 1921, sh.3, p.1; 11 August 1921, sh.2, p.3; and 27 August 1921, sh.3, p.1
- 35 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp.351-3
- 36 *HKHTJP*, 23 September 1921, sh.2, p.2
- 37 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p.35
- 38 Ting Wen-chiang, *op cit.*, Vol.2, pp.583-4
- 39 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p.311
- 40 The alliance stipulated: (1) the five provinces of Hupeh, Hunan, Kiangsi, Anhwei and Kiangsu were the area of joint defence of the Yangtze region, (2) the aim was an offensive and defensive alliance against any aggression of outsiders and internal troubles, (3) the defence of forts and of the waters of the Yangtze was the charge of Admiral Tu, (4) expenses of the joint defence was to be borne by all the provinces concerned, (5) the treaty of joint defence would be cancelled when the general situation was settled by mutual agreement, and (6) the results of the convention would be announced to the *tuchün* of the provinces concerned by their respective representatives and after their consent had been received it would be reported to the Army Department at Peking. *NCH*, 12 November 1921, p. 432; *HKHTJP*, 12 November 1921, sh. 3, p. 1.
- 41 Ts'en Hsüeh-lu maintains that Wu P'ei-fu agreed to the appointment of Liang Shih-i as Premier. See Ts'en Hsüeh-lu, *San-shui Liang Yen-sun hsien-sheng nien-p'u*, Vol. 2, pp.174-9
- 42 Chang Tsu-sheng, *Jen-hsu cheng-pien chi*, C.P., Shanghai 1923, pp.9-14
- 43 For the Shantung Question, see Ge-Zay Wood, *The Shantung Question*, Fleming H. Revell, New York 1922
- 44 Ts'en Hsüeh-lu, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 181-2. Part of the telegram was translated by S. Y. Teng and J. Ingalls. See Li Chien-nung, *op.cit.*, pp. 411-12
- 45 Ts'en Hsüeh-lu, *op. cit.*, Vol.2, p. 186
- 46 *NCH*, 21 January 1922
- 47 *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, Vol. 1, 1922, pp. 684-5
- 48 Denunciation came from the Commercial and Educational Union, the United Trade Unions, the Agricultural Association, the Peking Educational Association, the Union Press and the Union of Students. *China Illustrated Review*, 14 January 1922, p. 5 (hereafter cited as *CIR*)
- 49 Ts'en Hsüeh-lu, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 189-90; *NCH*, 21 January 1922, p. 147
- 50 Chang Tsu-sheng, *op. cit.*, p. 7; *CIR*, 14 January 1922, p. 3
- 51 President Hsü Shih-ch'ang sent a telegram to Wu P'ei-fu pleading for Liang Shih-i: 'As the Liang cabinet has been in existence for merely a fortnight and its policy has not been put into practice, how could we judge its success or failure. Hence, real patriotic people should not merely

- jump at conclusion upon rumours or tea-house gossip, but wait for results', *CIR*, 14 January 1922, p. 4
- 52 Ts'ao K'un's son married Chang Tso-lin's daughter
- 53 Wu P'ei-fu and Ch'en Chiung-ming allegedly agreed that, after the overthrow of both northern and southern regimes, Wu would assume the Presidency, while Ch'en would be appointed Vice-President. However, after Ch'en had driven Sun Yat-sen out of Canton, instead of appointing Ch'en Vice-President, Wu was said to have given him Y\$ 5 million and to have recognized him as the Inspecting Commissioner of Kwangtung and Kwangsi. This alleged agreement comes from Li Shui-hsien's article on Ch'en Chiung-ming's *coup*. The article is not sourced and the working makes it clear that it cannot be a direct quotation from an agreement between them. It is therefore unreliable as a source of evidence. Nevertheless, it is very likely that Wu had some sort of secret agreement with Ch'en. Li Shui-hsien, 'Ch'en Ch'iung-ming p'an-kuo shih.' See *Chung-kuo hsien-tai shih ts'ung-k'an*, edited by Wu Hsiang-hsiang, Vol. 3, pp. 403-8
- 54 Chang Tsu-sheng, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-19
- 55 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 367-8
- 56 *Ibid.*, pp. 369-77
- 57 *China Year Book*, 1922-23
- 58 Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 118-19. Wen stated that Wu's ammunition was purchased in part either from Italians or Russians. I suppose what Wen means is that Wu purchased his arms and ammunition from Italian merchants and anti-Bolshevik forces in Siberia
- 59 Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 115-32; Rodney Gilbert, 'Arms and men in China', *Asia*, Vol. 22, September 1922, pp. 725-31 and 152-4; Chang Tsu-sheng, *op. cit.*, pp. 36 and 46
- 60 Hsieh Sheng-chih, *Ch'en Chiung-ming p'an kuo-shih*, Chen pao pien chi pu, Hong Kong 1922. Hu Han-min, *Sun ta tsung-t'ung Kuang-chou meng-nan shih chou-nien chuan-k'an*, Chung-kuo kuo-min-tang Kuang-tung sheng chih-hsing wei-yüan hui, Canton 1932. Tsou Lu, *Chung-kuo kuo-min-tang shih-kao*, Vol. 3, pp. 1102-6 and Li Shui-hsien, 'Chen Chiung-ming p'an-kuo shih,' *Chung-kuo hsien-tai shih ts'ung-k'an*, (ed) Wu Hsiang-hsiang, Vol. 3, pp. 403-8. The last source is a biased source

Chapter 3 Control and Finance

- 1 Although Wu was the Assistant Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan, he had only a legal authority over Chihli and Shantung which were the base area of Ts'ao K'un, the Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan. The three provinces Honan, Hupeh and Shensi, which Wu actually administered between 1920 and 1924, were conquered by Wu between 1920 and 1921. Wu acquired Honan and Shensi during the Chihli-Anfu War of 1920 and, in 1921, he took over Hupeh from Wang Chan-yüan in the 'Rescue Hupeh War'
- 2 Okano Masujiro, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-37 and 327. Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu*

- hsien-sheng chi*, p. 312. Okano Masujiro states that there were a number of British and American returned students in Wu's Political Department who were friends of O. M. Green. As a result Green came to Loyang and recommended people to be Wu's foreign advisers. Okano Masujiro, *op. cit.*, p.324
- 3 Okano Masujiro., *op. cit.*, pp. 141-4
 - 4 *Ibid*
 - 5 *Ibid.*, pp.126-7
 - 6 *Ibid.*, pp.127-31 and 147-51
 - 7 *Ibid.*, pp.125-88
 - 8 *Ibid.*, p. 154. Okano used these terms to describe the relations of Wu's subordinates with their superior. Originally, these were Japanese terms. *Fudai* and *tozama* were two kinds of Japanese lords. *Fudai* accepted the authority of the Shogun, the ruler of Japan, before 1600. They therefore had close relations with the Shogun. The *tozama*, however, only acknowledged Shogun suzerainty after 1600. Their relations with the Shogun were more distant
 - 9 Department of State, 893.00/5078 and 893.00/4633. Okano Masujiro, *op.cit.*, p. 522
 - 10 *Chung-chou t'ung-kuan lu*, 1923
 - 11 The information is obtained by combing through the biographies of the civilian officials in the *Chung-chou t'ung kuan lu*, 1923
 - 12 Department of State, 893.00/4201
 - 13 *Ibid.*, 893.00/4290
 - 14 *CWR*. 20 December 1924, p.84
 - 15 *Ibid.*, 22 April 1922, p. 314
 - 16 Department of State, 893.00/4201
 - 17 Feng Yü-hsiang, *Feng Yü-hsiang jih-chi*, min-kuo shih-liao pien-chi she, Peking 1930, p. 49
 - 18 The figures were obtained by checking through the 144 biographies of magistrates in the *Chung-chou t'ung-kuan lu*, 1923
 - 19 Wen Kung-chih, *op.cit.*, Vol. 1, Sec. 2, p. 24
 - 20 Ts'ao K'un became the commander when Tuan was transferred to be the commander of the newly organized 6th Division. When Ts'ao was made *tüchun* of Chihli, Wu P'ei-fu took over as commander. *Lu-chün t'ung-chi chien-ming pao-kao shu*, Vol. 2 The Ministry of War, Peking 1916, pp. 7-9
 - 21 It is often assumed by historians that Wu was in control of the army as early as 1916. See Kuo-shih pien-chi she, *op cit.*, pp 80-3 and Chang Chun-ku, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 1929-3
 - 22 After the Chihli-Anfu War of 1920, Wu P'ei-fu and Chang Tso-lin competed to gain control and reorganize the defeated Anfu troops
 - 23 T'an tang tang chai-chu, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 11
 - 24 Department of State, 893.00/3581 and 893.00/3771
 - 25 *CWR*, 8 December 1923, p. 61
 - 26 *Ibid.*, 4 February 1922, p. 422; 18 February 1922, p.522; 18 March 1922, p.114; 25 March 1922. p. 152; 6 January 1922, p.228; 28 July 1923, p.302; 27 October 1923, p.335; 3 November 1923, p.371; 10 November 1923, p.468; 17 November 1923, p.504; 8 December 1923,

- p.61; 19 December 1924, p.272; 19 July 1924, p.236; 4 October 1924.
 p.160; 18 October 1924, p.216; 20 December 1924, p.84
- 27 *Ibid.*, 26 November 1921, p. 618; 25 March 1922, p. 154; 17 June 1922,
 p. 115 and 11 August 1923, p. 377
- 28 *Ibid.*, 1 April 1922, p. 192; 13 January 1923, p. 274; 14 July 1923, p.
 232; 15 September 1923, p. 106; 5 January 1924, p. 220; 19 January
 1924, p. 276. Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 326
- 29 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 326
- 30 A chart of the estimated military expenditure of Peking and 14 provinces
 in 1923 is given in the *Yin-hang yüeh-k'an*, No. 532. The chart is
 reprinted in the *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, April 1925, pp. 124-36
- 31 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 316-17
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 317
- 33 *Yin-hang yüeh-k'an*, Vol. 3, No. 5, 25 May 1923, p 17
- 34 *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, No. 5, pp. 4-5
- 35 *Ibid*
- 36 Feng Yü-hsiang, *Wo-ti sheng-huo*, san-hu t'u-shu she, Chungking 1944,
 p. 457
- 37 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, July 1926, p. 254
- 38 *CWR*, 5 August 1922, p. 388
- 39 *Ibid.*, 6 September 1924
- 40 *Yin-hang yüeh-k'an*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 25 February 1923, pp. 14-15; Pai
 Mi-chu, *Chung-hua min-kuo sheng-chü chuan chih*, Pei-ching shih-fan
 ta-hsüeh li-shih hsi, Peking 1924-7, Vol. 5, pp. 169-73
- 41 *Chung wai ching-chi chou k'an*, 22 August 1925, No. 126, pp. 1-10
- 42 *Ibid.*, 27 June 1925, No. 118, pp. 1-14; *Hsien-tai p'ing-lun*, Vol. 4. No.
 85, pp. 127-9
- 43 Ling Wen-yüan, *Sheng chai*, Yin-hang yüeh-k'an she, Peiping 1928. For
 Honan, see pp.1-23 in the Honan section; for Hupeh, see pp. 1-15 in the
 Hupeh section. Ling has listed the loans individually. The two figures are
 derived from adding up the loans that fall into the period of Wu's rule in
 Honan and Hupeh provinces respectively
- 44 *Ibid*
- 45 Department of State, 893.00/5385^{1/2}. *CWR*, 1 March 1924, p. 24 and 8
 March 1924, p. 6
- 46 *CWR*, 2 August 1924, p. 310
- 47 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 317
- 48 Department of State, 893.00/4201. *CWR*, 31 December 1921, p. 214, 7
 April 1923, p. 216 and 18 March 1922
- 49 *CWR*, 6 May 1922, p. 394
- 50 *Ibid.*, 20 October 1923, p. 293
- 51 *Ibid.*, 31 December 1921, p. 212; 13 May 1922, p. 437; 6 May 1922, p.
 396; 3 June 1922, p. 30
- 52 *Ibid.*, 20 October 1923, p. 292; 3 May 1924, p. 366; 28 June 1924; 5 July
 1924, p. 163; 9 August 1924, p. 336; 11 October 1924, p. 190 and 17
 January 1925, p. 202
- 53 *Yin-hang yüeh-k'an*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 25 February 1923, pp. 14-15
- 54 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, September 1924, pp. 385-6
- 55 *Ibid.*, December 1925, pp. 229-30

- 56 Sidney D. Gamble, *North China Villages, Social, Political and Economic Activities Before 1933*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1963, pp. 139-40
- 57 *CWR*, 6 May 1922, p. 396
- 58 Peking Legation File, No. 774, 10 November 1924
- 59 *Yin-hang yüeh-k'an*, 25 July 1924, pp. 3-10
- 60 *CWR*, 14 January 1922
- 61 The amount of surplus of salt revenue detained during the period January through September 1922 was as follows:

Month	Amount detained (Y\$)
January to April	156,360.00
May and June	201,635.25
July and August	100,998.23
September	88,219.35

- 62 *Yin-hang yüeh-k'an*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 25 December 1922, p. 9
- 63 *CWR*, 30 January 1926
- 64 Pai Mi-chu, *op. cit.*, Vol. 5, pp. 178-9
- 64 *CWR*, 18 August 1923, p. 410
- 65 *Ibid.*, 25 August 1923, p. 443; 1 September 1923, p. 30 and 8 March 1924, p. 62
- 66 *Ibid.*, 7 August 1926, pp. 237-40. In 1921 the number of reorganized tax barriers throughout China totalled 735 as follows:

Anhwei	42	Kiangsu	58
Chekiang	42	Kirin	27
Chihli	15	Kwangsi	29
Fukien	45	Kwangtung	30
Fengtien	34	Kweichow	44
Heilungkiang	31	Shansi	42
Honan	32	Shantung	10
Hunan	34	Shensi	30
Hupeh	25	Sinkiang	11
Kansu	43	Szechwan	20
Kiangsi	47	Yunnan	44

- 67 *CWR*, 6 January 1923, p. 230
- 68 Department of State, 893.00/5347
- 69 *Ibid.*, 893.00/4214
- 70 *Ibid.*, 893.10/59
- 71 Peking Legation File, Department of State, No. 902. August 1925
- 72 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, September 1925, pp. 158-9. This source provides the following list of the wine and tobacco taxes obtained in the provinces in 1922, with the exception of Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Szechwan, Hunan, Yunnan and Kweichow.

	(Y\$)		(Y\$)
Chihli	1,105,229	Fukien	577,620
Fengtien	2,402,845	Chekiang	2,063,323
Kirin	1,746,979	Hupeh	642,249
Heilungkiang	589,546	Shensi	352,892
Shantung	995,832	Kansu	357,992
Shansi	973,145	Peking	523,826
Honan	386,405	Jehol	425,645
Kiangsu	1,021,777	Chahar	281,687
Anhwei	327,573	Szechwan border	1,494
Kiangsi	253,933	Sinkiang	9,690

- 73 *Yin-hang yüeh-k'an*, Vol. 4, No. 7, 25 July 1924, pp. 16–18
 74 *CWR*, 6 May 1922, p. 394
 75 *Ibid.*, 24 April 1926
 76 *Ibid.*, 14 January 1922, p. 311
 77 *Ibid.*, 15 April 1922, p. 272 and 29 April 1922, p. 354
 78 *Ibid.*, 17 December 1921, pp. 124–8 and 7 January 1922, p. 264, and 23 February 1924
 79 *Yin-hang yüeh-k'an*, Vol. 4, No. 7, 25 July 1924, pp. 18–20. The figures for Honan and Shensi were Y\$ 190,000 and Y\$ 56,000 respectively
 80 *Ibid.*, p. 20
 81 *CWR*, 7 January 1922 and 8 April 1922, p. 228
 82 *Chung-kuo nien-chien, ti i hui*, (ed) Juan Hsiang et al. Shanghai yin-shu kuan, Shanghai 1924, pp. 579–84
 83 *CWR*, 11 February 1922, p. 487; 29 April 1922, p. 350; 27 October 1923, p. 335; 10 November 1923, p. 467; 7 November 1925, p. 236; Department of State, 893.512/244 and 893.512/294

Chapter 4 Wu P'ei-fu and the Chihli Clique

- 1 This chapter was originally published as 'A Chinese "Warlord" Faction: The Chihli Clique, 1918–24', in *Columbia Essays in International Affairs*, Vol 3, *The Dean's Papers* 1967, (ed) Andrew W. Cordier, Columbia University Press 1968, pp.249–74. This chapter together with part of Chapter 5 is a somewhat expanded version of the article.
- 2 *Nu-li chou-pao*, No.1, 7 May 1922, p.2; *Tung-fang tsa-chih*, Vol.19, No.9, pp.120ff
- 3 Sources: Since the warlord period is a relatively unexplored field, biographies of warlords, particularly the smaller ones, are difficult to come by; materials are either scattered or non-existent. Results of the analysis derived here are based on the study of a number of biographies and subsequently a categorization of the militarists. It is based on the summer of 1924 list of militarists of the Chihli and Anfu cliques published in Wen Kung-chih's *Tsui-chin san-shih nien Chung-kuo chün-shih shih* (Military History of China in the last Thirty years). It is a list of militarists published just before the commencement of the Second Chihli-Fengtien War. This list is chosen because, in summer 1924, the Chihli clique reached the peak of its power; hence the size of the organization

was at its maximum. Furthermore, it is easy to trace which one belonged to the Chihli clique, since Wen has indicated clearly the clique affiliation, the rank and the garrison post of every commander. Fortunately biographies of all the Chihli division commanders except one—Sun Chung-hsien, the Central 5th Division commander—are available. Because of the lack of material, it is impossible, although it would be enlightening, to analyse the mixed brigade commanders. (A mixed brigade was a reorganized brigade of a division. After it had been removed from the division it became an independent unit, receiving its orders directly from the central government. The normal number of men in a mixed brigade was 6,000 consisting sometimes of two regiments of infantry, one battalion of artillery, one battalion of cavalry and one machine-gun company.) In addition to this list I have included those Chihli militarists who were above the rank of division commander. Their biographies are easily obtained in biographical dictionaries.

This study relies heavily on Sonada Kazukki's *Shina Shinnin Kokki* (A Record of Personages of New China). Sonada was a sinologist with a special interest in 1920 China. At that time he was writing for the *Seikyo Jippo*, a Japanese newspaper. The *Shina Shinnin Kokki* was later translated by Huang Hui-ch'uan and Tiao Ying-hua into Chinese and was renamed *Fen-sheng hsin Chung-kuo jen-wu chih* (A Record of Personages of New China by Provinces). In his work, Sonada has chosen at random a sample of 677 of what he calls 'militarists, bureaucrats, politicians, diplomats and thinkers'. He groups them together in accordance with their native provinces. The number of militarists under analysis, both traditional and modern (by modern he means those who had studied in Japan), amounts to 282. Sonada's study is particularly valuable, not only for his indication of the regional affiliation of the militarists, but also for his comparison of the militarists and politicians of equal rank and status. For example, he compares Hsü Shih-ch'ang with Feng Kuo-chang, and Wang Shih-chen with Ts'ao K'un.

The *Chung-hua chin-t'ai ming-jen chüan* (Biographies of Prominent Chinese), prepared by A. R. Burt, J. B. Powell and C. Crow, contains biographies of many prominent militarists useful for checking those of Sonada. Biographical sketches are found in *Who's Who in China* 1925. The *Hsien t'ai Chung-kuo ming-jen wai shih* (Anecdotes of the Prominent Persons in Modern China) throws sidelight on some of the Chihli militarists, since the brother of the author had been a member of the Chihli military organization. The *Chih-yüan lu* (Record of Officials) of the Republican period lists all the military and civilian officials. It contains no biography but the provincial origins of many of the officials are entered. This enables one to trace the changes of division commander in every division during the period here considered.

See Wen Kung-chih, *op.cit.*, Vol. I Sec. 2, pp. 14–24. Wen lists the Chihli militarists by province. For the names of the militarists other than the 24 division commanders, see Appendix 2. Sonada Kazukki, *Fen-sheng hsin Chung-kuo jen-wu chih*, Shanghai 1930. Translated from the Japanese text by Huang Hui-ch'uan and Tiao Ying-hua

4 The title *tutuh* was given to military governors of the provinces during

and after the Revolution of 1911 by Yüan Shih-k'ai. After Yüan's death, the name was changed to *tuchün*. Later it was changed again to *tuli* or *tupan*.

- 5 See Appendix 1
- 6 See Appendix 2
- 7 In Hsü Shih-ch'ang's biography, Sonada points out that Hsü was the head of the *wen-ch'ih p'ai*. He clearly distinguishes the civilian from the military. It is also important to point out that, although Hsü was the head of the civilian faction, he was also the elder in the military faction, due to his seniority in the Peiyang clique and his connection with other militarists. This can also be applied to Wang Shih-chen. See later under the section on the elders. For the biography of Hsü Shih-ch'ang, see Sonada Kazukki, *op.cit.*, pp.25-8 and A. R. Burt, J. B. Powell and C. Crow, *Chung-hua chin-t'ai ming-jen chüan*, Shanghai Biographical Publishing Co. Shanghai 192?, p.4
- 8 Sonada Kazukki, *op.cit.*, pp.31-3; A. R. Burt, J. B. Powell and C. Crow, *op.cit.*, p.19
- 9 The civilian associates of Hsü Shih-ch'ang were Ch'ien Neng-hsun, Chang Hsi-luan and their subordinates. Sonada says that both Ch'ien and Chang were 'the old bureaucrats of Hsü'. Ch'ien was Premier between 11 October 1918 and 13 June 1919, during the time when Hsü was President of the Republic
- 10 They were Chang Shao-ts'eng and Kao Ling-wei, who had been Premier, Chang Chih-tan, Chang Ying-hsu, Liu En-yüan, Wu Yü-lin, Li Shih-wei, Chu Shen, Sun Hung-i, Ku Chung-hsiu, Yen Hsiu and Yang Wen-k'ai, who had been ministers, Ts'ao Jui, Yang I-te, Liu Jo-tseng, Li Chi-ch'en, T'ao En-ch'eng, Wang Hu, who had held posts at the provincial level. All these men came from the Chihli province
- 11 For the formation and the nature of the Anfu Recreation Club, see *Chin-tai shih tzu-liao*, 1962, No. 2, pp.11-23; Wei Yung-hei, 'Min-kuo shih shang chung-yao ti i-yeh: "Anfushi" ti ch'an-seng yü hsiao-mieh chi pi', *Ch'un Ch'iu*, No. 117 (16 May 1962), Hong Kong, pp. 2-4 and Ch'en Tu-hsiu, 'Tuan p'ai, Ts'ao Lu, Anfu chü-lo-pu', *Hsin Ch'ing-nien*, Vol. 7, No.1, 1 December 1919, pp.119-20
- 12 See Amitai Etzioni, *Modern Organizations*, Foundations of Modern Sociology Series, Prentice-Hall 1964. Talcott Parsons, *Structure and Process in Modern Society*, The Free Press, Illinois 1960, pp.17ff
- 13 Wen Kung-chih, *op.cit.*, Vol.1, Sec. 2, pp.14-18
- 14 *Ibid*
- 15 H. G. W. Woodhead, *China Year Book*, 1924, pp.950-2
- 16 State Department, *op.cit.*, 893.00/5100
- 17 The *Chih-yüan lu* or *Min-kuo chih-yüan lu* as it was sometimes called, was published in Peking every year between 1912 and 1928
- 18 H. G. W. Woodhead, *op. cit.*, 1924, p.958
- 19 See Appendix 3
- 20 In March 1923 Wu P'ei-fu began his scheme of reunification of the country by force. The main objective was to add the adjoining provinces of Kiangsi, Fukien and Kwangtung into his sphere of influence. Using the excuse that the Northern Expeditionary forces of Sun Yat-sen were

- infringing his territory, Wu demanded that the Peking government appoint his subordinates, Sun Ch'uan-fang and Shen Hung-ying *tuli* of Fukien and Kwangtung respectively. At the same time Wu moved troops into these two provinces
- 21 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp.374-6
- 22 *Ibid.*, p.351
- 23 See Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier, A Social and Political Portrait*, Free Press, London 1960. S.A. Stouffer, E.A. Suchman, L.C. Devinney, S.A. Star and R.M. Williams Jr, *The American Soldier, Adjustment During Army Life*, Vol. 1 John Wiley, New York 1965. Morris Janowitz, *The Military in the Political Development of New Nations, An Essay in Comparative Analysis*. Studies in Social Psychology in World War II, University of Chicago Press 1964
- 24 Clan is a somewhat inappropriate translation for *tsu* which anthropologists usually translate as lineage. Here I have used the terms clan and lineage interchangeably
- 25 For the details of the clan and lineage organization refer to Hui-chen Wang Liu, *The Traditional Chinese Clan Rules*, Locust Valley, New York 1959. Maurice Freedman, *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China*, Athlone Press, London 1958. Maurice Freedman, *Chinese Lineage and Society: Fukien and Kwangtung*, Athlone Press, London 1966. Marion J. Levy Jr, *The Family Revolution in Modern China*, Octagon Books, New York 1963
- 26 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p.271
- 27 Sonada Kazukki, *op. cit.*, pp.31-3
- 28 Wen Kung-chih, in his book, *Tsui-chin san-shih nien Chung-kuo chun-shih shih*, states that the *ti hsi* of the Chihli clique in 1920 consisted of Ts'ao K'un, Wu P'ei-fu and their subordinates Lu Chin, Yen Hsiang-wen, Wang Ch'eng-pin, Hsiao Yao-nan, Ts'ao Ying, Feng Yü-hsiang, Ko Shu-p'ing, Tung Cheng-kuo, Peng Shou-hsin and Sun Yo. Wen has included this list of what I later call 'adopted sons'. I will point out later that there is some difference between the *ti hsi* and the 'adopted sons'. In Wen's list, Lu Chin, according to my categorization, would be included as the 'adopted son' of Ts'ao K'un while Feng Yü-hsiang and Sun Yo were the 'adopted sons' of Wu P'ei-fu. See later section under 'adopted sons'. My lists of *ti hsi* are different from Wen's because they are lists in 1924, when there was a change in the composition of the Chihli clique. The clique had expanded and some of the militarists had passed from the scene. Furthermore, I also distinguish militarists who belonged to Ts'ao K'un and those who belonged to Wu P'ei-fu, while Wen lumps them together and names them *ti hsi* of the Chihli army. Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, Sec. 2, p 12
- 29 Sonada Kazukki, *op. cit.*, pp.54-7; T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol. 6, p.61
- 30 James E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord, The Career of Feng Yü-hsiang*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1966. It is interesting to note that Ch'ih Sung-tzu in his book *Min-kuo ch'un ch'u* also takes Feng Yü-hsiang not as a member of Wu P'ei-fu's *ti hsi*. He gives the following statement, 'Soon after the end of the first Chihli-Fengtien War, because

Wu P'ei-fu did not regard Feng Yü-hsiang as one of his *ti hsi*, he (Wu) therefore promoted his subordinate Chang Fu-lai as *tuchün* of Honan.³¹ Originally the *tuchün*ship was given to Feng Yü-hsiang. But in October 1922, due to some disputes between Wu and Feng, Wu transferred Feng to Peking as Inspecting Commissioner of the Army and, instead, appointed Chang Fu-lai *tuchün* of Honan. Ch'ih Sung-tzu, *Min-kuo ch'un ch'iu*, *Hai-tien wen-hua fu-wu she*, Hong Kong 1961, p. 102

- 31 If one traces the background of these militarists one will find that originally they were not subordinates of Ts'ao K'un or Wu P'ei-fu, but joined Ts'ao and Wu at a certain time. Hu Ching-i was originally under Yü Yu-jen; Chang Ch'ih-kung originally under Liu Ch'en-hua; Sun Yo had been a member of the Kuomintang and then became a brigade commander when the Chihli clique expanded its army in July 1917; Lu Chin was a subordinate of Yüan Shih-k'ai and later became a subordinate of Ts'ao K'un; Kung Pang-to was originally a member of Li Shun's branch; and Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun was a subordinate of Ho Tsung-lien
- 32 The term *Chun Chih hsi* is used, for the first time, by Sonada Kazukki to distinguish Wang Huai-ch'ing and T'ien Chung-yü from the other militarists of the Chihli clique. See Sonada Kazukki, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-2
- 33 *Ibid.*, M.C. Powell, *Who's Who in China*, The China Weekly Review, Shanghai 1925, pp. 807-8
- 34 Tao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol. 2, p. 150
- 35 The term 'southerners' refers to those who followed Sun Yat-sen at Canton
- 36 Sonada Kazukki, *op. cit.*, p. 264. State Department, 893.00/5223 and 893.00/5256
- 37 Sonada Kazukki, *op. cit.*, p. 478. State Department, 893.00/5510
- 38 Sonada Kazukki, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-8
- 39 State Department, 893.00/4956
- 40 On 6 May 1923, a group of bandits held up an express train at Lincheng in Shantung and held for ransom 300 Chinese and foreigners on board the train. This incident aroused a great deal of hostility from foreign circles. Besides putting pressure on the Peking government to try to save the foreigners, foreign countries proposed that the railways in China should be under joint management by Chinese and foreign governments. Since T'ien Chung-yü was the *tuchün* of the province, he was the first to be blamed. Using this as an excuse, the Peking government under Ts'ao K'un stripped T'ien of his title and took over the province into its own sphere of influence
- 41 *Nu-li chou pao*, No. 1, 7 May 1922, p. 2
- 42 As late as 1922 the immediate subordinates of Ts'ao K'un, Wang Ch'eng-pin and Ts'ao Ying still did not have a territorial base. It was very unlikely that after the first Chihli-Fengtien War that territory would be given to these two 'adopted sons', Lu Chin and Ts'ai Ch'eng-hsun. Moreover the war was started by Wu P'ei-fu. Naturally, Wu would get a lot out of this war since he was the main fighter
- 43 *Nu-li chou pao*, No. 3, 21 May 1922, p. 2

Chapter 5 Conflicts within the Chihli Clique

- 1 *Ku Chün*, Vol. 1, No. 4–5, 1923
- 2 Hui-chen Wang Liu, *op. cit.*, p. 5
- 3 *CYB*, 1924, p. 1179
- 4 H.H. Fox and H.J. Brett, *Report for the Year 1919 on the Condition and Prospects of British Trade with China*, 48 Appendix 2
- 5 Shen Yün-lung, *Li Yuan-hung p'ing-chuan*, Chung-yang yen-chiu yüan chin tai-shih yen-chiu so, Taipei 1963, pp. 147–8; *HKHTJP*, 15 August 1922, sh. 2, p. 2
- 6 Shen Yün-lung, *Li Yuan-hung p'ing-chuan*, p. 147
- 7 For example, Wang Ch'ung-hui, Lo Wen-kan and V.K. Wellington Koo were men of intellect and ability. T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol. 6, pp. 157–9
- 8 Chang Chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol. 2, p. 457
- 9 Department of State, 893.00/5078
- 10 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol. 6, p. 152; *HKHTJP*, 7 July 1922, sh. 2, p. 2
- 11 *British Chamber of Commerce Journal*, 1921, p. 83
- 12 This was in connection with a contract made before the War whereby China was to purchase four gunboats. In 1914, just before the First World War, the Chinese government borrowed from Austria a loan of £6 million sterling at an interest of 6 per cent per annum for the purpose of buying four gunboats from a group of Austrians and Germans. Upon conclusion of the contract Austria paid China £7,000 sterling as commission. After the war, the Chinese government demanded that this Austro-German Steamship Loan be cancelled as an indemnity for Chinese citizens suffering because of the war. That was refused and negotiations for a settlement went on. At the end of 1922, under Wang Chung-hui's cabinet, China negotiated with Austria for a postponement of payment of this loan. Austria proposed a new interest rate of 9 per cent per annum and agreed to pay another commission of £8,000 sterling upon signing of the contract. Finally, China and Austria came to an agreement to reduce the principle of the loan from £6 million sterling to £4,110,000 sterling, while maintaining the interest rate at 9 per cent per annum. The final agreement was signed by Finance Minister Lo Wen-kan on 14 November 1922. According to Ku Shih-i, the £8,000 sterling, which Austria gave to China as commission apparently through the Sino-Italian Bank, went directly to the Finance Ministry as a 'welfare fund' of the Ministry.

When Wang Chung-hui, the Premier, met with members of parliament in mid-November 1922, Wu Ching-lien, Chairman of the House of Representatives, raised the question of the unpaid salary of the members of the House. Wang replied that all the other ministries were equally short of money and payment of officials was in arrears. Wu found Wang's reply unsatisfactory. Later, upon hearing that Finance Minister Lo Wen-kan had signed the agreement for a postponement of the Austro-German Loan and had received a commission of £8,000 sterling, Wu found this to be the best instrument to topple the Wang cabinet.

- For the Austro-German Loan, see the biography of Lo Wen-kan in Ku Shih-i's *Min-kuo ch'u nien ti chi jen ts'ai-cheng tsung-chang*, pp. 68-71, and Chang Chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fuchuan*, Vol. 2, pp. 460-2
- 13 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol. 6, p. 166. According to T'ao, both Wu Ching-lien and Chang Pai-lieh asserted that the Sino-Italian Bank had agreed to give Lo £80,000 as commission besides promising to let China postpone the payment. The figure given by T'ao seems to be a mistake. According to Ku Shih-i, the figure is £8,000 sterling
- 14 *CIR*, 25 November 1922, p. 10 and 2 December 1922, p. 9
- 15 *Ibid.*, 2 December 1922, p. 4
- 16 *Ibid.*, 2 December 1922, p. 3
- 17 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, p. 173-4; *HKHTJP*, 2 December 1922, sh. 2, p. 2. Ku Shih-i, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-71
- 18 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, p. 177
- 19 *HKHTJP*, 27 May 1921, sh. 2, p. 2; *CIR*, 3 June 1922, p. 3
- 20 Chang Tsu-sheng, *op. cit.*, p. 60; Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 384
- 21 Chang Tsu-sheng, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-8
- 22 *HKHTJP*, 27 June 1922, sh. 2, p. 2
- 23 *CIR*, 27 May 1922
- 24 *Ibid.*, 3 June 1922, p. 15
- 25 Shen Yün-lung, *Li Yüan-hung p'ing-chuan*, pp. 131-4; Chang Tsu-sheng, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-75
- 26 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol. 6, p. 129
- 27 See Chapter 1
- 28 Shen Yün-lung, *Li Yüan-hung p'ing-chuan*, pp. 162-77
- 29 Sun Yao, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 49-54
- 30 *Tung-fang tsa-chih*, Vol. 20, p. 2
- 31 T'ao Chü-yin, *Pei-yang chün-fa t'ung-chih shih-ch'i shih-hua*, Vol. 6, p. 248
- 32 Okano Masujiro, *op. cit.*, p. 73; Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 227
- 33 Normally Wu's subordinates should have sent telegrams of congratulations to Peking after Ts'ao had been elected President. Their non-committal policy amounted to a kind of silent protest. *Tung-fang tsa-chih*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 2-5
- 34 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 138
- 35 Department of State, 893.00/6206
- 36 James Sheridan, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-19
- 37 James Sheridan, *op. cit.*, p. 126; *CYB*, 1925-6, pp. 871-2
- 38 Chang Chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol. 2, pp. 541-3. *Tuli* was equivalent to *tuchün*
- 39 He compelled Ma Lien-chia to appoint two of his associates, Wang Pu and T'ien Chin-chang, to be brigade commanders of the Anhwei army. Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 259-62
- 40 Department of State, 893.00/4941, 893.00/5362 and 893.00/5213.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 893.00/4915 and 893.00/4956

- 42 David Fraser, 'A Diary of Affairs of China', *BCCJ*, January 1924, pp. 8–11; 'Disorder in China: Description of Conditions in some of the Chief Trading Areas', *BCCJ*, October 1922, pp. 363–4; Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 180–1
- 43 Li Chien-nung, *op. cit.*, p. 467
- 44 *Tung-fang tsa-chih*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 10 February 1924, pp. 1–4 and Vol. 21, No. 16, 25 August 1924, pp. 3–7
- 45 *NCH*, 13 September 1924, p. 404
- 46 Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 180–99, *Tung-fang tsa-chih*, Vol. 21, No. 16, 25 August 1924, pp. 3–7, Vol. 21, No. 3, 10 February 1924, pp. 1–4 and Vol. 21, No. 13, pp. 1–4
- 47 *Tung-fang tsa-chih*, Vol. 21, No. 20, 25 October 1924, p. 1; Vol. 21, No. 20, 10 November 1924, pp. 1–4
- 48 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 402–4
- 49 *Ibid.*, pp. 402–6
- 50 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 406–8

Chapter 6 Interorganizational Conflicts and the Downfall of Wu P'ei-fu

- 1 Hsi-sheng Chi, 'The Chinese Warlord System as International System', *New Approaches to International Relations*, (ed) Morton A. Kaplan, pp. 405–25, St. Martin's Press, New York 1968. Lucian W. Pye, *Warlord Politics, Conflict and Coalition in the Modernization of Republican China*, Praeger, New York 1971. See also James N. Rosenau, *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, The Free Press, New York 1969. Romano Romani, *The International Political System*, John Wiley, New York 1972. Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*, John Wiley, New York 1957
- 2 *CIR*, 1 November 1924, p. 176
- 3 Department of State, 893.00/6206
- 4 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 410–13
- 5 *NCH*, 20 December 1924, p. 477. Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 218. *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, 1 December 1924
- 6 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 414. *NCH*, 21 February 1925, p. 295
- 7 *NCH*, 28 February 1925, p. 334. *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, Vol. 1, 1924, p. 408
- 8 Representatives of Tuan and Feng came to negotiate with Wu in Chikungshan. Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 413–15. Sun Yo and Chang Tsung-ch'ang also sent their representatives to see Wu P'ei-fu. See later in the chapter.
- 9 Li Chien-nung, *op. cit.*, pp. 484–5. Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 413
- 10 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 414–15
- 11 Szechwan, Hunan and Kweichow were allies of Wu previously. They carried on friendly relations with Wu, because he had, on many occasions, assisted them in driving out their enemies

- 12 *HKHTJP*, 16 March 1925. T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün chuan*, pp. 119-22
- 13 For Chang Tso-lin's drive towards the Yangtze, see James E. Sheridan, *op. cit.*, p. 178 and Kao Yin-tsu, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-82
- 14 Wen Kung-chih, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 199-204
- 15 Li Chien-nung, *op. cit.*, p. 487
- 16 Wu claimed that all eighteen provinces, within the Great Wall with the exception of Yunnan, Kansu, Shantung and Chihli, were on his side. In fact, only nine provinces - Kiangsu, Anhwei, Chekiang, Kiangsi, Fukien (all under Sun Ch'uan-fang), Hupeh (under Hsiao Yao-nan), Szechwan, Hunan and Kweichow (all nominally under Wu himself as head of the Joint Protection Alliance) - supported the new Anti-Bandits' Alliance *CIR*, 24 October 1925, p. 8
- 17 *Ibid.*, 24 October 1925, p. 11
- 18 *NCH*, 24 October 1925, p. 139
- 19 *CIR*, 24 October 1925, p. 11
- 20 Li Chien-nung, *op. cit.*, p. 487
- 21 Chang chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol. 2, p. 587
- 22 James E. Sheridan, *op. cit.*, p. 180. Li Chien-nung, *op. cit.*, p. 487
- 23 *HKHTJP*, 19 January 1926. In this telegram Feng showed great respect to Wu. Feng also considered himself to be a member of the Chihli faction
- 24 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, December 1925, pp. 228-9
- 25 James E. Sheridan, *op. cit.*, p. 182
- 26 For the part played by Japan in the Kuo Sung-ling revolt, see *Jimbun gaku-ho*, pp. 71-88
- 27 Okano Masujiro, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-8
- 28 Chang Chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol. 2, pp. 588-9
- 29 Li Chien-nung, *op. cit.*, p. 492
- 30 *HKHTJP*, 21 January 1926, sh. 3, p. 2; 3 February 1926, sh. 3 p. 2
- 31 Feng Yü-hsiang resigned and departed in January 1926 but did not cross the steppe to Urga until late March 1926. He stayed in Russia until August and did not return to China until his army retreated from Nankow. See Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yü-hsiang*, pp. 197-202
- 32 *NCH*, 13 February 1926, p. 270
- 33 *Ibid*
- 34 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, December 1925, pp. 204-5
- 35 *Ibid.*, December 1925, pp. 228-9
- 36 *Ibid.*, February 1926, pp. 209-11
- 37 Li Chien-nung, *op. cit.*, p. 493. See Chapter 8 for the Russian help in Kuominchün's bargaining for Wu's loyalty
- 38 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, March 1926, pp. 195-6
- 39 *Ibid.*, March 1926, pp. 216-17
- 40 Kao Yin-tsu, *op. cit.*, p. 206
- 41 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, April 1926, pp. 20-1
- 42 Chang Chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol. 2, p. 591. *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, April 1926, pp. 155-6, April 1926, pp. 184-5
- 43 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 417, *Tung-fang tsa-chih*, Vol.

- 23, No. 8, 25 April 1926. 'Premier-regent' was a temporary premier administering government during a time of crisis
- 44 T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün chuan*, pp. 151-2
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 156
- 46 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, June 1926, pp. 265-72. *NCH*, 5 June 1926, p. 431
- 47 Department of State, 893.00/7388 and 893.00/7392
- 48 *NCH*, 5 June 1926, p. 429
- 49 Kao Yin-tsu, *op. cit.*, p. 215
- 50 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, June 1926, p. 63
- 51 T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün chuan*, p. 153
- 52 During the months of July and August 1926, there were a number of defection and revolts of Wu's commanders. On 14 July Ch'en Ting-cha, a brigade commander, suddenly defected to the Kuominchün while he fought at the front. Ten days later, two regiment commanders, Ma Tsung-yung and Chia Tzu-wen revolted. They had previously been Kuominchün commanders who were reorganized by Wu as part of the army of T'ien Wei-chin, Chin Yün-e's subordinate. Naturally they favoured a Wu-Feng combination. *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, July 1926, pp. 187 and 330-3, August 1926, pp. 74-5
- 53 Kao Yin-tsu, *op. cit.*, p. 214. *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, 26 June 1926, pp. 281-5
- 54 Lucien Pye, *Warlord Politics*, pp. 110-11
- 55 Department of State, 893.00/7926
- 56 T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün chuan*, pp. 167-9
- 57 C. Martin Wilbur, 'Military Separatism and the Process of Reunification under the Nationalist Regime, 1922-1927.' *China in Crisis*, Vol. I, *China's Heritage and the Communist Political System*, (ed) Ping-ti Ho and Tang Tsou, pp. 243-4, Chicago University Press, Chicago 1968
- 58 T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün chuan*, p. 168
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 169
- 60 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, September 1926, pp. 201-4. Chang Chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol. 2, p. 597
- 61 Department of State, 893.00/7932
- 62 Kao Yin-tsu, *op. cit.*, p. 226
- 63 Department of State, 893.00/7939. Kao Yin-tsu, *op.cit.*, p. 226
- 64 Department of State, 893.00/7996. Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 420
- 65 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, March 1927, pp. 10-12
- 66 *Ibid.*, March 1927, pp. 5-6 and 87
- 67 *Ibid.*, February 1927, pp. 105-6, 169, 299-300; March 1927, p. 161
- 68 H.O. Chapman, *The Chinese Revolution 1926-27*, pp. 189-98

Part Two Foreign Relations

Introduction

- For example, in August 1923, Chang Tso-lin the Manchurian militarist planned to seize the Chinese Eastern Railway Land Office. Leo Karakhan,

then the Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, did not waste his time negotiating with the Foreign Office in Peking. Knowing that Peking was unable to discipline Chang, he dealt directly with the Manchurian warlord. See Allen Whiting, *Soviet Politics in China 1917-24*, pp. 209-11

Chapter 7 Relations with Britain and the United States

- 1 For report of these visits, see F.O. 371/6615, F.O. 371/9181, F.O. 371/6616
- 2 Report of Colonel Orpen-Palmer to the British Legation, 29 September 1921, F.O. 371/6616
- 3 Orpen-Palmer's report to the British Legation, 12 April 1922, F.O. 371/7997
- 4 Colonel Orpen-Palmer to Sir R. Macleay, 10 April 1923, F.O. 371/9181
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 5
- 6 H. Porter to Sir Ronald Macleay, 2 November 1925, F.O. 371/11655
- 7 Herbert Goffe to Sir Beilby Alston, 26 August 1921, F.O. 371/6615
- 8 Okano Masujiro, *Go Hai-fu*, pp. 333-6, Chang Chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol. 2, pp. 433-5
- 9 W.R. Braisted, *The United States Navy in the Pacific, 1909-22*, p. 536, University of Texas Press, 1971. Department of State, 893.00/3771
- 10 This is in connection with his victory over the Anfu clique in the summer of 1920. Wu asked Ruddock not to grant asylum to five Anfu men, Hsü Shu-cheng, Tseng Yü-chün, Chu Shen, Li Ssu-hao and Ting Shih-yuan. No reply was made to Wu. Letter from A.B. Ruddock to Secretary of State, 22 July 1920, Department of State, 893.00/3546
- 11 Major Philoon's report to the Department of State, 893.00/3581
- 12 Bell to Secretary of State, 3 June 1924, Department of State, 893.01a/54. In a report to the State Department, Connor advised the government not to invest at that time because of the confusing situation in China. However, he stated that foreign investment would benefit later when the Chinese central government was financially exhausted and would show favour to those nations which provided financial assistance. This is when the United States should change her present policy and compete with the Japanese who in an effort to restore tranquillity and therefore increase her prestige in China, would surely take the opportunity to finance the central government. Department of State, 893.00/5482
- 13 Edward Bell to the Secretary of State, Department of State, 893.01a/57
- 14 Department of State, 893.01a/54, 893.01a/55 and 893.01a/56
- 15 Report of political conditions in Hupeh, Department of State, 893.00/4214
- 16 Telegram from Admiral McVay to Admiral Washington, Hankow File 800. P.S. Heintzleman to F. Mayer, Hankow File 777
- 17 E.W. Eberle, Acting Secretary of the Navy to Navy Department in Washington, 14 February 1927. Enclosure a memorandum of Rear Admiral McVay concerning an incident occurring in 1925. Department of State, 893.00/8255
- 18 F.P. Lockhart to J.V.A. MacMurray, Department of State, Hankow File L. No. 79

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- 19 Department of State, 893.00/8255
- 20 Telegram from Palairet in Peking, 19 August 1925, F.O. 371/10922, F.O. 371/10922 minute
- 21 Hsiao helped to bring about a settlement of the Hankow Incident in June 1925, Sir R. Macleay to Sir Austen Chamberlain, F.O. 371/11666
- 22 Foreign Office minute (G.S. Moss), F.O. 371/10923
- 23 P.S. Heintzelman to J.V.A. MacMurray, 21 August 1925, Department of State, Hankow File, L. No. 908
- 24 Telegram from the Governor of Hong Kong to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 14 September 1925, F.O. 371/10949
- 25 S.P. Waterlow to Sir Samuel Wilson, F.O. 371/10949
- 26 See minute in F.O. 371/10923
- 27 Barton's telegram, 15 January 1926, F.O. 371/11655
- 28 Extract from the *Central China Post* of 10 February 1926, enclosed in Macleay to Sir Austen Chamberlain, 12 March 1926, F.O. 371/10957
- 29 In 1919, the American Minister recommended to the diplomatic corp that if foreign nations stopped exporting arms to China, it would be more difficult for warlords to fight against each other. He suggested an international agreement prohibiting the sale of arms in China which was known as the Arms Embargo Agreement of 1919. However, many militarists simply imported their arms secretly or openly, 'for commercial use'. The agreement was so frequently violated that it became nothing but a piece of paper
- 30 F. G. Watkin did not spell out what the Chinese Arms Mandate was. He said that Wu P'e-fu could succeed in obtaining control of the Peking government without the British arms, he would then be able to stabilize himself by importing arms under special permit. Later, Sir R. Macleay asked the British government that he be allowed to communicate to Wu 'that His Majesty's Government while not contemplating any immediate change in the present policy of strict neutrality towards contending factions in China might be led to modify that policy to the extent of withdrawing obstacles in the way of supply of munitions of war from British sources in favour of a friendly and stable central government at Peking which might find itself attacked by those extremist elements at Canton and elsewhere which are notoriously an obstacle to unification and pacification of the country, but also through their violent hostility to our interest in China an impediment to good relations between British and Chinese peoples'. See F. G. Watkin's comment and Sir R. Macleay's dispatch F.O. 371/11655
- 31 Telegram from Consul-General of Hankow, 25 February 1926, F.O. 371/11655. Minute from Mr Marshto and Selby, 6 March 1926, F.O. 371/11656
- 32 Sir R. Macleay's telegram, 3 March 1926, F.O. 371/11655
- 33 Goffe to Ronald Macleay, 22 March 1926, enclosed in Goffe to Foreign Office, F.O. 371/11673
- 34 Goffe to Sir R. Macleay, 16 April 1926 in Macleay to Foreign Office, 17 May 1926, F.O. 371/11658
- 35 These are the interim surtaxes granted by the Powers at the Washington Conference in November 1922. The Washington Customs Treaty

stipulated a grant of 2.5 per cent surtax on ordinary goods and 5 per cent on luxury imports. It was agreed that a conference would be called to revise the Chinese customs tariff. However the tariff was not held until 1925-6. The Chinese never got these surtaxes because of the unstable political situation in China. The granting of these surtaxes to any military faction, the foreign powers argued, would amount to intervention in Chinese politics. It was not until 1927 that the Nanking government, under Chiang Kai-shek, announced the tariff autonomy and put the new rate at 7.5 per cent

- 36 See minute in F.O. 371/11658
- 37 Teichman's report enclosed in Sir R. Macleay to Austen Chamberlain, 16 August 1926, F.O. 371/11658. The Foreign Office later regarded this deputation to Wu as an 'unwise step', and 'unnecessary and illtimed'. One member thought Wu's attitude 'was not necessarily due to resentment but probably to a natural desire not to commit himself'
- 38 Minute of Teichman's interview with emissary from Wu P'ei-fu on 20 September 1926, enclosed in Sir R. Macleay to Sir Austen Chamberlain, 12 November 1926, F.O. 371/1160
- 39 Telegram from Sir R. Macleay to Foreign Office, F.O. 371/11659
- 40 Notes on various interviews held with military attache during the period 26-9 January 1927, enclosed in Sir M. Lampson's letter to the Foreign Office, 8 February 1927, F.O. 371/12403.
- 41 For information on these individuals and their relations with Pai, see letter from Pai Chien-wu to Rodney Gilbert, Department of State, 893.000/4010 and 893.00B/194. 'Tragic Death of Governor Li Shun', *Milliard's Review*, 16 October 1920, p. 349. *New York Times*, 5 May 1922, 1: 1 and 2 and 3 December 1922, IX, 1:1
- 42 Other American advisers included Frank H. Clark (Railway technician) and Wilbur P. Richardson (draftman of The Ministry of Communications). Department of State, 893.51A/48^{1/2}, 893.0la/50, 893.0la/51. *China Weekly Review*, 24 April 1926
- 43 Barbara Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China, 1911-45*, p. 68, MacMillan, New York 1971
- 44 *New York Times*, 5 May 1922, 1: 1 and 2
- 45 'United States of China Predicted as World's Greatest Democracy', *New York Times*, 3 December 1922, IX, 1:1
- 46 Extract from the *Peking Leader*, enclosed in Clive to Earl Curzon, British Foreign Ministry F 2645/865/10.
- 47 For the Y\$ 2 million loan see later in this section. Schurman to Secretary of State in Washington, Department of State, 893.01A/49^{1/2}
- 48 Report from the Manager of the Standard Oil Company at Hankow, Department of State, 893.00/4146. See enclosure
- 49 *Political Science Quarterly*, 1921, pp. 642-62
- 50 Josef Washington Hall, *In the Land of the Laughing Buddha*, pp. 330-1. Letter from Frank Rhea to F.R. Eldridge, Department of State, 893.51/3951
- 51 Josef W. Hall, 'Wu P'ei-fu's financial program,' *FER*, Vol. 18, No. 7, June 1922, pp. 266-7. *CIR*, 3 June 1922, p.20
- 52 Hillier's letter to Clive, 13 June 1922, F.O. 371/7985

- 53 'Mr. Stephen on China's Finance: the \$400,000,000 rumor,' reprinted in *CIR*, 24 June 1922, p. 21
- 54 Schurman to Secretary of State, Department of State, 493.11/834
- 55 Report of the financial situation in China, 15 June to 15 July 1922 by the economist consul of the American Legation. Department of State, 893.51/3973. Conversation with F.W. Stevens, Department of State, 893.51/3899
- 56 Memorandum of conversation with F.W. Stevens and memorandum by F.W. Stevens, Department of State, 893.51/3899 and 893.51/3942
- 57 Schurman to Secretary of State, 27 July 1922, Department of State, 493.11/837. Telegram from Sir C. Eliot, Sir B. Alston and Sir Robert Clive, F.O. 371/7985
- 58 Schurman to Secretary of State, 27 July 1922, Department of State, 493.11/837
- 59 Telegram of Clive to Foreign Office 28 July 1922, F.O. 371/7985, p. 482
- 60 Sir Robert Clive to V. Wellesley, 8 August 1922, F.O. 371/7985 p. 482
- 61 Minute of F.O. 371/7985
- 62 'China's Financial Independence', *FER*, September 1922, Vol. 18, No. 9, pp. 568-9. Department of State, 893.51/4008
- 63 Department of State, 893.51/4025 and 893.51/4031
- 64 Oliver B. Harriman to Secretary of State, Department of State, 893.51/4038
- 65 F.O. 371/7985. The Japanese embassy to the Department of State, Department of State, 893.51/4019
- 66 'The New Consortium Loan', by Wellesley, enclosed in Oliver B. Harriman to Secretary of State, 24 October 1922, Department of State, 893.51/4038. Sir Auckland Geddes to Charles E. Hughes, Department of State, 893.51/4041 and telegram to Sir A. Geddes from the Foreign Office, 27 October 1922, F.O. 371/7985
- 67 Charles E. Hughes to Sir Auckland Geddes, Department of State, 893.51/4041
- 68 Memorandum from the Japanese embassy to the Department of State, Department of State, 893.51/4129.
- 69 See documents and minute in F.O. 371/7985
- 70 Letter of Sir Robert Hotung and H. Goffe, enclosed in Sir R. Macleay to Curzon, F.O. 371/10243
- 71 'Policy of Marshal Wu', and 'A Stable Government for China', enclosed in A. Brook Smith's letter to D.G.M. Bernard, F.O. 371/10924
- 72 Smith's letter to Bernard and Bernard's reply to Smith, F.O. 371/10924. See previous section for Prince Kung and General Yeung Shing's mission to Hong Kong
- 73 Minute F.O. 3710924
- 74 J.C. Huston to J.V.A. MacMurray, 3 February 1926 and Lockhart to MacMurray, 2 September 1926, Department of State, Hankow File L No. 35 and L No. 74
- 75 Lockhart to MacMurray 19 September 1925, Department of State, Hankow File L. No. 2. Lockhart to Secretary of State, 25 September 1925, Department of State, Hankow File No. 8. *China Weekly Review*, 24 April 1926, p. 207

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- 79 [Ch'en] Tu-hsiu, 'Ti-kuo chu-i che yüan-tsü chü fa chih yu i cheng-chü', *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 76, 30 July 1924, pp. 605-6
- 80 Hu Sheng, *T'i-kuo chu-i yü Chung-kuo cheng-chih*, Sheng-huo, tu-shu, hsin-chih, san-lien shu-tien, Peking 1950, pp. 299-311
- 81 Liu Ta-nien, *Mei-kuo ch'in Hua shih*, Jen-min chu-pan she, Peking 1951, pp. 126-32. Wang Min-chih, *Mei-kuo ch'in Hua hsiao shih*, San lien shu tien, Peking 1950, pp. 94-5
- 82 S.J. Fuller to J.G. Schurman, Department of State 893.113/464. *Tung-fang tse-chih*, Vol. 21, No. 5, pp. 4-6. J.C. Huston to J.G. Schurman, Department of State, 893.00/51-. B. Alston to Curzon, 21 March 1922, Foreign Office F 1593/84/10
- 83 The information was obtained from Morty Rozensky
- 84 Admiral A. Kolchak, the leader of anti-Bolshevik forces in Siberia in 1919. See Allen Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China 1917-24*, pp. 32-3
- 85 J.G. Schurman to Secretary of State, Department of State, 893.00/4369, 893.113/262. Memorandum, American legation, Peking, 15 June 1922, Department of State, 893.00/4592
- 86 J.G. Schurman to Secretary of State, Department of State, 893.113/423, 893.113/438 and 893.113/441. *China Weekly Review*, 6 January 1923, p. 60
- 87 NCH, 12 July 1924, p. 56. The Department of State document on the *Talbot* case is not available. The inventory briefly refers to it. See Department of State, 893.113/723, 893.113/740 and 893.113/721 sub. No. 709
- 88 Schurman to Secretary of State, 893.113/733 and 893.113/763
- 89 Edwin S. Cunningham to Secretary of State, Department of State, 893.113/880
- 90 Charles C. Shedd, 'New Cotton Mill opened at Chengchow, Honan', *Milliard's Review*, 3 July 1920, pp. 309-11
- 91 *China Weekly Review*, 13 May 1922, p. 434
- 92 *China Weekly Review*, 1 March 1924, p. 24. 'Kishi shosho naka Shina ryoko hokoku', Kawada Akiharu, August 1924, Japanese Army and Navy Archives (IV) AG (A) No. 577 NA 14664 p. 07829. *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 55, 20 February 1924, p. 421
- 93 *China Weekly Review*, 25 March 1922, p. 152
- 94 Colonel Orpen-Palmer's report, F.O. 371/9181, p. 7
- 95 Colonel Orpen-Palmer to Sir R. Macleay, F.O. 371/9181. Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 328
- 96 Okano Masujiro, *Go Hai-fu*, pp. 171-5, 324, and 1204-5
- 97 Okano Masujiro, *op. cit.*, pp. 324-7. J.W. Hall, *In the Land of the Laughing Buddha*. Department of State, 893.00/4010
- 98 J.W. Hall, *In the Land of the Laughing Buddha*, pp. 93-103

- 99 *Ibid.*, p. 153
- 100 The Boxer Protocol signed in September 1901 provided the occupation by foreigners of a dozen railway posts in the Peking-Tientsin area to ensure foreign access to Peking from the sea. Any fighting among warlords in that area would be considered by foreign nations as an interruption of communication between Peking and Tientsin and beyond to the sea. The Japanese authorities, who were pro-Fengtien, protested that Wu's army had violated the Boxer Protocol so as to deter Wu from his pursuit of Chang outside the Great Wall.
- 101 *Ibid.*, pp. 329-48
- 102 T.R. Jerigan, 'Observation,' *Milliard's Review*, 14 August 1920, pp. 573-7. 'The Emerging Wu P'ei-fu', from the 'China Christian Advocate', *Milliard's Review*, 18 September 1920, pp. 120-4. 'Who's Who in China - Wu P'ei-fu', *Milliard's Review*, August 1920, pp. 636-8. John Dewey, 'A Political Upheaval in China', *Milliard's Review*, 4 December 1920, pp. 9-10. W.W. Willoughby, 'China's Present Political Situation', 20 September 1919, *Milliard's Review*, pp. 101-4. 'Wu's Attitude Towards Japan', *Milliard's Review*, 10 January 1920, p. 270. *Asia*, Vol. 25, No. 7, p. 583. David Fraser, 'A Diary of the Affairs of China', *BCCJ*, Vol. 8, No. 12, December 1923, pp. 409-10. 'A Diary of Affairs of China: The Political Situation Delinquencies of Chang Tso-lin, Japanese Troops in Manchuria', *BCCJ*, 1920, pp. 421-3. Peter S. Jowe, 'Activities of Allies in Hankow', *China Weekly Review*, 12 December 1925. 'Wu P'ei-fu, Heads Anti-Red Alliance', *China Weekly Review*, 13 February 1926, p. 299
- 103 George Branson Rea, 'The Tail of the Dog' *FER*, Vol. 9, No. 6, June 1923, pp. 367-72
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- 114 'Wu P'ei-fu's Blunder', *Peking and Tientsin Times*, 18 August 1921, *CIR*,

- 20 August 1921, p. 4
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- 116 Editorial, *The Weekly Review of the Far East*, Vol. 18, No. 10, 6 August 1921, p. 483
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- 126 David Fraser, 'The Next Stage of Wu P'ei-fu's Wise Leadership', *The Times*, 29 June 1922, p. 7a
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- 136 'Wanted: A Leader', *FER*, Vol. 19, No. 5, May 1923, pp. 290-1

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- 138 David Fraser, 'A Diary of the Affairs of China', *BCCJ*, Vol. 7, No. 12, December 1923, pp. 409–10
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- 152 C.W. Harvey, Notes Concerning the International Committee Secretarial Staff in the War Area in China, YMCA Archives, 25 October 1924
- 153 G.A. Fitch's letter, YMCA, Shanghai, August 1920, YMCA Archives
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- 155 Department of State, 893.00/6206, the *New York Times*, 14 January 1925, 1:5
- 156 'The Emerging Wu P'ei-fu', *China Christian Advocate*, reprinted in *Milliard's Review*, 18 September 1920, pp. 120–4
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- 162 L.E. McLahlin to G. Sherwood Eddy, 28 June 1922, YMCA Archives
 163 A.M. Gutlery to Foreign Department, International Committee YMCA, New York, 2 February 1922, YMCA Archives
 164 Editorial, the *Chinese Recorder*, Vol. 55, No. 11, November 1924, p. 694
 165 At the end of the war there was a general anti-British feeling in Manchuria. Since the British press in Tientsin strongly supported Wu, the Fengtien clique looked upon the British Legation and the British newspaper, the *Peking and Tientsin Times*, as antagonistic and seeking their destruction. Chang Tso-lin, in a speech, also warned the British that he would no longer guarantee the security of British residents in Manchuria. Resentment was so strong that the British residents in South Manchuria shared the apprehension regarding their safety in the area. Two British firms even removed all their stock from the city. Wilkinson, the British Consul-General at Mukden, believed that if the anti-British feeling reached Chang Tso-lin's officers and soldiers, there might be an outbreak of violence against British subjects.
 166 Department of State, 893.00/4417
 167 Clive to Earl Balfour, 26 June 1922, Enclosure F.E. Wilkinson to Clive, 17 June 1922, F.O. 371/7997, Clive to Earl Balfour, 5 July 1922. Enclosure, F.E. Wilkinson to Beilby Alston, 19 June 1922, F.O. 371/7998
 168 Circular to consuls, No. 42, F.O. 371/7998
 169 F.P. Lockhart to F. Mayer, 20 September 1926, Department of State, Hankow File No. 86

Chapter 8 Relations with the Soviet Union, the Chinese Communists and Sun Yat-sen

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- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 107
- 3 Allen S. Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China, 1917-24*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1968. Conrad Brandt, *Stalin's Failure in China, 1924-27*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1958
- 4 Harold R. Isaacs, 'Documents on the Comintern and the Chinese Revolution', *op.cit.*, p. 102. Chin Shen-pao, *1917-27 nien chih Chung Su kuan hsi*, Wen hua chi-chin hui, Taipei 1966, pp. 43-6
- 5 O. Edmund Clubb, *China and Russia. The 'Great Game'*, Columbia University Press, New York 1971, pp. 161-74
- 6 Li Yun-han, *Ts'ung yung Kung tao ch'ing tang*, Vol. 1 Chung-kuo hsueh-shu chu-tso chiang-tsui wei-yuan hui, Taipei, 1966, p. 113
- 7 Allen Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China*, p. 305
- 8 X.J. Eudin and R.C. North, *Soviet Russia and the East 1920-1927, A Documentary Survey*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1957, p. 129
- 9 Leo Pasvolsky, *Russia in the Far East*, New York 1922, p. 133
- 10 Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party, 1921-27*,

- University Press of Kansas, Lawrence 1971, pp. 75–6
- 11 Vladimir Sibiriakoff (Vilensky), 'Recent Events in China', *International Press Correspondence*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 17 October 1921, p. 15
- 12 Allen Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China*, p. 305
- 13 According to Conrad Brandt, T'ang Liang-li and Wu Hsiang-hsiang, it was Maring who visited Wu P'ei-fu in late 1921. Brandt says that Maring visited Wu while stopping in Peking on his way to the First Party Congress in Shang-hai. He asserts that Maring had promised to support Wu against Chang Tso-lin by organizing railway workers to protect his rail lines in the First Chihli-Fengtien War. Ts'ai Ho-shen stated that it was a Comintern envoy who was responsible for the collaboration between Wu and the Chinese communists. See C. Brandt, *Stalin's Failure in China*, pp. 24–6. T'ang Liang-li writes, 'Mahlin had during his stay in China, secretly organized the Chinese Communist Party, and on his return to Moscow recommended that the Third International enter into relations with Sun Yat-sen and Wu P'ei-fu. He reported that ... the man with strongest military force was Wu but Wu knew nothing about politics. Moscow accepted Mahlin's report and made connections with both Sun and Wu, so as to secure protection for the Chinese Communist Party.' T'ang Liang-li, *The Inner History of Chinese Revolution* Routledge, London 1930, p. 155. Wu Hsiang-hsiang, *Chung-kuo hsien-tai shih tsung-k'an*, Vol. 2. Cheng-chung shu-chü, Taipei 1961 pp. 103–4. However, according to Wang Ching-wei, while Maring was talking with Sun in 1921, Russia also sent a delegate to negotiate with Wu in the north. Wang Ching-wei, 'On Separating the Communists from the KMT at Wuhan', 5 November 1927 in *Ko-ming yü fan ko-ming*, p. 593. Shen Yun-lung asserted it was Voltinsky who devised a plan to have Li Ta-chao contact Pai Chien-wu. Shen Yun-lung, *Chung-kuo Kung-chan-tang chih lai yuan*, Min chu chao she, Taipei 1959, p. 10
- 14 Wu Hsiang-hsiang, *Min-kuo jen ho-shih*, San Min shu-chu, Taipei 1971, p. 150. Hsi-wu-lao-jen, 'Hui-i Li Ta-chao tung-chih', *Chung-kuo kung-jen*, No. 9, 1957, p. 21. Ch'en Kung-po and Chou Fo-hai, *Ch'en Kung-po Chou Fo-hai hui-i lu ho pien*, Ch'un Ch'iu chu-pan-she, Hong Kong 1967 p. 145
- 15 Teng Chung-hsia, *Chung-kuo chih-kung yün-tung chien shih*, Yenan (?): Chieh-fang she, 1943, pp. 25–6
- 16 See Karl Radek's speech to the 4th Comintern Congress, 23 November 1922. Lydia Holubnychy, *Comintern in China*, an unpublished paper. Teng Chung-hsia, *op.cit.*, pp. 25–6
- 17 Wang Yü-chün, *Chung-Su wai-chiao ti hsü-mo*, Academia Sinica, Taipei 1963, p. 135
- 18 J.B. Powell, 'The "Return" of Marshal Wu P'ei-fu', *China Weekly Review*, 22 May 1926, p. 315
- 19 Teng Chung-hsia, *op.cit.*, p. 27
- 20 Ch'en Ta, *Chung-kuo lao-kung wen-t'i*, Shanghai 1929, p. 229. Richard P. Soter, *Wu P'ei-fu: A Case Study of a Chinese Warlord*, Harvard University Ph.D dissertation, 1959, p. 183
- 21 Hsi-wu-lao-jen, 'Hui-i Li Ta-chao tung-chin', *Chung-kuo kung-jen*, No. 9, 1957, p. 21

- 22 Hsi-wu-lao-jen, *Erh-ch'i hui-i lu*, Peking 1957, p. 21
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 22
- 24 According to Chang Kuo-t'ao, Ch'en Tu-hsiu was interested in the idea of the Able Men Government at the beginning, Chang Kuo-t'ao, 'Wu ti hui-i', *Ming-pao yüeh-k'an*, No. 8, pp. 76, 81-2. Maurice Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism*, pp. 220-1
- 25 This refers to the parliament which Chang Hsun dissolved on 12 June 1917, after he entered the capital with his 5,000 soldiers in an attempt to restore the last Manchu Emperor, P'u-i, to the throne. Li Yuan-hung was forced to give up his Presidency at this time
- 26 Editorial, 'Wo-men ti cheng-chih chu-chang' ('Our Political Proposals') in the *Nu-li chou-pao*, 14 May 1922, p. 1
- 27 Chang Kuo-t'ao, 'Wu ti hui-i', *Ming-pao yüeh-k'an*, No. 8, p. 81
- 28 Teng Chung-hsia, *Chung-kuo chih-kung yünn-tung chien-shih*, p. 27. Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party, 1921-27*, Vol. 1, p. 265. Ts'ai Ho-sen also reported that 'there were one or two comrades who placed unfounded hopes on Wu', Ts'ai in *Problemy Kitaya*, No. 1, p. 4, quoted by C. Brandt, *Stalin's Failure in China*, p. 25
- 29 Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, pp. 262-3. Ts'ai Ho-sen stated that the tactic of rapprochement with Wu found its principal defendant in the Comintern representative. Did he mean Maring? Except in T'ang Liang-li's *The Inner History of Chinese Revolution*, I have not been able to find any evidence that Maring was interested in that idea. Ts'ai Ho-sen's article in *Problemy Kitaya*, No. 1, p. 4, quoted by C. Brandt in *Stalin's Failure in China*, p. 25
- 30 Joffe A., 'SSSR i Dal'nii Vostok' ('USSR and the Far East') *Mirovoe Khoziaistvo i mirovaya politika* (*World Economy and World Politics*), No. 10/11, 1927, pp. 25-47. The information is given to me by Lydia Holubnychy
- 31 Between May and October 1922, Wu had submitted two proposals to the International Banking Consortium for a constitutional interim loan. The Americans were not interested in the idea. For Wu's relations with the British and Americans and for the constitutional interim loan, see Chapter 7
- 32 H.G.H. Woodhead, *The Truth About the Chinese Republic*, Hurst & Blackett, London 1926, pp. 249-52
- 33 Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the CCP*, p. 266
- 34 Sun Yat-sen, *Kuo-fu chuan shu*, Kuo-fang yen chiu yuan, Taipei 1960, 3rd edition, pp. 750-2. For Wu's telegrams, Chang Chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol. 2, p. 424
- 35 Both telegrams were published in the *Hua-tzu jih-pao* on 8 September 1922, p. 2, sh. 2. They might have been issued earlier. There is another telegram allegedly sent by Ts'ao and Wu to Sun and published on 16 September 1922 in the *Hua-tzu jih-pao*, p. 2, sh. 2. In the telegram, Ts'ao and Wu agreed with Sun that federalism would not work in China as there had been an autocratic government before. They thought that a strong centralized government should be established to make its law universally applicable in the nation. In the telegram Ts'ao and Wu also agreed with Sun's idea of disbanding the troops and turning them into

productive labour, which would ease the conflict between the capitalists and the labour. Furthermore, they agreed that internal capital should be tapped but disagreed that China should contract foreign loans. The editor of the *Hua-tzu jih-pao* stated that the telegram was issued by Ts'ao K'un's subordinates in Paoting. Wu P'ei-fu, however, denied any knowledge of this telegram. *Hua-tzu jih-pao*, 16 September, 1922, p. 2, sh. 2. *Nu-li chou-pao*, 10 September 1922, p. 1 and 20 September 1922, p. 1.

It is interesting to note that in a letter to Paul S. Reinsch, dated Shanghai 26 August 1922, Sun expressed hope of meeting Reinsch, 'at Peking at an early date. This is quite possible if success attends certain efforts which are about to be made to secure the "financing" of the Government'. And in 25 August 1922, the *New York Times* reported 'Sun Yat-sen ... who has been leading conferences on plans to reunify the country, today outlined a plan to rehabilitate China's finances by having America take over China's debts to European countries on a refinancing basis, as part payment on European debts to the United States.' It seems that Sun, at least in August was supporting Wu in the latter's efforts to get the International Banking Consortium to make administrative loans to his Peking government. Dr Paul S. Reinsch's letter is in the Reinsch paper in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at Madison. See *New York Times*, 25 August, p. 15:5

- 36 According to Hu Shih, Sun's political principles were (1) the protection of the constitution, (2) recognition of the 1919 parliament in the south, (3) anti-federalism and, (4) abolition of regionalism and district autonomous rule as a step to centralization of government. Hu pointed out that the third and fourth principles were similar to that of Wu P'ei-fu. *Nu-li chou-pao*, 3 September 1922
- 37 See Sun's letter in 1922 to members of the Peking government, 5 September; to Ts'ai Chu-yu and Ch'en Ch'u-chen 7 September; to K'ao Ch'en-hsiao, 5 September; to members of the Kuomintang, 18 September; and to Chang Kai-yu and Chu Pei-te, 20 September. Sun Yat-sen, *Kuo-fu chuan shu*, pp. 802-7
- 38 Chang Kuo-tao, *The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party*, pp. 73, 75, 296-7; *Nu-li chou-pao*, 3 September 1923. Li Ta-chao served under Sun Hung-i in 1916, when the latter was the Minister of Interior in Peking. Later when Sun Hung-i was forced to resign by Hsu Shu-tseng and the Anfu clique in the power conflict between Li Yuan-hung and Tuan Ch'i-jui, Li Ta-chao followed Sun to Shanghai. Li Yuan-han, *op.cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 55. Later in 1923, when Sun Yat-sen reorganized the KMT, Sun Hung-i became one of the 'advisers' to the KMT
- 39 Wen Kung-chih, *Tsui-chin san-shih nien Chung-kuo chün-shih shih*. Vol. 1, p.144. Wen-hsing shu-tien, Taipei 1962. See Sun's letter to Hsieh Ch'ih on 23 October 1922, in *Kuo-fu chuan shu*, p. 812. Wu Hsiang-hsiang, *Min-kuo pai jen chuan*, Vol.2 pp. 175-82. Chuan-chi wen-hsueh chu pan she, Taipei 1971
- 40 Sun Tan-lin's comment on the Sun-Wu co-operation was first published in *Shen Pao* on 28 September 1922 and was quoted by Ts'ai Ho-shen in

his article published in the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 4, 4 October 1922, p. 28

- 41 Wen Kung-chih, *op.cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 144, *Nu-li chou-pao*, 1 October 1922, p. 1. Wu's comment to Chang Chi and Hsu Chien was reported in the *Shen Pao* on 19 October and quoted in the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao* on 25 October 1922, p. 53. A year later on October 1923, Hsu Shao-cheng was sent by Sun Yat-sen to consult with Wu P'ei-fu in Loyang. In their conversation, Hsu mentioned three envoys Sun had sent to see Wu. They were Wang Ching-wei, Chang Chi and Ch'en Chung-fu. According to Hsu, both Wang Ching-wei and Chang Chi were impressed with Wu's personality. Hsu also said that all three representatives of Sun failed to accomplish their mission: to get Wu to co-operate with the KMT leader. Ch'en Chung-fu's mission will be dealt with later. However, I have no evidence on Wang Ching-wei's mission, except Hsu's own statement. See Okano Masujiro, *Go Hai-fu*, pp. 439-43
- 42 Richard P. Soter, *op.cit.*, p. 122
- 43 *China Weekly Review*, 23 September 1922, p. 136
- 44 See Ts'ai Ho-shen's article on reunification, foreign loans and the KMT in the *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 1, September 1922, pp. 4-6
- 45 Ts'ai was referring to Wellington Koo and his associates who were allegedly helping Wu to seek foreign loans from the International Banking Consortium
- 46 Sun's policy of co-operation with Russia and Germany was quoted in Ts'ai Ho-shen's article. See *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 4, 4 October 1922, pp. 25-6
- 47 This is referring to the telegram published in *Hua-tzu jih-pao* on 16 September 1922. See note 35
- 48 *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 4, 4 October 1922, pp. 28-9
- 49 *Ibid.*, No. 5, 11 October 1922, p. 44
- 50 Chang Kuo-t'ao's rebuttal to Hu Shih's article on International Control of China, *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 6, 18 October 1922, pp. 45-50
- 51 Ts'ai Ho-shen's article on Wu P'ei-fu is looking for a good buy, *Hsiang tao chou-pao*, 25 October 1922, p. 53. The Tangshan strike will be dealt with later
- 52 A. Khodorov, 'Koalitsia Chang Tso-lin i Sun Yat-sen' (Coalition between Chang Tso-lin and Sun Yat-sen), Allen Whiting, *op. cit.*, p. 117
- 53 Upton Close (J.W. Hall), 'Russia and Japan - Champion for the New Government', *Asia*, August 1923, p. 557. For A. Hodoroff, see *Milliard's Review*, 30 April 1921, p. 480. Also see Department of State, 893.0013/17, pp. 10ff. A. Hodoroff is the same as Abram Khodorov
- 54 *Izvestiia*, No. 181 (1620), 13 August 1922, p. 2. See Whiting, *op.cit.*, p. 120
- 55 *Izvestiia*, No. 182 (1621), 15 August 1922, p. 2. See Whiting, *op.cit.*, p. 120
- 56 V. Vilensky, 'Politische Gruppierungen und Parteien in China', *Die Kommunistische Internationale*, 1 November 1922. See R.P. Soter, *op.cit.*, pp. 147-8. Allen Whiting, *op.cit.*, pp. 118-19
- 57 George V. Chicherin, 'Comrade Chicherin and the Far Eastern

- Question,' *International Press Correspondence Report*, 16 November 1922, p. 795. See R.P. Soter, *op.cit.*, p. 150
- 58 Lydia Holubnychy, *Comintern in China*. I am thankful to Holubnychy for the translation of Radek's speech
- 59 See Sun's letter to Ching Mei-chiu, 11 October 1922; to Hsu Pao, 11 October; to Chou Chen-lin, 20 October; to Ts'ai Chu-yu, 27 October and to Lu Ti-p'ing, 27 October in the *Kuo-fu chuan shu*, pp. 809-13
- 60 Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the CCP*, pp. 244-5. Chang has confused the date of his trip to Peking. He stated it was in mid-June. It is clear, however, that in mid-June the Chihli clique had not yet split into the Loyang and Paoting factions. Ts'ao K'un and Wu P'ei-fu were still united in a concerted effort to get Li Yuan-hung out as a president. It was not until early October, that the Chihli clique became divided
- 61 *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 7, 25 October 1922, pp. 54-5
- 62 For a detailed account of the Lo Wen-kan case and the split of the Chihli clique, see Chapter 5
- 63 This is also mentioned by V. Vilensky in two other articles. See later
- 64 Ts'ai Ho-shen on 'The Inside Story of Recent Political Crisis', *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 12, 6 December 1922, pp. 93-4
- 65 Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the CCP*, p. 266
- 66 Chen-yu, 'Shouldn't We Take Note of the Activities of Those Who Are Pro-British and Pro-American?', *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 10, 25 October 1922, p. 54
- 67 Sun To, 'Wu P'ei-fu and Ch'en Chiung-ming', *ibid.*, No. 9, 8 November 1922, p. 71
- 68 Sun Yat-sen's letter to Chiang Kai-shek, *Kuo-fu chuan shu*, p. 817
- 69 *Ibid.*
- 70 Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the CCP*, p. 267
- 71 Li Yun-han, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 144. Chang Chi, *Chang Fu-chuan hsien-sheng chuan chi*, p. 195
- 72 Lydia Holubnychy, *Comintern in China*
- 73 A. Joffe, 'Kitaiskii Kavardak' (Chinese Puzzle), *Izvestia*, No. (1740), 5 January 1923, p. 2. See Whiting, *op.cit.*, p. 201
- 74 Okano Masujiro, *Go Hai-fu*, p. 370
- 75 *Ibid.*, pp. 376, 1260 and 1278
- 76 The denunciation came from the Tientsin and Paoting factions such as, Ts'ao K'un, Wang Huai-ch'ing, T'ien Chugg-yu and also from some Paoting parliamentarians, Wu Ching-lien and Chan Pai-lieh, who initiated the Lo Wen-kan case. The only Loyang militarists who joined in the denunciation were Hsiao Yao-nan and Chang Fu-lai, both Wu's subordinates. It is interesting to note that Wu himself did not issue any telegram denouncing the Russians. See Wang Yu-chun, *op. cit.*, pp. 424-7
- 77 Whiting, *op. cit.*, p. 202
- 78 V. Vilensky, 'Political Situation in China', *International Press Correspondence*, Vol. 3, No. 9, 8 March 1923, pp. 134-5. This article was written at the time when Ch'en Chiung-ming fled from Canton, which was about mid-January
- 79 V. Vilensky, *Izvestia*, No. 18 (1755), 27 January 1923, p. 3. See Whiting, *op.cit.*, pp. 120-1

- 80 Strike at Changhsintien, J.C. Huston's report, Department of State, 893.504/15, pp. 7-8. Teng Chung-hsia, *op.cit.*, pp. 93-4
- 81 Ch'en Ta, *Chung-kuo lao-kung wen-t'i*, Shang wu yin-shu kuan, Shanghai 1929, p. 176
- 82 Ch'en Ta, *op. cit.*, p. 230; Teng Chung-hsia, *op.cit.*, p. 94
- 83 *Far Eastern Times*, 5 March, quoted in J.C. Huston's report, Department of State, 893.504/15, p. 67
- 84 See Chao Chi-hsien's telegram quoted in Chang Te-hsun's report to Wang Huai-ch'ing, *Chin-tai shih tzu-liao*, No. 1, 1958, p. 23
- 85 Chao's telegram was quoted by Wu P'ei-fu in his telegram to Chin Yun-o, 29 January 1923. *Chin-tai shih tzu-liao*, No. 1, 1955, p. 55
- 86 J.C. Huston's report 1 March 1923, on the February Seventh Strike, Department of State, 893.504/15, p. 43
- 87 Chung-kuo kuo-min-tang chung-yang tsu-chih pu t'iao-ch'a k'o, *Chung-kuo Kung-chan-tang chih t'ou shih*, Wen Hsiang shu-tien, Taipei 1962, p. 54
- 88 Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the CCP*, p. 297
- 89 'Causes of Peking-Hankow Strike'. J.C. Huston's report, Department of State, 893.504/15, p. 66
- 90 Chang Chun-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol. 2, p. 485
- 91 Teng Chung-hsia, *op.cit.*, p. 95. Hsi-wu lao-jen, *Erh-ch'i hui-i lu*, p. 95
- 92 We do not know the names of Sun's labour organizers. See J.C. Huston's report, Department of State, 893.504/15, p. 53
- 93 *Chin-tai shih tzu-liao*, No. 1, 1958, p. 24
- 94 Teng Chung-hsia, *op.cit.*, pp. 100-6, Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the CCP*, pp. 270-95, J.C. Huston's report, Department of State, 893.504/15, pp. 52-60
- 95 Maurice Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism*, p. 212. See Chia Chih's article on Li Ta-chao, *Chung-kuo kung-jen*, No. 8, 1957, pp. 13-15
- 96 Chang Kuo-t'ao, *The Rise of the CCP*, p. 296
- 97 'A manifesto of the CCP to all Workers and People on the occasion of Wu P'ei-fu's massacre of the Peking-Hankow Railway workers', *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 20, 27 February 1923, p. 1
- 98 Sun To, 'Wu P'ei-fu and KMT', *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, 9 May 1923, No. 24, pp. 177-8
- 99 Hu Hua, *Chung-kuo hsin-min-chu chu-i ko-ming shih ts'an k'ao tzu-liao*, Commercial Press, Peking, 1951 p. 86
- 100 *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 20, 27 February 1923, p. 159; Nos. 31-2, 11 July 1923, pp. 232-3; No. 55, 20 February 1924, p. 421; No. 56, 27 February 1924, p. 446; No. 76, 30 July 1924, p. 606 and No. 79, 20 August 1924, p. 629
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- 109 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 288; T'ao Chü-yin says that Ivanov visited Wu several times. See T'ao Chü-yin, *Wu P'ei-fu chiang-chün chuan*, p. 93
- 110 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 327-9
- 111 *Hua-tzu jih-pao*, 31 March 1924, p. 9; 1 April 1924, p. 9; 7 April 1924, p. 9. Also see 'Affaires Russe - Extrait de l'Asie Francaise, March 1924', *Chines Moderne*, Vol. 5, p. 179
- 112 *HKHTJP*, 17 July 1924, p. 9 and 31 July 1924, p. 9
- 113 'Wu Rejects Feng's Proposal', *CIR*, 22 August 1925, p. 16, 'Wu P'ei-fu Speaks Out in Hankow', *NCH*, 24 October 1925, p. 139; 'Wu Prolongs Stay in Hankow', *CIR*, 7 November 1925 and *HKHTJP*, 24 December 1925, p. 3, sh. 2
- 114 Department of State 893.00B/312
- 115 Detailed report of the intelligence work in Mukden by Donskoi, residence of Mukden (real name Suhoroukoff, vice-consul of Mukden) *Su-lien yin-mou wen-cheng hui-pien*, Intelligence Section, Donskoi's report, p. 1
- 116 *China Weekly Review*, 12 December 1925
- 117 See the inventory of the *Su-lien yin-mou wen-cheng hui-pien*. Report of secret agent 1301 (probably Seifulin), Vol. 6, pp. 19-20 in the original documents. The inventory shows that there were a lot of reports of contacts with Wu submitted to the military attache in the Soviet embassy. Seifulin also mentions it in his letter to Mihailoff, concerning the military plan to assist the Kuominchün. Kuominchün Section, Soviet Intelligence, Seifulin's letter to Mihailoff, p. 27a. The contact with Wu was also brought up in a meeting between Lin (real name Vitaly Markovich Primakov), the head of the Kalgan adviser's mission, and Karakhan on 2 December 1925. Kuominchün Section, 'A Record of a Meeting at the Soviet Embassy of Karakhan on 2 December 1925, Concerning the Internal Situation in China', p. 8a
- 118 Pan disguised himself as a representative of T'ang Shao-i. His visit was very short and he was not able to see Chiang Kai-shek, who was away at this time on business. *Hua-tzu jih-pao*, 7 January 1926, p. 1, sh. 3, and 10 January 1926, p. 1, sh. 1. Also see the report of the Central Committee of the CCP at the Second Enlarged Plenum, Wilbur and How, *Documents on Communism, Nationalism and Soviet Advisers in China, 1918-27*, New York 1956, pp. 271-2. The report says that in the period between 19 October 1924 and 22 October 1925, 'Wu P'ei-fu showed good will toward the National Government'
- 119 Throughout the period from August 1925 to January 1927, Wu P'ei-fu had made use of the 'bolshevik menace' and the anti-British sentiment in China to pressure the British government to support him. Wu's effort in

- securing British loans is dealt with in Chapter 7
- 120 Report of the Central Committee of the CCP at the Second Enlarged Plenum. See Wilbur and How, *op.cit.*, pp. 271-2
- 121 P'eng Shu-chih, 'The Masses Should Rise Up and Launch Their Full Attack on Wu P'ei-fu', *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 144, 3 February 1926, pp. 1312-16
- 122 *Hsiang-tao chou-pao*, No. 145, 10 February 1926, pp. 1339-40. *Lao-kung jih-k'an*, 31 January 1926, 7 February 1926, p. 2, 9 February 1926, p. 1, and 11 February 1926, p. 2
- 123 'Wu P'ei-fu's denunciation of Kuominchün leader: Traitor to All', and 'Wu P'ei-fu and Red Menace', *North China Herald*, 13 February 1926, p. 270
- 124 C. Brandt, *op.cit.*, p. 25
- 125 'Karakhan's Last Error', *North China Herald*, 22 May 1926, p. 334
- 126 See the conversation between Mr Teichman, the Chinese secretary to the British Legation, with Wu's staff at Paoting on 21 June 1926. Teichman's report is enclosed in Sir R. Macleay to Sir Austen Chamberlain, dated 16 August 1926. Foreign Office, F.O. 371/11658
- 127 Wilbur and How, *op.cit.*, p. 333
- 128 'Report of negotiation with Wu P'ei-fu to Kuo-erh-fu', 11 April 1926, Original Russian document Vol. 118, p. 242. See the inventory of the *Su-lien yin-mou wen-cheng hui-pien*
- 129 'Karakhan's Last Error', *North China Herald*, 22 May 1926, p. 334
- 130 Wilbur and How, *op.cit.*, Note 91, p. 521
- 131 'Karakhan Tries Bluff on Wu', *CIR*, 1 May 1926, p. 15
- 132 J.C. Huston to J.V.A. MacMurray, Department of State, Hankow File, L. No. 52, 30 April 1926
- 133 'Wu P'ei-fu and Labour Unions', *CIR*, 15 May 1926, p. 13
- 134 Interview of Wu P'ei-fu by a correspondent of the *I Shih Pao*, on July 1926. See *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, July 1926, pp. 153-4
- 135 The Red Spear Society was a secret society originated in Shantung in about 1920. They were active in the Shantung-Hopei-Shensi-Honan region. Their name came from their practice of carrying long spears with red tassels. Like many of the other secret societies dating back to the Ch'ing period, they were anti-government, anti-warlord and anti-foreign. Many of their members were poor peasants driven into banditing by the warfare and the misrule of the time
- 136 N. Mitarevsky, *World Wide Soviet Plots*. Tientsin Press, Tientsin 1940, p. 87. Minutes of the meeting of the Soviet Commission for Chinese Affairs, on 4 August 1926. The *Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, pp. 248-53
- 137 N. Mitarevsky, *World Wide Soviet Plots*, p. 84
- 138 *Ibid.*, p. 28
- 139 *Su-lien yin-mou wen-cheng hui-pien*, Intelligence Section, pp. 8b-14a
- 140 *Ibid.*, Political Section, p. 13
- 141 *Ibid.*, Intelligence Section, pp. 8b-14a
- 142 The number is obtained by combing through the inventory published in the *Su-lien yin-mou wen-cheng hui-pien*
- 143 Resolutions on the Red Spears Movement adopted by the Central

- Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, at the Second Enlarged Plenum, held in Shanghai, 12 July to 18 July 1926. Wilbur and How, *op.cit.*, pp. 283–313
- 144 Report regarding the work in Honan in order to help the expedition against the north. N. Mitarevsky, *op.cit.*, pp. 91–101

Chapter 9 Relations with Japan

- 1 Ikey Masaru, 'Dai-ichiji Feng-Chih sensō to Nihon' ('The First Fengtien-Chihli War and Japan'), p. 357
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 363
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 373
- 4 Okano Masujiro, *op.cit.*, p. 1274. Josef W. Hall, *In the Land of the Laughing Buddha*, p. 327
- 5 Josef W. Hall, *op.cit.*, p. 333. Chang Chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, Vol. 2, pp. 395–6
- 6 Okano Masujiro, *op.cit.*, pp. 877–82
- 7 *Ibid.*, pp. 887 and 1197
- 8 *Ibid.*, pp. 1274–5
- 9 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 225
- 10 Chang Chün-ku, *Wu P'ei-fu chuan*, pp. 431–2. Okano Masujiro, *op.cit.*, p. 841
- 11 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 318
- 12 According to the report on 12 June 1924 in the *Far Eastern Times*, Wu asked the Ministry of Finance in Peking to raise two-thirds of the needed fund and made his protégé K'ao En-hung, then Director General of Tsingtao, to be responsible for the remaining third. Schurman to Secretary of State, June 1924, Department of State, 893.113/729
- 13 Okano Masujiro, *op.cit.*, pp. 1289 and 1158
- 14 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 325–6
- 15 Okano Masujiro, *op.cit.*, p. 910
- 16 Ikey Masaru, 'Dai-niji Feng-Chih sensō to Nihon' ('The Second Fengtien-Shihli War and Japan'), p. 61
- 17 Okano Masujiro, *op.cit.*, p. 1275
- 18 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 397–401
- 19 Ikey Masaru, 'Dai-niji Feng-Chih sensō to Nihon', p. 65
- 20 'Matsui Taisu Ryokō hōkoku no ken' (Travel Report of Colonel Matsui), Kawada Akiharu, Chief-of-Staff of the Kwantung Army, February 1924. The Japanese Army and Navy Archive (IV) AG (A) No. 575 NA 14664 pp. 07949–07956
- 21 Hayashi Yasakichi, 'Go Hai-fu ni taisuru teikoku no taido ni tsuite' ('Concerning the Japanese Attitude Toward Wu P'ei-fu'), 20 February 1924, Japanese Army and Navy Archives (IV) AG (A) No. 577 NA 14664, p. 07978ff
- 22 'Kishi shōshō naka Shina ryoko hōkoku' ('Major Kishi's Report of Travel in Central China'), Kawada Akiharu, August 1924, *ibid.*, p. 07829
- 23 Ikey Masaru, 'Dai-niji Feng-Chih sensō to Nihon', p. 58
- 24 *Ibid.*, p. 66
- 25 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 402–10. Chang chün-ku,

- Wu P'ei-fu chuan, pp. 562-80. Department of State, 893.00/5733 and 893.00/5707
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- 27 *Ibid.*, pp. 808-9
- 28 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 427-9
- 29 *Gendai Shina no kiroku*, August 1928, p. 240
- 30 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, pp. 429-31
- 31 Okano Masujiro, *op.cit.*, pp. 788-91
- 32 Wu P'ei-fu, *Wu P'ei-fu hsien-sheng chi*, p. 433
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- 34 An address at the Hall of Martial Arts in Peking, summer of 1932, *ibid.*, pp. 140-2
- 35 An address at the Northeastern University in Peking 1932, *ibid.*, pp. 443-4
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- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 1016
- 42 *Ibid.*, pp. 1053-73
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- 45 Gerald E. Bunker, *The Peace Conspiracy*, pp. 58-9
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- 61 Imai Takeo, *Showa no bōryaku*, p. 149. Telegram from the British embassy in Shanghai to the Foreign Office No. 1629, 11 November 1938. British Foreign Office Archives, F.O. 371/23406
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- 64 *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1938, Vol.3, pp. 429-31
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- 66 *Ibid.*, 1 February 1939, p. 178
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