

THIS FILE IS MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE DECLASSIFICATION EFFORTS AND RESEARCH OF:

THE BLACK VAULT

THE BLACK VAULT IS THE LARGEST ONLINE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT / GOVERNMENT RECORD CLEARING HOUSE IN THE WORLD. THE RESEARCH EFFORTS HERE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DECLASSIFICATION OF THOUSANDS OF DOCUMENTS THROUGHOUT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, AND ALL CAN BE DOWNLOADED BY VISITING:

[HTTP://WWW.BLACKVAULT.COM](http://www.blackvault.com)

YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO FORWARD THIS DOCUMENT TO YOUR FRIENDS, BUT PLEASE KEEP THIS IDENTIFYING IMAGE AT THE TOP OF THE .PDF SO OTHERS CAN DOWNLOAD MORE!

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: MAY 2007

~~SECRET~~



EO 12958
3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs
EO 12958 6.2(c)



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Report

THE P.L.A. AND THE "CULTURAL REVOLUTION"

(Reference Title: POLO XXV)

~~SECRET~~

28 October 1967
RSS No. 0022/67



~~SECRET~~

THE P.L.A. AND THE "CULTURAL REVOLUTION"

This is a working paper of the DD/I Special Research Staff. It is a successor to the writer's study of February 1967 (POLO-XXII, "Mao's 'Cultural Revolution': Its Leadership, Its Strategy, Its Instruments, and Its Casualties"), and is a companion-piece to a recent study by another analyst of the staff (POLO-XXIV, "Mao's 'Cultural Revolution': Origin and Development").

The February study offered inter alia the propositions that Mao had taken the initiative at each stage, that changes in the Chinese leadership represented primarily a purge rather than a "power struggle," and that Mao was carrying out methodically and in general successfully a scheme for the reorganization of the apparatus of power in China. The February study further offered the view that the prospect for 1967 was for the continued dominance of Mao and his team, and for their continued progress--at various speeds at various points--toward that reorganization. The present study, carrying the story to 1 October 1967, deals mainly with Mao's conduct of the "revolution" in the P.L.A. (that is, the purge and reorganization of the military apparatus), with Mao's use of the P.L.A. as an instrument for conducting the "revolution" as a whole, and with the relationship between these two concerns--in particular the way in which Mao has relieved the pressure on the P.L.A. in periods of urgent need for the P.L.A.'s cooperation in restoring and maintaining order. In surveying developments since April, the writer places great importance on the directives of April through August which forbade the P.L.A. to open fire on mass organizations, and on the change of policy in early September which finally authorized the P.L.A. to open fire--a change of policy which was followed by a dramatic reduction in the disorder throughout China. The study concludes with a brief discussion of the scale of the purge of the P.L.A. leadership--one in four military commanders, one in two political officers--and of the prospects for the further purge and reorganization of the P.L.A. and for the P.L.A. as a factor in the future succession.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The writer has taken profit from the work of--and has had rewarding talks with--many other analysts of the Agency (of ONE, OCI, OER OSR, and DD/P) in addition to his colleagues of the DDI/SRS, and also of other components of the intelligence community (especially the Department of State and DIA), and has profited as well from exchanges with members of the [redacted]

[redacted] academic community. Although the writer is in substantial agreement with several of these observers and in virtually complete agreement with a few, this paper presents simply a working thesis and does not reflect an official position of the Directorate of Intelligence. The DDI/SRS would welcome comments on this paper, addressed in this instance to the acting chief of the staff [redacted]

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

THE P.L.A. AND THE "CULTURAL REVOLUTION"

Contents

	<u>Page</u>
The Small Purge of 1959-60.....	1
"Rectification," 1960-62.....	3
The PLA as a Model, 1963-64.....	6
Increased Dissidence in the PLA, 1965.....	9
The Fall of Lo Jui-ching, Late 1965.....	11
The Political Work Conference and the Fall of Liang Pi-ye, Early 1966.....	20
The So-called "Coup" of February 1966.....	23
Some Preparations, Spring 1966.....	25
The "Failure" of the Work Teams, Summer 1966.....	27
Lin Piao's Outline of the Purge, August 1966.....	31
The PLA Above the Struggle, Early Autumn 1966.....	34
The Fall of Liu Chih-chien, Late Autumn 1966.....	37
The Fall of Ho Lung and Others, December 1966.....	44
The Purge of the Regional and Provincial Commands, 1966.....	53
Reorganization of the PLA Purge Group, January 1967.....	59
The Teeter and Recovery of Hsiao Hua, January 1967..	62
The Order to the PLA to Intervene, Late January 1967.....	66
Reassurances to the PLA, Late January-February 1967.....	72
The PLA Occupation of China, Late January-March 1967.....	77
The Leashing of the PLA, April 1967.....	86
Disorder and Response, May-June 1967.....	95
Mildness and "Mediation," June and Early July 1967.....	107
The Wuhan Incident and Its Backlash, Late July 1967.....	116
Revolutionary Momentum and the Fall of Hsiao Hua, Early August 1967.....	128
A Shift in Emphasis, Late August 1967.....	133
Effectual Efforts Against Disorder, September 1967.....	139
The Scale of the Purge of 1966-67.....	156
Prospects.....	170

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

THE P.L.A. AND THE "CULTURAL REVOLUTION"

Summary

The Small Purge of 1959-60

Prior to the large-scale purge of the Chinese Communist military leadership in 1966-67, the last substantial purge of the PLA had been the comparatively small one of 1959. Opposition to a range of Mao's radical domestic and foreign policies was led at that time by Minister of Defense Peng Te-huai. Mao replaced Peng at once with Lin Piao, who had long been his favorite military leader but had also long been ill. Mao at the same time replaced the PLA's chief-of-staff with Lo Jui-ching, a security specialist, and purged perhaps a dozen other high-ranking officers of the PLA.

"Rectification," 1960-62

In 1960 and 1961 Mao and Lin rebuilt the PLA around a "rectification" campaign, aimed at gaining recognition of the priority of political factors. The methods employed for this indoctrination were later to serve for the "cultural revolution." Mao and Lin at the same time reorganized, expanded and strengthened the PLA's political apparatus, while seeking also to enhance the combat-effectiveness of the PLA. The good showing of the PLA against the Indians in autumn 1962 appeared to vindicate the approach of Mao and Lin.

The PLA as a Model, 1963-64

In late 1962, Mao apparently decided to apply to Chinese society and the Chinese party the extreme methods

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

of political indoctrination perfected in the PLA; and he may already (although this is conjectural) have been thinking of Lin Piao as his successor. Late in 1963, Mao issued his call to "learn from the PLA," and in February 1964 a major campaign was launched to this end. As part of this, military-type political departments were established in important sectors of the government. As this new network came to be staffed increasingly by PLA figures, the ground was being prepared for the emergence of the PLA as the most important instrument of the "cultural revolution." However, it is possible that by the end of 1964 Mao and Lin had begun to be suspicious of the PLA's chief-of-staff, Lo Jui-ching.

Increased Dissidence in the PLA, 1965

It was apparent in early 1965 that Mao and Lin had found renewed opposition in the officer corps to the emphasis on "politics" in the PLA and to all of the expressions of this--e.g., the increasing authority of political officers, the quantity of political indoctrination, the concept of "men over weapons," and the related doctrine of "people's war." At this time, a period of increased concern over the possibility of war with the U.S., Lo apparently did differ with Mao and Lin on the question of how best to prepare for war. Mao and Lin responded typically, by increasing the political element at the expense of the professional, and publicly admitted a continuing serious problem with "bourgeois thinking" in the PLA.

The Fall of Lo Jui-ching, Late 1965

In November 1965 the purge of the PLA began. In early November, Mao planted an article in a Shanghai newspaper attacking a playwright who was to serve as a symbol of all opposition to Mao. In mid-November, Lin Piao issued a directive on the PLA's work which made the

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

test of the loyalty and competence of PLA cadres that of whether they regarded Mao's works as their "highest instructions." Two weeks later, chief-of-staff Lo Jui-ching, on a visit to Shanghai, suddenly disappeared. Disappearing at the same time was Yang Shang-kun, an officer of the party apparatus who held two key posts in central committee organs in which he would probably have worked closely with Lo.

Lo and Yang reappeared only in January 1967, in the hands of the Red Guards. As for Lo's case, nothing can be demonstrated beyond the fact that he was not regarded as sufficiently trustworthy--at the beginning of the "cultural revolution"--to be left in operational control of troops that might have to be used, and in a party security post which would necessarily be involved. However, there are several credible charges in the long list of crimes now attributed to Lo--most of which can be summarized as resistance to the concept of "giving first place to politics" and resistance to specific policies of political leaders, a case similar to the case made against Peng Te-huai in 1959. This in itself would have marked Lo for purging; and, beyond this, there is some evidence that Mao felt that Lo in his security post would be a positive obstacle to what Mao had already decided was to be a large-scale purge. And beyond this, the simultaneous disappearance of Lo and Yang suggests that Mao may really believe that there was active "conspiracy" between those two, at least in the sense of their working together with the conscious aims of obstructing the policies of Mao and Lin and of eventually dislodging Lin as head of the PLA. Lo is charged with "conspiracy" also with Peng Chen and Lu Ting-i, the first top-level party leaders to fall; perhaps Lo's activity in Shanghai was regarded as undertaken on behalf of Peng and Lu, those immediately threatened by the process Mao had set in motion in Shanghai.

~~SECRET~~

The Political Work Conference and the Fall of Liang Pi-Yeh, February 1966

The PLA's General Political Department called a political work conference in January 1966 to study Mao's directives to the PLA and means of carrying out Lin's "principles" for "giving prominence to politics." Within a month, Lin chose to make an example of a deputy director of the General Political Department itself, Liang Pi-yeh. Lin said later that he himself purged Liang in February 1966 for contending that politics should be better coordinated with the practical work of military preparedness --one of the charges made against the fallen Lo Jui-ching.

The So-Called "Coup" of February 1966

Red Guard materials have charged that a "coup" was attempted in Peking in February 1966, when Mao was absent. Accounts of the "coup"--as distinct from other accounts of plotting going on in this period for a coup later--seem to relate to some initiative on the part of Peng Chen against which counter-action may have been taken by Mao or Lin Piao. The reported remarks of party leaders on this matter have differed as to whether Peng was plotting a coup to take place in February, but they agree that no coup was staged.

Some Preparations, Spring 1966

In the spring of 1966, while the PLA was taking the public lead in the "cultural revolution," Mao and Lin made preparations to extend the "revolution" into the PLA itself and to make the purge of the PLA a thorough-going one. Madame Mao, who was to accumulate an impressive list of victims as the purge proceeded, prepared the ground with a symposium on "cultural" work in the PLA. Mao himself called for the PLA to master its speciality but also to conduct propaganda and take part in production

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

--a justification for much of its unconventional activity in the year ahead. At the same time (mid-May), at a CCP central committee work conference, Lin Piao reportedly charged that Peng Chen and other leaders sought to bring Mao down, and he implied strongly that others (besides Peng) would be purged; and a central committee directive of 16 May stated expressly that Mao's opponents were operating in the PLA as well as in the party. Then or soon thereafter, Liu Chih-chien, the most important remaining deputy director of the General Political Department, was named to the new central Cultural Revolution Group--under Chen Po-ta and Madame Mao--which was to supervise the overall conduct of the "revolution."

The "Failure" of the Work-Teams, June-July 1966

The period of June and July 1966 was dominated by the "work-teams," assigned to carry out the "cultural revolution" throughout China. The PLA supplied some of the personnel (even leaders) for work-teams operating in non-military organizations, and its own military academies and schools suffered the activity of the teams. When the line followed by these teams was subsequently discredited as insufficiently militant, Liu Chih-chien was made the scapegoat for this period, although in fact he had been in high favor at the time. The offenses of Ho Lung and some other leaders who fell from favor in December 1966 were also backdated to June and July, but evidence is lacking that they were in collusion this early.

Lin Piao's Outline of the Purge, August 1966

In early August 1966 the party issued a new, militant directive for the conduct of the "revolution," calling for a "daring" attack on Mao's opponents without fear of "disorder." In telling PLA leaders how to carry this out, Lin Piao stated that all cadres were to be judged --and promoted or purged--on the basis of whether they demonstrated their support of Mao or not, whether they

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

gave priority to politics or not, and whether they had revolutionary enthusiasm or not. He apparently gave the job of evaluating cadres primarily to Yang Cheng-wu (Lo Jui-ching's successor) and Liu Chih-chien, then still in favor. The purge of the PLA as sketched by Lin was to be synchronized with the large-scale purge of the party and governed by the same principles. However, it was apparently to hit the line organizations only lightly if at all and was to be carried out by the PLA's own instruments.

The PLA Above the Struggle, Early Autumn 1966

In the period of violence which followed the appearance of the Red Guards in mid-August 1966, the PLA was ordered to stand clear, and PLA units themselves were sometimes the targets of Red Guard attacks. In the PLA itself, the "cultural revolution" proceeded quietly --and, according to the later judgment of Mao and Lin, too slowly. The "revolution" was still concentrated in the military schools and academies, was run by PLA party committees (rather than by the special cultural revolution teams taking over from the work-teams elsewhere), and was pursued by more conservative methods than those employed outside the PLA. Liu Chih-chien was later made to serve as the scapegoat for this period too.

Greater Militancy and the Fall of Liu Chih-chien, Late Autumn 1966

In early October 1966 a MAC directive moved the "cultural revolution" in military academies and schools into a higher gear. The directive reversed actions which the work-teams (June and July) and the PLA party committees (August and September) had taken against the most militant students, called for the use of the more militant and disorderly methods already in use outside the PLA, specified that "bad elements" were to be brought down, urged a more militant interpretation of the criteria for examination

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

of cadres stated by Lin Piao in August, and gave the leadership to special cultural revolution teams. The PLA almost certainly set up at this time its first Cultural Revolution Group, probably under the direction of Liu Chih-chien.

At the same time, the MAC issued a directive--in the spirit of Lin Piao's criteria--which may have been intended to serve as a general directive for the conduct of the "revolution" in the PLA as a whole. This directive reportedly ordered all PLA personnel who encountered statements or actions opposed to Mao's thought or to the MAC's policy to report this to higher levels. It was in this period of October and November that Liu Chih-chien fell from favor; he was charged with insufficient militancy in carrying out the "revolution" in the military schools, and he may also have failed to identify Mao's "opponents."

The Fall of Ho Lung and Others, December 1966

Ho Lung, who ranked just below Lin Piao as a deputy chairman of the MAC but had been in some degree of trouble by November, was in disgrace by 18 December, when Madame Mao denounced him. Ho and other important military figures who apparently fell at the same time--(Huang Hsin-ting and Kuo Lin-hsiang of the Chengtu Military Region, Liao Han-sheng of the Peking Military Region, Su Chen-hua of the Navy, and Hsu Kuang-ta of the Armored Forces), plus a number of lesser figures who may or may not have fallen at just this time--were soon charged with having acted in collusion against Lin Piao; and another major figure, Yang Yung of the Peking headquarters, was later charged with having been a member of this cabal. As in the case of Lo Jui-ching, there are several credible charges in the long list of crimes attributed to Ho Lung, but, as in Lo's case, all that can be said about the charge of collusion among these military leaders is that the simultaneous fall of several of them suggests again that Mao may really believe it, at least in the sense of their working together to resist the onslaught of the "cultural

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

"revolution" in the PLA. This would have been a created opposition, one which developed and coalesced in the latter half of 1966 as the "revolution" in the PLA intensified.

The Purge of the Regional and Provincial Commands, 1966

By the end of 1966, when it was evident that Mao might have to send the PLA into action to restore and maintain order, it was also apparent that the leaders of the PLA's military regions and military districts--that is, the commanders and political officers there--had already been hit hard by the purge. Of the 24 key figures of the military regions, at least ten had been replaced in 1966 (and an eleventh was soon to fall), and the status of several others was in doubt. And of the 44 key figures of the provincial military districts, at least 14 had been replaced in 1966, and the status of as many more was in doubt. No information was available on the leaders of armies in the field. The great majority of those replaced in both the regions and the districts were political officers, most of whom had been made vulnerable primarily through their concurrent positions in the party apparatus.

Reorganization of the PLA's Purge Group, January 1967

On 10 January 1967 Madame Mao denounced Liu Chih-chien, and on 12 January the PLA Cultural Revolution Group which he had headed was reorganized, with Hsu Hsiang-chien (perhaps already a vice-chairman of the MAC) as the new chief and the Madame as his "advisor" and de facto superior. Others who had had important roles in the "revolution" in the PLA--e.g., Hsiao Hua and Yang Cheng-wu--were named his deputies. The PLA newspaper at the time called for the revolution to proceed militantly in "all high-ranking leading organs" of the PLA (as well as in its academies and schools and "cultural" organizations), but for the continuation of a low-key program of "education" in the line organizations. (Mao and Lin were apparently willing to accept disruption of

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

the upper levels of the PLA, but not of line organizations which might have to be sent into action.) For reasons still not clear, several members of the new PLA/CRG were attacked in Red Guard posters within a few days, but only two low-level members failed to survive the attacks at that time.

The Teeter and Recovery of Hsiao Hua, January 1967

In mid-January Hsiao Hua, director of the General Political Department, teetered under attack but recovered. He had been criticized in posters in early January, was given a vote of confidence in his 12 January appointment as senior deputy chief of the reorganized PLA/CRG, but apparently continued to be criticized by other leaders in favor for errors in the conduct of the "cultural revolution" in the PLA--the "rightist" errors for which his deputies, Liang Pi-yeh and Liu Chih-chien, had been purged. Chen Po-ta and Madame Mao took the initiative in at least one meeting--on 19 January--to criticize Hsiao, and Yang Yung, commander of the Peking Military Region, immediately publicized this meeting, apparently in the hope of reducing some trouble he himself was in. Chou En-lai repelled the attacks on Hsiao on 21 January, making clear that, while Hsiao had made mistakes, he remained in favor; Chou also denied that Chen had made remarks about Hsiao which could be taken as derogatory to the PLA. Chen and the Madame were not punished for their private criticism of Hsiao, but Yang Yung was broken immediately--both for revealing it and for his version of it.

The Order to the PLA to Intervene, Late January 1967

In early January, "revolutionary rebel" mass organizations (composed mainly of older militants from the working-class, shaping up since November to supplement the Red Guards from the schools) began to "seize power" from party organizations outside Peking--that is, to take

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

over administration from the discredited and inactive party apparatus. As a result of the various activities of these "rebels" (a term thereafter including the Red Guards), by mid-January China was in a state of great disorder. Shortly after mid-January, Mao apparently became concerned--a concern probably reinforced by Chou and the military leaders--with the scale and potential of the disorder, and was evidently persuaded that the "rebels" would not be able to administer the country successfully without the intervention of the PLA. On 23 January, a new directive to the PLA rescinded the directives which had kept the PLA out of action and ordered the PLA now to support the "genuine" leftists. There was probably little opposition among PLA leaders to a directive which could be used to restore order, but some PLA leaders outside Peking were probably concerned about the terms of the directive and about the lack of clear guidance for its implementation.

Reassurances to the PLA, Late January-February 1967

At the end of January and in early February, new directives modified the militant conduct of the revolution at the higher levels of the PLA itself which had been called for in mid-January--a necessary modification, in view of the PLA's assignment to restore order and administer the country. These directives provided for the revolution to be conducted at these higher levels (now fully occupied) as opportunity permitted, and assigned the conduct of it at these levels to PLA party committees; they forbade the use of force, arrests without orders, and physical harassment; they also forbade the "seizure of power" in military "leadership" organs and assaults on military organs of any kind; and they also reaffirmed that "education" was sufficient for line organizations (at least of division-level and below). These directives amounted to reassurances to the military leaders--in particular the line units which might have to do some fighting--that the purge of the PLA as a whole would not be carried out to the extreme degree or in the wild way that the purge of the party had been, and that

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

the majority of PLA leaders whom Mao and Lin wanted to purge had already been purged. These reassurances probably did help to make the PLA a reliable instrument in the new stage of the "revolution."

The PLA Occupation of China, Late January-March 1967

PLA commanders everywhere in China apparently acted swiftly to restore order under the terms of the 23 January directive--evidently taking this as their immediate mission. Within a few weeks, the PLA had restored order sufficiently to be able to take further steps to carry out its longer-range political mission. (There remained in place, however, in some parts of China, political and military leaders whom Mao and his team did not trust, e.g. Wang En-mao in Sinkiang, men whom Mao planned to move against later.)

In carrying out its political mission, looking toward the formation of "revolutionary committees" (governing bodies composed of PLA officers, acceptable party cadres, and representatives of the "rebels"), the PLA ran into trouble from the start. One factor evidently was that in many or most cases Peking itself did not know enough about the local situation to be able to give the PLA commander of the spot clear directives about whom to support. In those cases, the PLA apparently engaged in a holding action while it tried to sort things out, and it had a hard time with this. Another factor was that the guidance provided at this time--in leadership statements and the party press--was in apparent conflict with at least the nominal terms of the general directive the PLA was operating under. That is, the 23 January directive had ordered the PLA to support the "genuine" leftists --which, as previously defined, would mean the most militant of the "rebel" groups and the kind of local officials who would find favor with them; but the signals from Peking were increasingly to the effect that the extreme militants were out of favor or at best in qualified favor at a time when the main job was to restore and maintain order. The PLA in the field, perhaps baffled at first,

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

seemed increasingly to take these signals as a mandate to find against, and to suppress, the most militant of the "rebel" groups on the spot. By the end of March, the PLA was acting so aggressively against the militants that Mao was concerned for the continued good health of the young "revolutionary successors." It seems clear that the PLA's actions of this kind in February and March were an important factor in developing the ill-feeling expressed later in the year in persistent "rebel" denunciation and defiance of the PLA and even physical attacks on PLA personnel.

The Leashing of the PLA, April 1967

The PLA was leashed again in April, almost certainly on orders of Mao himself, and possibly following an inspection tour by Lin Piao. In a 30 March speech, Lin said that the PLA would now be restricted in its use of arms and other forms of coercion, and emphasized that PLA units were not to take action on their own initiative but were to act only on orders from above (a clear indication that the PLA had been found guilty of "mistakes"). This order directly from Lin--highly important in holding the PLA to a cautious interpretation of its mission through summer 1967--was embodied in a 10-point directive of the MAC on 6 April.

The 6 April directive forbade the PLA to open fire on "rebel" groups (it did not even allow for extreme provocation), to make mass arrests, to classify "rebel" organizations as counter-revolutionary without the approval of the central committee, or to use force to get confessions or to punish; and it called for the PLA to make sure that rightist cadres were not permitted to suppress leftist rebels. Whereas the intent and effect of the 23 January directive (reinforced by signals from Peking) had been that of restoring order, placing the "rebels" in a position subordinate to the PLA, the 6 April directive placed the restrictions on the PLA instead, with the predictable consequence that the most militant "rebels" would assert themselves more aggressively than ever. (This policy could

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

only have dismayed many leaders of the PLA.) Also on 6 April, there appeared intensive poster attacks on Hsu Hsiang-chien, who was to be made a scapegoat for the PLA's "mistakes" in dealing with "rebel" organizations; ten days later, Madame Mao reportedly dismissed Hsu as chief of the PLA's Cultural Revolution Group and said that Hsiao Hua (General Political Department), Hsieh Fu-chih (Minister of Public Security), and Yang Cheng-wu (acting chief-of-staff) would now run it. At the end of April, the only top-level military leaders still clearly in favor were Lin Piao, those three, and Su Yu (a Deputy Minister of Defense), the five officers who constituted the core of the Military Affairs Committee. At the same time, Su Yu blamed local PLA leaders for taking action against the "masses" (thus underlining Lin Piao's 30 March speech), and Chou En-lai confirmed that the PLA leaders in most of the provinces had not been able to move very far forward with their political mission.

Disorder and Response, May-June 1967

In late April, May and early June, there was again serious and increasing disorder in China, in part the result of the 6 April directive placing crippling restrictions on the PLA. Much of this probably represented "unprincipled" struggle--among "rebel" organizations competing for position. Much of it, however, apparently represented "principled" struggle in which the fighting groups tended to divide between those aligned with and those hostile to the local military authorities. Peking was keeping both forces in the field--supporting the "rebels" and leaving the local authorities in place.

As of early May, Mao's immediate concern was still more with correcting the faults of the PLA in handling the "rebels" than with the troubles caused by the rebels themselves, but as disorder increased the emphasis shifted. In mid-May the new Peking municipal revolutionary committee (installed in April) issued a stiff six-point notice forbidding the rebels to use force or to destroy or seize state property, and calling for "revolutionary order;"

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

and on 22 May, the party newspaper called for an end to violence everywhere. However, large-scale clashes in many provinces continued. Finally, after provincial broadcasts had made clear that rebel violence was preventing the provinces from setting up or operating revolutionary committees and after Mao himself had reportedly stated his disfavor for armed struggle, the leaders in Peking on 6 June provided a new directive. This called for an end to the violent offenses of the "rebels," and gave local PLA commands the responsibility for enforcing the order. It did not, however, give them the necessary authority, as it did not authorize them to use any degree of armed force against mass organizations (even to defend themselves). In other words, the 6 June directive modified Lin Piao's 30 March directive to the PLA not to act without express orders from above, but it left standing the MAC's 6 April directive which had forbidden the PLA to open fire on mass organizations. This was a critical weakness.

Mildness and "Mediation," June and Early July 1967

Disorder in all parts of China continued in general as if the 6 June directive did not exist. In late June, the PLA newspaper reaffirmed that the PLA was not to use force against mass organizations but was instead to "reason" with offenders. Peking soon decided to undertake mediation in some especially troubled areas--in other words, to get agreement from "rebel" groups to obey the 6 June directive. In the first two weeks of July, a delegation headed by Hsieh Fu-chih toured the Southwest, getting an agreement of this kind from the warring "rebels" in Kunming and possibly from those in Chengtu and Chungking. By mid-July, however, reporting from all parts of China indicated that disorders were spreading and becoming more serious, and it was apparent that the 6 June directive had positively encouraged the forces of disorder--by making clear to them that they could still get away with it. The reporting confirmed that as of mid-July the PLA was still not permitted to use armed force against mass organizations.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The Wuhan Incident and the Backlash, Late July 1967

Hsieh Fu-chih's delegation went on to Wuhan in mid-July and, rather than mediating between warring "rebel" groups, told the local military authorities that they had been backing the wrong groups and that Peking was now giving its official support to the others. Those who were ruled against refused to accept this, and, with the cooperation of elements of the PLA in Wuhan, subjected Hsieh's delegation to indignities. This infuriated the leaders in Peking and alarmed some of them; Madame Mao, for example, called on the revolutionary masses to arm themselves against their enemies, a line which probably contributed heavily to the increased seriousness of the fighting in several parts of China after the Wuhan Incident. The Wuhan commander was blamed in part for the incident, and was swiftly removed and replaced.

At the same time, senior officers of other military regions were summoned to Peking and warned against such lack of discipline. Although the assembled military leaders may have been given an opportunity to put their own case to Lin Piao and Chou En-lai (Mao was apparently absent), they were probably told by Lin and Chou that they would henceforth be held responsible for placing the "rebel" groups selected by Peking in dominant positions; moreover, they were given no assurance that they would not continue to be subject to "rebel" attacks, and they were given no authority to use armed force against "rebels." They may also have been told, and could have deduced from the party and military press in any case, that Peking intended to purge some additional leaders of the PLA (including some of the regional leaders if necessary). In the same week, Chou announced that the Hunan military district had made "errors" and would be reorganized, an earnest of the fate awaiting regional military leaders who did not fully co-operate. The PLA's leaders had abundant reason, at the end of July, to be concerned about Peking's intentions toward them.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Revolutionary Momentum and the Fall of Hsiao Hua, Early August 1967

Mao's problem as of early August seemed to be that of maintaining "revolutionary" momentum while at the same time bringing under control the increasingly serious disorders. In early August, apparently as an over-reaction to the Wuhan Incident, the first of these objectives had the priority. There was a new emphasis on the rapid preferment of Peking's favorite "rebel" groups, and Peking intervened in several places to ensure this, moving troops to back up decisions and reorganize provincial military commands. Moreover, in mid-August, posters announced the fall of Hsiao Hua, the director of the General Political Department and leader of the PLA's Cultural Revolution Group who had survived attacks early in the year, and indicated that several other military leaders (mostly military professionals rather than political officers) had been brought down at the same time.

A Shift in Emphasis, Late August 1967

Mao in mid-August offered an assessment of the "cultural revolution" in which he expressed confidence that he could get--was getting--China into good shape, one area at a time, and that he had reliable leaders in place in most of the regional military commands (but not in Sinkiang). But in response to the increased fighting, and as an expression of disappointment in the "rebels," there was a return to an emphasis on measures to control disorder. The party press cancelled Madame Mao's late July exhortation to the "rebels" to arm themselves, and reversed the late July line on the need for a further purge of the PLA--thus seeking to deter the "rebels" from seizing arms from the PLA and from attacking PLA personnel. Peking also directed the "rebels" to surrender their weapons to local military authorities, and continued its efforts to "mediate" in areas of serious disorder. There was still, however, widespread disorder at the end of August, and the various measures taken by Peking did not add up to a sufficient response. In particular, the PLA still lacked a directive which would permit it to use whatever degree of armed force was necessary to enforce Peking's decisions.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Effectual Efforts Against Disorder, September 1967

On 5 September, Mao's team finally gave the PLA a serious weapon with which to bring disorders under control--the express authority to open fire on mass organizations. The directive was put in terms of countering attempts to seize weapons from the PLA, but it could be used to recover weapons, to repel physical attacks of any kind on PLA personnel, and to enforce agreements among "rebel" groups and Peking's decisions relating to these groups. On the same day Madame Mao, speaking for Mao, made it official that Mao's team was now in earnest about putting an end to disorder; among other things, she withdrew her own remarks of late July which had contributed to disorder, forbade any further attacks on the PLA, and warned that the 5 September directive would be used seriously. In addition to encouraging a militant interpretation of that directive, the Madame in effect was telling the PLA that there was not to be another substantial purge of PLA leaders at this time, even though some of them then in place might be in disfavor.

In mid-September, Peking called a virtual halt to the "revolution" in rural areas, and took steps to control the activities of urban workers. At the same time, the military and party press told the PLA that, in handling mass organizations, it was less important at this time to make fine political distinctions among them than to take action to restore order. Before the fourth week of September, a dramatic improvement had become evident in several of the areas in which there had been serious fighting as late as early September. Concurrently, Mao's team reportedly found scapegoats--lesser members of the team--for the period of April through August in which the PLA had been harshly treated, and orders went out to find and punish those responsible for the "struggle by force" and for criminal offenses in that period.

In late September Peking announced Mao's return to the capital from an inspection tour of several provinces, thus associating him personally both with the change in Peking's line in September and with the organizational

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

changes in the provinces. By National Day, 1 October, large-scale disorders were no longer being reported from any part of China, although violent incidents were; both the PLA and the "rebels" had in general proved to be responsive to the new directives. On National Day, Mao and Lin presided over a great rally, and in his main speech Lin made clear that the short-term aims of Mao's team remained those of controlling disorder and moving at a deliberate pace toward the formation of a new governing apparatus. The rally displayed as "leading comrades" most of those taking the field since May Day as Mao's first team, but with three second-level figures missing (one "rightist," two "leftists") and one or two possible new members. As evidence that moderate forces had not taken over the leadership from Mao and Lin (even though moderate policies were to be pursued for a time), none of the party officials or military officers known or believed to be in their strong disfavor was rehabilitated for the occasion.

The Scale of the Purge of 1966-67

The scale of the purge of the PLA in the past two years may be surprising, although it is less impressive when political officers--most of whom fell with the destruction of the party apparatus--are subtracted. Fully half of the top military leaders in Peking have been brought down: at least five of the ten officers of the Military Affairs Committee; up to seven of the ten known officers of the PLA's Cultural Revolution Group; at least four of the nine ranking officers of the Ministry of National Defense; five of the 11 principal figures of the General Staff; five of the seven leaders of the General Political Department; and two to five of the 13 principal officers of the service headquarters. The purge rate for the top leaders of the military regions (considering only the military commander and political officer of each) is well over 50 percent, and the rate for the top leaders of provincial military districts is also more than 50 percent. However, if all leading officers of the military regions are considered, the rate falls appreciably; and if all

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

of those figures for military regions and districts are combined to get a single figure for headquarters outside Peking, the rate of the purge seems to be about 40 percent. Moreover, no figures are available for armies in the field. If, as seems likely, the rate for these armies is very low, the purge rate for the PLA as a whole--outside the central leadership--probably falls to about 30 percent. Political officers have been purged at a rate twice that of military commanders. About one in four of the military commanders is known or believed to have fallen, but about one of every two political officers.

Prospects for the PLA

The purge of the PLA has not been completed; that is, Mao is not yet satisfied that he has in place everywhere reliable "revolutionary successors." Among the remaining military leaders at the center, the chances are that few or none are in disfavor at the moment (Mao would probably purge them at once if they were), but some will probably come into disfavor as the "revolution" proceeds. At least one, perhaps four, of the military regions will be reorganized, and perhaps as many as a dozen of the military districts are yet to be. Military leaders in all of the provinces and municipalities will continue to have trouble in forming and operating the "revolutionary committees" Mao apparently means to establish throughout China, as the other components of the committees will sometimes be hard to manage and Peking will sometimes be hard to satisfy.

The question arises as to whether Mao will give the leaders of the PLA sufficient cause to attempt a coup. Mao seems to be pleased with the PLA now, and his present plans, with respect to the further purge and reorganization of the PLA, appear to be modest. It is possible that he will become displeased with the PLA's performance in its political role, that he will conduct or try to conduct another large-scale purge of the PLA, that this will provoke an attempted coup, and that the coup will succeed;

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

but none of these things seems probable in the next few months. The probability, if his health holds, is for Mao to remain in command and to proceed with a modest further reorganization of the PLA as inclination and opportunity permit. If Mao dies or is disabled, Lin Piao as the successor, or any contender for the succession, would need the support of the PLA, whether as contender or as winner. In sum, the prospects of most of the present leaders of the PLA look pretty good even under Mao, and seem likely to improve under Mao's successor.

-xx-

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

THE P.L.A. AND THE "CULTURAL REVOLUTION"

The Small Purge of 1959-60

Prior to the great 1966-67 purge of the Chinese Communist armed forces (PLA) as an important part of Mao Tse-tung's "cultural revolution," the last substantial purge of the PLA--a comparatively small one--had come in 1959. This had followed the Chinese Communist party plenum of July-August 1959, at which opposition to a range of Mao's radical domestic and foreign policies was led by the then Minister of Defense, Peng Te-huai. Chinese pronouncements at the time indicated that Peng's group had advocated a return to more nearly orthodox programs for the military and economic development of China, and--in the interest of regaining Soviet military, economic and technical assistance to these programs--a compromise of some sort in the Sino-Soviet dispute.* These were generally credible charges.

*This paper discusses only briefly the period from mid-1959 to autumn 1965, when the "cultural revolution" began. A good, detailed account of the evolution of the PLA from 1946 to 1965 is now available in John Gittings' The Role of the Chinese Army, Oxford, 1967. On this particular point of Peng's attitude toward the USSR as a factor in his fall, Gittings argues that it may well have been the main factor; he cites the Sino-Soviet agreement on "new technology for national defense" signed in October 1957, Peng's trip to Moscow in late 1957 presumably to discuss the implementation of this agreement, and the breakdown of negotiations in 1958; he conjectures that the big issue was that of "control and command" (i.e. the USSR sought integration of bloc defenses and would not give Peking nuclear weapons without control over them), notes that Peking itself has said that Moscow in 1958 tried to bring China "under military control," and goes on to conclude that Peng was sympathetic to the Soviet position.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

More recently, Peking has spelled out Peng's offenses as hostility to Mao's thought (and a preference for the Soviet model) and in particular to the concept of "politics first"; opposition to party leadership of the PLA and to its expression in the party committee system; opposition to the use of the PLA for non-military tasks and derogation of the national projects (e.g. the "leap forward") entailing such tasks; an emphasis on regularization, modernization and advanced techniques; personal empire-building; a treasonable relationship with a foreign power (the USSR), and conspiracy with a number of party leaders discredited both before and after Peng's fall. The detailed list is also generally credible, apart from the last two charges: Peng's relationship with the USSR seems to have been irregular but not treasonable, and Peng was an open rather than secret opponent of Mao's program.

Mao, whose leadership and policies had not been openly challenged since 1935, struck back at once, replacing Peng Te-huai with Lin Piao, who had long been his favorite military leader but had been ill and comparatively inactive for years. Lin, who had not been on good terms with Peng in earlier years, had been added to the politburo standing committee in 1958, and had probably played an important role in shaping some of the policies which Peng rebelled against: the emphatic reassertion of the party's authority over the military, the rejection of Soviet experience and practice, the imposition of Mao's "thought" from guerrilla days as the strategic doctrine of the regime (in the light of the failure to obtain nuclear weapons), and the assignment of large roles to the military in non-military projects related to the "leap forward" and commune programs.

Mao at the same time (September 1959) purged the PLA's Chief-of-Staff (Huang Ko-cheng) and replaced him with Lo Jui-ching, a security specialist who had also been close to Mao; Lo's long experience in public and party security work was presumably an important factor in his appointment (as it was probably to be an important factor in his fall). Lo himself was replaced as Minister of Public Security by Hsieh Fu-chih, one of Teng Hsiao-ping's proteges. In the "cultural revolution" of 1965-67, Lin

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

and Hsieh have played important roles as leaders, and Lo and Teng have played important roles as victims.

Lin Piao responded to his appointment as Minister of Defense with a major article in support of Mao's fundamental propositions in which he pledged the PLA's "unconditional" allegiance to Mao personally. Although Peking described Lin as still "very weak" physically, he was strong enough to take firm hold of the Ministry, to become de facto leader (under Mao) of the party's Military Affairs Committee, and to carry on the modest purge of the PLA's leadership. Among the known or probable victims in the following year or so--some dismissed and degraded, some simply demoted--were the Director of the PLA's General Political Department (Tan Cheng), a Deputy Minister of Defense (Li Ta), the Director of the Rear Services Department (Hung Hsueh-chih), the commander of the Mukden Military Region (Teng Hua, who had been Peng's deputy in the Korean war), some of the deputy commanders of service arms, other onetime leaders of Chinese forces in Korea, and some of the many officers of military regions and military districts and garrison commands at that time who have never appeared since.* The purge of 1959-60, however, was not conducted on anything like the scale--especially at the top of the PLA--as the purge of 1966-67.

"Rectification," 1960-62

In the fall of 1960, the situation of the PLA was bleak. The withdrawal of Soviet military aid in mid-1960 forced Peking to adopt a program of self-reliance; the "leap forward" was collapsing; and there was an agricultural

*Several of those who fell with or soon after Peng were men believed to be--and evidently regarded by Mao as--close to Peng personally. This factor of personal association was to prove important in the great purge of 1966-67 as well.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

depression. Mao and Lin were concerned about the morale and combat-effectiveness of the PLA, and about the poor condition of its political control apparatus; Chinese Communist military documents indicate that more than one-third of the PLA's companies had no party committees at all.

In 1960 and 1961 Mao and Lin rebuilt the PLA around a "rectification" campaign. They began in October 1960 by putting first things first. At that time Lin introduced at a MAC meeting the "four firsts"--all of them political imperatives--which were to put man first in handling the relationship between men and weapons, to put political work ahead of other work, to put ideological work ahead of other kinds of political work, and to put "living" ideas ahead of ideas in books. The last and most important of these--a formula for absolving the top-level leadership--made the PLA's political cadres responsible for making clear to the troops the "correct" ideas of their political (party) leaders and for making these ideas effective ("living") in their daily lives, and also for making clear to the party leaders the degree to which these ideas had been implanted and were operative. The methods employed for this indoctrination were later to serve for the "cultural revolution"--the shouting of slogans, the slap-up of wall-posters, and the printing of large-character bulletins, as well as the "struggle" techniques of contention, blooming, and debate. All of these were of course expressions of "Mao's thought," the study of which was repeatedly specified as the PLA's main task. (Liu Shao-chi has since been charged with having opposed this emphasis.)

Mao and Lin at the same time reorganized, expanded and strengthened the political apparatus which was to carry out the "rectification." All companies that lacked party committees were given them; the collective leadership of the party committees at all levels was emphasized; and the status of the political officers (often or usually the heads of the party committees) was enhanced, and their authority vis-a-vis the military commanders was increased. All of this was a part of the assertion of the party's absolute authority over the PLA.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

While emphasizing "politics" and indoctrination, Mao and Lin in that period sought to enhance the combat-effectiveness of the PLA in other ways. For one thing, the regular armed forces were given preference over the militia, and military training was given priority over non-military activities; captured documents of the period show Lin Piao again and again to be calling for more time to be given to military training (during which "Mao's thought" could be absorbed). Moreover, while assigning high priority to the development of nuclear weapons, Peking sought to improve and did improve the PLA's conventional weapons. Further, the captured documents show an apparently genuine concern on the part of Lin Piao and Lo Jui-ching and others for the welfare of the troops; this concern was given practical expression in increasing army rations, giving preferential treatment to the families of servicemen, and halting non-essential work programs. (Among other things, Lin in 1961 expressed his opposition to handling erring soldiers by a method--public shaming--which was to be used by the Red Guards against the PLA in 1967--with Lin's presumed concurrence.)

The party organs principally concerned with control of the PLA were the Military Affairs Committee and the General Political Department; the latter was probably not yet entirely subordinate to the former. The principal officers of the MAC were Lin Piao as vice-chairman (under Mao) and de facto chairman ("chief Lin" in the captured documents), as well as Minister of Defense; Ho Lung as the next-ranking vice-chairman; Nieh Jung-chen as next-ranking, concurrently chairman of the regime's Scientific & Technological Commission, probably responsible for planning the development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles; Lo Jui-ching as secretary-general, in charge of MAC's daily work, as well as chief-of-staff; Yeh Chien-ying as the committee's specialist in training; and Hsiao Hua, deputy director (soon director) of the General Political Department. Less important figures appeared to be Hsu Hsiang-chien and Liu Po-cheng, (although Liu may have been nominally a vice-chairman), who had both been ill, and Yang Cheng-wu, the senior deputy chief-of-staff. All of these except old Liu were to be featured in the "cultural revolution."

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Peking's party and military leaders, who had frankly expressed their fear of U.S. nuclear weapons in 1961, clearly were not confident of the PLA's military capabilities against a serious opponent by the spring of 1962.* They were clearly made anxious by the appearance at that time of a small threat from India and some indications of Chinese Nationalist plans for an invasion of the eastern coast, either of which could be supported by the U.S. In the fall of 1962, however, the PLA had an opportunity to take on the Indians alone, and did well. The performance of the PLA seemed to vindicate the methods of Mao and Lin.

In this period of 1960-62, there were only a few visible changes in the Chinese military leadership. There were three deaths among top-level figures: Ho Ping-yen, the commander of the Chengtu Military Region, Chen Keng, deputy minister of defense and deputy chief-of-staff, and Li Ko-nung, deputy chief-of-staff and one of the two most important specialists in party police work. (Recent Red Guard materials associating Li professionally with Liu Shao-chi's wife may foreshadow an effort to discredit Li posthumously.) And there were several unexplained disappearances of second-level figures, mostly in the headquarters of the service arms; these may or may not have been deaths.

The PLA as a Model, 1963-64

By the end of 1962, the military establishment, which had been so worrisome in the winter of 1960-61 that Lin Piao warned of the need to "ensure that the armed

*Liu Shao-chi is now accused of having tried in January 1962 to "reverse the verdict" (of 1959) on Peng Te-huai, and Peng himself is said to have submitted another massive document in June 1962 to the same end; these assertions cannot be confirmed, but are not incredible.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

forces do not get out of hand," now seemed a model of order and discipline. In launching a "socialist education" campaign at that time (late 1962) to re-educate the Chinese people and "reorganize our revolutionary ranks," Mao seems to have decided to apply to Chinese society as a whole--and particularly to the Chinese party--the extreme methods of political indoctrination tested and perfected in the PLA. It is possible, as one close observer of the Chinese scene has concluded, that Mao at this time was already thinking in terms of Lin Piao--rather than Liu Shao-chi--as his successor, but this conclusion is conjectural.

It is true that Mao and Lin did not take the pressure off the PLA itself. In March 1963, for example, the "Regulations Governing Political Work in the PLA" made clear that there was still some distance to go in making the PLA a perfectly reliable, perfectly responsive instrument. But at the same time a Chinese soldier whose short life had been devoted obsessively to the study of Mao's works was made the model for Chinese youth; and in December 1963 Mao issued his call to "learn from the PLA" as a whole.

In February 1964 a major campaign was launched to this end; all political, economic and social organizations in China were directed to study and emulate the organizational, operational, and ideological training methods of the PLA. As part of this, in the spring of 1964 military-type political departments were established in all industrial, commercial and financial ministries and bureaus and their subordinate enterprises. This was, of course, an early expression of Mao's distrust of the conventional party apparatus. As this new network came to be staffed increasingly by PLA officers, cadres, and soldiers, who were to "grasp both ends well" (the levels above and the levels below, in accordance with the most important of the "four firsts" introduced by Lin), the ground was being prepared for the emergence of the PLA as the most important instrument of the "cultural revolution."

PLA officers were also given increased roles in the party organization at regional and provincial levels,

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

with several more commanders of regional military headquarters becoming concurrently secretaries of regional bureaus; the closer integration was mutual, however, as local party leaders assumed the posts of political officers in many commands. PLA leaders were also increasingly prominent in managing the national defense industries; of the five ministers of the new ministries of machine-building established in 1963-65, four were generals or admirals, and there is evidence in Red Guard materials that a fifth (Su Yu) was made the overall coordinator of defense industries.

Although the "professional" military point of view was still an object of political attack, this point of view seemed in fact to be taken into consideration. Despite a low level of announced military activity in 1964, there was a high level of military investment. There was evidence of enhanced capabilities in such fields as advanced aircraft and missiles. Moreover, the leaders of the military establishment--Lin Piao, Lo Jui-ching, Ho Lung, Nieh Jung-chen, Yeh Chien-ying, and Hsiao Hua (who moved up to Director of the General Political Department in 1964)--seemed to be working well together. Peking now says that Lo in 1964 tried to displace Lin, in part on the ground that Lin was still sick, and that Lo was really subverting the Mao/Lin principle of "politics to the fore" and rejecting Lin's "four firsts" at the same time that he was publicly stating the military doctrine which derived from those concepts, with its emphasis on political training and close combat. There is a little evidence--centering on Lo's alleged promotion of a "weapons competition" in 1964, which in effect would have challenged Mao's dogma of "man over weapons"--that by the end of 1964 Mao had begun to be suspicious of Lo.

In the period of 1963-64, there were again only a few visible changes in the Chinese military leadership. There were three additional deaths among top-level figures: Lo Jung-huan, Director of the General Political Department, Kan Szu-chi, a deputy director of that department, and Chou Pao-chung, a longtime general officer whose post was not known. There was only one unexplained disappearance: of a deputy commander of the CCAF.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Increased Dissidence in the PLA, 1965

It was apparent in early 1965 that the party's and the PLA's leaders had found renewed opposition in the officer corps to the emphasis on "politics" in the PLA and to all of the expressions of this--most importantly, the increasing authority given to political officers, the amount of time assigned to political indoctrination, and the concept of "men over weapons" and the related doctrine of "people's war." (Lo Jui-ching publicly criticized "conceit, complacency, and conservatism" among unspecified PLA leaders--charges similar to those made by Mao against the party.) In this connection, Peking now says that Lo himself in 1965 stated openly his opposition--expressed indirectly in 1964--to the concept of "politics to the fore" and emphasized the importance of military training in fundamentals--which had been the implicit point of the "weapons competition" in 1964.

There was obvious concern in Peking in the early months of 1964 over the rapid escalation of the U.S. military effort in Vietnam, in particular the U.S. decision to initiate large-scale regular bombing of North Vietnam; this was a refusal to play according to Mao's book, which envisaged the sanctuary of revolutionary bases, and it raised the possibility of the extension of the war to China. There is some evidence that the top Chinese leaders reacted differently in evaluating the threat of war posed by this escalation and thus in judging the line to be taken on "class struggle" in the face of a possible war; but only Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping--none of the military leaders--have been specified as opposed to carrying on a "class struggle" at the time.

Some observers have surmised that in 1965 the PLA's leaders were divided between a dominant "political" group (led by Lin) which favored "people's war" and the "professional" group (presumably with Lo as its spokesman) which wanted to rely on positional warfare and contended that the PLA should be freed from political indoctrination in order to prepare. This surmise seems, however, to misstate a bit the central military issue, which was probably

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

that of military-preparedness for all aspects of conventional warfare, particularly in the light of the risk of U.S. air attack (almost certainly the thing Peking feared most). The central political question would have been that of the degree of risk of U.S. air attack to accept, and related to this, as in 1959, would have been the question of improving relations with the USSR in order to have the benefit of the Soviet deterrent. There is some evidence that Lo did indeed stand in opposition to Mao and Lin on the question of how best to prepare for war, but not on the matter of acceptable risk; in his statements of the period--e.g. in May 1965--he stated his favor for the same degree of risk accepted by the dominant figures, i.e. the moderate degree entailed in keeping the Vietnamese Communists fighting rather than negotiating, while keeping the Chinese overtly out of it.

In May 1965 Mao and Lin responded in a typical way to the opposition to "politics" in the PLA--that is, by increasing the political element at the expense of the professional. They abolished military ranks (and reportedly reduced pay), and told officers to take the lead in the creative application of Mao's thought. Red Guard materials have since asserted that Lo Jui-ching by this time had begun to fear for his own position--telling others that Mao "did not trust him and wanted to purge him."

In August 1965, a few weeks before the party meeting which was to launch the "cultural revolution," Ho Lung summed up those issues in the PLA which Peking was willing (although only by implication) to admit. The common feature of the opponents of Mao's line on "army building," Ho said, was "bourgeois thinking," expressed as opposition to the principle of "absolute leadership by the party over the army, resistance to "democracy" and the "mass line," including opposition to the "strengthening of political and ideological education," resentment of "supervision" by lower (as well as higher) levels, opposition to the party committee system, strong favor for "only those commanders and technical experts who had undergone strict professional training," and rejection of the man-over-weapons dogma.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

In 1965 there were again only a few visible changes in the Chinese military leadership. There were three additional deaths: Ko Ching-shih, first political officer of the Nanking headquarters as well as first secretary of the party's East China Bureau; Liu Ya-lou, commander of the Air Force; and Lai Chuan-chu, second political officer (under Sung Jen-chiung) in the Mukden headquarters. There was no unexplained disappearance until late November, when there was a spectacular one--the disappearance of Lo Jui-ching, secretary of the party secretariat, secretary-general of the MAC, and the PLA's chief-of-staff, second only to Lin Piao among Chinese military leaders.

The Fall of Lo Jui-ching, Late 1965

Peking has long maintained that Mao launched the "cultural revolution" at a central committee meeting in September 1965 in which he stated that it had become necessary to "criticize bourgeois reactionary thinking." Red Guard posters have more recently asserted that in this meeting Mao criticized Wu Han--the playwright who was to serve as a symbol of all opposition to Mao's thought and policies--and called for an "investigation." They have also asserted that some resistance to Mao--described as "revisionism"--appeared at that meeting and in the following month, partly in terms of questioning the advisability of carrying out a harsh internal program at a time of increased external danger (Mao himself apparently felt secure against this threat). There is a little evidence that Lo Jui-ching was among those resisting: in Lo's case, resisting the implications of the "cultural revolution" for the armed forces, primarily the disruption of the PLA's work, the further emphasis on political "struggle" at the expense of military preparedness as a military professional would see it. There is better evidence that Mao felt that Lo would be a positive obstacle to what Mao had already decided was to be a large-scale purge--i.e., that party leaders would be "protected" by the security apparatus in which Lo played a leading role--and that Lo himself would have to be purged for this reason if no other. However, Lo remained publicly active for two more months.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

On 10 November 1965 a Shanghai newspaper opened the "revolution" with an article--planted by Mao through Madame Mao--attacking one of Wu Han's plays. Just five days later, Lin Piao issued a five-point directive on the work of the PLA for 1966, the principal point of which was that the test of the loyalty and competence of PLA cadres was to be whether they regarded Mao's works as the "highest instructions" with regard to "all aspects of the work of our entire army." The other four points called for persistence in the "four firsts"--the four political imperatives stated in October 1960--and for leading cadres to provide energetic leadership to the work (mainly political work) of basic units, for the promotion of good (young) officers and men to key posts, and for hard training in close-range combat and night fighting (part of the "people's war" doctrine). In broadcasting the directive, Peking radio went on to state that at the forthcoming all-PLA political work conference, "great emphasis" was to be put on the role of politics in the work of the PLA, and it quoted Lin to the effect that Mao's thought "always puts politics in first place and puts military affairs under the guidance and command of politics," and that Mao's thought was itself the "best weapon."

On 28 November, Lo Jui-ching dropped out of sight in Shanghai, to reappear only in January 1967 in the hands of the Red Guards. Lo went to Shanghai with a foreign delegation; he may have been given this errand by Mao or Lin in order to be separated from his Peking assets and thus set up for an easy arrest; or he may have been investigating the alarming initiative of the Shanghai newspaper in which Mao had secretly planted the incendiary article, thus setting himself up for a later charge of "conspiracy" with Peng Chen and Lu Ting-i. (This surmise --not original with this writer--may seem inadequate to support a charge of "conspiracy," as such an action is one which Lo might reasonably have taken on someone's order and in ignorance of the situation, but there is no known development other than Lo's trip which would seem to link Lo with Peng and Lu, and this surmise seems the best yet offered.) Yang Shang-kun, head of the general (administrative) office of the central committee and Lo's associate on the secretariat, disappeared at the same time and reappeared in the same circumstances.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Red Guard posters and papers in early 1967 provided lavish detail on the crimes of Lo Jui-ching. If the posters are to be believed, Lo began conspiring against Mao in 1949; as early as 1958, he rejected Mao's sense of the need for "class struggle", and later denied the existence of "class struggle" in the PLA; after 1958, as chief-of-staff (from 1959), as secretary-general of MAC (from 1960 or earlier), and as a party secretary (from 1962), he failed to implement honestly the directives of Mao and the central committee (specifically, he withheld one on the militia), prevented others from making reports to and seeking guidance from Lin Piao and other officers of MAC, and acted as a dictator in the daily work of MAC; from 1960, he failed to carry out Mao's directives on transferring some PLA divisions for use as the core of local armed forces in East China opposite Taiwan, and at some time in that period he instructed those East China forces to attack enemy naval units on their own initiative and took other "reckless action" of this kind; from about the same time, he favored an improvement of relations with the USSR in the interest of getting modern weapons, and, specifically, failed to accept portions of Peking's case in the Sino-Soviet border dispute; beginning about 1963, he tried to take over Nieh Jung-chen's Scientific & Technological Commission and to gain control of national defense industry (from Su Yu, apparently), in order to concentrate on the immediate production of standard materiel, while "borrowing from abroad" the modern weapons that Chinese long-range research and development was then working toward; from 1964, he expressed a "purely military viewpoint," attacked the "four firsts" formulated by Lin Piao, opposed political leadership of military affairs and opposed the emphasis on political work in the PLA, and consistently called for an emphasis on "military matters and techniques" and on training in military fundamentals, one expression of which was his sponsorship of military tournaments; from about the same time, he opposed Lin Piao's insistence on the primacy of Mao's thought (and in fact derided Mao's works), conspired with a number of other military leaders and planted counter-revolutionaries in key positions in order to "usurp military leadership,"

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

tried similarly to enlarge his own authority on the grounds of Lin's ill health, and held that Lin should step aside in favor of a man of "greater ability" (presumably himself); and finally, after his arrest, he "rebelled" against the party by trying to kill himself.

These charges sum up to something like the case against Peng Te-huai, and Peking has recently taken the line that Peng and Lo acted together until the time of Peng's fall and that Lo conspired with others after Peng's fall--to the same end of discrediting Mao's thought (in favor of Liu Shao-chi's thought), adopting the Soviet model, changing the emphasis on political work to an emphasis on military technique, gaining personal power, and (in collusion with the USSR) making a bid for control of the party and army.

Obviously not all of the charges against Lo are true (or he could not have lasted as long as he did), but, as previously suggested, there is some reason to believe some of them, or some part of some of them. It is credible, in the first place, that Lo opposed the long-standing degree of emphasis on political work in the PLA and the Maoist dogmas expressed as military doctrine, resisted Mao's plans for a disruptive "cultural revolution" in the PLA, and resisted Lin's directive for an even greater emphasis on political work in the PLA. While this cannot be demonstrated from Lo's official speeches, the party thought it worth while in early 1966

[redacted] to accuse Lo, in a [redacted] party document not intended to be read by other than party officials, of denying the existence of "class struggle" in the PLA. It would logically follow from such a denial that he would be opposed both to the "cultural revolution" and to Lin's directive, and, indeed, the charge in the party document amounts to saying that he was.

It is also credible that Lo failed to implement some of Mao's directives in the way that Mao wanted them implemented, and that he acted too often (in Mao's later judgment) on his own initiative. This charge is similar to credible charges against Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping, who clearly did not act as Mao wanted them to act in 1966 on the question of condemning Wu Han's plays and who were later said to have failed for years to consult Mao sufficiently and thus to have taken some decisions

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

out of his hands. (The specific charge of failure to transfer some troops is to some degree supported by its inclusion in the [redacted] party document cited above, but the specific charge with respect to "reckless" action by East China forces cannot be supported by the record of behavior of those forces.)

Some of the other charges against Lo are not inherently incredible. He may indeed have been one of those who favored a compromise in the Sino-Soviet dispute--both in general, partly in the continuing interest of rapid modernization of the Chinese military establishment, and, again, in particular in the face of the apparently increased danger of war, and he may have argued in this connection that Chinese research and development ought to be reoriented and subordinated to himself. Similarly, he may indeed have placed his favorites in key posts (as most other leaders did and do), and he may indeed have believed that he was better qualified than Lin Piao to lead the PLA.

There is some reason to believe, as previously noted, that one important reason for Lo's fall (or, at least, for his fall at this particular time) was a reason which Peking has not discussed at all in its public pronouncements--that is, his role in Peking's security and secret police apparatus. It is not necessary to try to assign comparative degrees of importance to Lo's role as chief-of-staff and Lo's role as a key figure in party security work, as his activity in either role could have been sufficient to make him a prime target of the purge; it is enough to take note of Mao's reported belief [redacted] that he could not accomplish his large-scale purge of the party with Lo standing where he was, and to speculate that, since Lo was on the list anyway, his party security role was responsible for making him the first to go. Lo's precise position in the security apparatus is not known. Chinese Communist military documents have provided evidence of Lo's continuing concern with security matters in 1964 and 1965, and there is a Red Guard assertion that Lo headed a (or the) "security bureau" in the party central committee; this may be identical with--or an outgrowth of--the "political research office" (identified in other Red Guard materials) which

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

as of 1961 was sending out "investigation teams" to conduct investigations of a type previously associated with the party police, and which may since have been redesignated as the "central investigation" or "central research" group. Lo may also have kept a direct relationship with the "political defense" (security) network in the PLA. Finally, he may have been that member of the party secretariat (there was almost certainly someone) charged with supervising security matters across the board. Whatever his precise post or combination of posts in this area of concern, and whatever his actual or anticipated offenses in his party security role, it now seems probable that his occupancy of this position was a factor in his fall.*

There remains the charge that Lo was an active conspirator against Mao and Lin--one who aimed actually to dislodge them. Normally, this is the hardest kind of charge to take seriously, because, once a given leader is in disfavor, Peking is not above charging him with having conspired against Mao for 30 years (Liu Shao-chi) or having been the actual leader of a conspiracy (Peng Te-huai) for which others were purged many years before (the Kao/Jao case). There is some reason in this case, however, not to dismiss the charge out of hand.

Lo's co-conspirators, as given almost from the start, add up to a formidable group: Peng Chen (head of the Peking committee), Lu Ting-i (director of the propaganda

*Some readers will recall that there was no discussion of this factor in the first draft of this paper. This omission was the result of simple ignorance: the fragmentary information of recent years on Lo's continuing concern with the security/police field was not known to the writer, and the reports of Mao's feeling that Lo's party/security role was an obstacle to Mao's plans did not come to hand until later. In any case, those observers proved to be right (it is now believed) who insisted to this writer that Lo's party/security role was an important factor.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

department), and Yang Shang-kun (chief of the central committee's general office), the four bracketed together since early January 1967 as the most serious offenders, who "deserve death." Red Guard newspapers and posters soon supplied the names of Liu Shao-chi, Teng Hsiao-ping, Ho Lung, and a number of lesser figures, including some who like Lo were concerned with the operational command of the PLA, and a party police figure. The alleged conspiracy of Lo with most of the major figures is not credible, because they did not fall when he did--not until months, or in Ho's case a year, later. Moreover, the charges involving most of these major figures came at a time when Peking was saying just about anything that would serve to blacken those in disfavor. Further, the [redacted] [redacted] party documents of early 1966--some months after Lo's fall--charged Lo with a number of offenses but made no mention of conspiracy.

Nothing about Lo can be demonstrated beyond the fact that he was not regarded as sufficiently trustworthy, at the beginning of the "cultural revolution," to be left in operational control of troops that might have to be used and in a party security post in which he could impede the progress of the purge. Nevertheless, the disappearance of Lo and Yang Shang-kun at the same time provides a little support for the view that Mao does really believe the conspiracy charge with respect to Lo and Yang. It is a striking fact that Yang disappeared from the news just one day after Lo did, in late November 1965 (both may have been seized in early December), and that no other party leaders fell for some months after that.* In their common

*Another (although lesser) military figure who may have fallen at the same time is Hsiao Hsiang-jung, Lo's subordinate and Yang's opposite number in the Ministry of Defense who probably would have worked closely with both Lo and Yang. Director of the general (administrative) office of the Ministry since 1954 and for years before and after that time apparently close to Yeh Chien-ying, Hsiao was out of the news in 1966 and was displayed with Lo and Yang at a rally in the first week of January 1967. Posters subsequently linked Hsiao with both Lo and Ho Lung. Another (footnote continued on page 18)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

capacities as secretaries of the party secretariat, and in Lo's capacity as secretary-general of the central committee's Military Affairs Committee and Yang's capacity as director of the central committee's general office, they probably did work closely together. Moreover, Yang may have been the head or supervisor of the "central research" group cited above if that body was not identical with Lo's "security" office; or he may have been Lo's deputy in some such post. Yang's possible occupancy of a police/security post in addition to his public position of course raises the possibility that he was purged for this alone--that is, as a person simply standing in the way, as Lo was standing in the way. But Peking has insisted on the conspiracy charge.

In some specifics, the poster charges against Yang Shang-kun go even farther than those against Lo. Yang is charged, for example, with having conducted espionage on behalf of the USSR, and, to this and other ends, having placed monitoring devices in Mao's apartment (where important meetings were sometimes held). While there is evidence that Yang was close enough to Mao to do this, there is of course no evidence beyond the poster assertions that he in fact did it, and these specifics seem doubtful. But Yang had been so close to Mao in recent years (making trips around China with him) that it seems fair to conclude that Mao would not have purged him as he did except as a clear and present danger.

In sum, there are several credible charges against Lo Jui-ching, most of which can be summarized as resistance

(footnote continued from page 17)

who may have been seized at about the same time was Yang Shang-kuei, first secretary of the Kiangsi committee and a military figure as the political officer of that provincial military district; a Red Guard newspaper denouncing Yang in February 1967 revealed that Yang, out of the news since late December 1965, is the brother of Yang Shang-kun.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

to the concept of "giving first place to politics" and resistance to the specific policies of political leaders; this in itself would have marked him for purging. Beyond this, there is some evidence that Mao felt that Lo in his security post would be an obstacle to the purge of others. And beyond this, the simultaneous disappearance of Lo and Yang suggests that Mao may really believe the charge of "conspiracy" between them, at least in the sense of trying to obstruct Mao's policies and eventually to dislodge Lin. (A Liberation Army Daily editorial of May 1967 bundled all of the charges against Lo into those principal two: Lo "opposed Chairman Mao's military line and the instructions to give first place to politics and other instructions by Comrade Lin Piao" and worked in "collusion" with other disgraced leaders to "carry out insidious activities to usurp military power...") The link with Peng Chen and Lu Ting-i is harder to establish, but Lo may have been making--or could have been regarded as making--his Shanghai trip on their behalf.*

*It is not at all clear why Peking from the start has treated the particular four party leaders--Lo Jui-ching, Yang Shang-kun, Peng Chen, and Lu Ting-i--as a tightly-knit conspiratorial group, and continues to present them as more serious criminals than--in fact, in an altogether different category from--the alleged leaders of the opposition to Mao over the years, Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping. The difference in treatment suggests that Mao may believe the four to have been guilty of conspiracy in the sharpest possible sense (even though he does not want to discuss this publicly)--that is, a conspiracy to overthrow him in a sudden coup. The four would in fact have made a fair team for an attempted coup--with Lo's control of PLA forces and some part of the party police, Yang's control of some part of communications to and from Mao, Peng's control of the city of Peking, and Lu's control of the propaganda department (and thus of the news which would follow a coup). There is no independent evidence, however, that the four were actually planning a coup. Perhaps Lo Jui-ching is the link to the other three for the "conspiracy" charge: that is, he was regarded as conspiring with (footnote continued on page 20)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The Political Work Conference and Liang Pi-yeh, Early 1966

As promised in November 1965, the General Political Department in or about early January 1966 called a political work conference of representatives of all elements of the PLA, which--Peking said--"studied" the directives of the central committee and Chairman Mao on construction of the PLA and on political work in it, and also "studied" ways of implementing Lin Piao's "five principles" of November 1965 on "giving prominence to politics." (This may have been the meeting which "fully exposed" Lo Jui-ching.) Within a month of the conference, Lin found another high-ranking officer--in fact, a deputy director of the General Political Department itself--to make an example of, as a leader who did not understand the principle of "politics in first place" and therefore was unqualified to lead. This was Liang Pi-yeh.

The participants in the January conference were received by Chou En-lai, Chu Te, Teng Hsiao-ping, and

(footnote continued from page 19)

Yang Shang-kun on one hand (as their simultaneous arrest suggests), and as suggested above, his trip to Shanghai in November 1965 was taken as evidence of conspiracy with Peng and Lu, those directly threatened by the process Mao had set in motion in Shanghai. (The "conspiracy" between Peng and Lu has been presented by Peking as a conspiracy against Mao's "thought" rather than his person, including such matters as their failure to publish Mao's works in 1962 while publishing a lot of Liu's, and their collusion on a February 1966 report which shielded rather than attacking other opponents of Mao's thought; but Mao may have some unpublished charges. At any rate, Mao has been treating all four as if he meant eventually to shoot them--rather than keeping them around as "negative examples" like Liu and Teng--and, if so, he may at that time provide a better picture of the "black thread" that unites these particular four.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Peng Chen, each of whom except Chou was to be disgraced in the following year. Chou, Teng, and Peng gave "important reports" which were not published. Yeh Chien-ying of the MAC, Hsiao Hua, Director of the Political Department (who presided over the conference), and Yang Cheng-wu, the senior deputy chief-of-staff (believed to have been acting chief-of-staff by this time), made speeches; only Hsiao's was made public (in summary). There may have been a speech by Liang Pi-yeh himself, as Peking has spoken of "two documents presented by the General Political Department" but has identified only one, Hsiao's. Lo Jui-ching was not present, a good indication that he was arrested prior to January; in fact he missed an important military funeral in December.

The political work conference of course called upon the PLA to "continuously give prominence to politics and resolutely implement the five principles," and it reaffirmed that the organizational form of "giving prominence" was the "system of dual leadership by the military commands and [PLA] party committees..." (Organizationally, this is in fact a triple leadership--the military commander, the political officer, and the secretary of the party committee; but the political officer is normally the secretary, so it can be described as "dual." The political officer/secretary normally has the greater power, this itself being an expression of "giving prominence to politics.")

Hsiao Hua in his speech explained that "putting politics first" was necessary because "class struggle" still existed in the PLA (something Lo was charged with denying). Indeed, Hsiao went on, "putting politics first" was the "supreme and most essential factor in our combat readiness" (because morale is the most important factor in fighting). Further, Hsiao said, there had been a dispute in the PLA about whether to put politics first, a dispute which itself reflected the fact of continued "class struggle" in the PLA..

In mid-February, Liang Pi-yeh, a onetime political officer with Lin Piao's 4th Field Army and who had served in Korea before becoming a deputy director of the Political Department under Hsiao Hua, suddenly dropped out of sight

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

after making several appearances in the first half of February. He was not heard from again until he was denounced in wall-posters in early 1967; at the same time, a reported speech by Lin Piao on 10 August 1966 explained Liang's fall in terms of his resistance to the concept of "putting politics first."

Lin implied in his speech (as reported) that he himself had purged Liang. When he (Lin) had put forward during the winter the "five principles of putting politics first"--that is, the directive of 15 November 1965, previously summarized--Liang had resisted Lin's formulation. The account of Lin's speech does not make clear whether Liang argued the question with Lin at the time (probably not, since he lasted until February), or later changed the sense of Lin's directive in materials prepared by the General Political Department, or had taken a different line in a speech of his own (at the political work conference of January, or on some other occasion). But in any event, as Lin was said to have put it in his 10 August speech, Liang had held that politics should be "adapted to"--the sense is, better coordinated with--the "practical business of preparing for war." Thus Liang had failed the first test of the loyalty and competence of PLA cadres, as stated by Lin in November; he had opposed Mao's thought, which "always puts politics first." In other words, the Mao-Lin approach to military preparedness had proved too much even for this top-level political officer whose entire career was built on political work--as it had proved too much for Lo Jui-ching and was to prove too much for others. Posters later got around to charging Liang with conspiracy with both Lo and Ho Lung, but this was obviously an afterthought; Liang's fall came too long after Lo's, and too long before Ho's, for this charge to be at all credible. Lin's given reason, which is credible, was enough.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The So-Called "Coup" of February 1966

Since January 1967, there have been frequent charges in Red Guard materials that a "coup" was attempted in Peking in February 1966, when Mao was absent from Peking. Although the waters have been badly muddied by these Red Guard materials, the "coup" seems to relate entirely to some initiative--actual, planned, or suspected--on the part of Peng Chen, against which counter-action may have been taken by Mao or someone acting for Mao, possibly Lin Piao.

There is a credible report that in August 1966 Teng Hsiao-ping, himself about to be disgraced, was asked to comment on--as the questioner put it--the "February mutiny." Teng denied that any "such thing" had taken place, and surmised that the question was based on the consideration being given at that time (February) to the possibility of stationing (billetting?) troops in some schools, an action which, Teng said, was decided against. According to this account, Teng angrily denied that either he or another unidentified leader--the text strongly suggests Peng Chen--had the authority to order the troops to "move" (into the schools?).

The incident was muddled in those Red Guard materials of early 1967 which gave a leading role to Lo Ju-ching or related Ho Lung's alleged plotting in this period. The accounts featuring Lo were on the face of it incredible, as there was good evidence that Lo had been taken out of action two months prior to the supposed "coup." The accounts featuring Ho in some instances alleged that Ho was a part of the "coup," but more often accused Ho of plotting separately during February for a coup of his own later. (This will be discussed in a subsequent section on the fall of Ho Lung.) Still later, Red Guard materials brought Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping into the alleged "coup" of February, but the accompanying scenarios were puerile.

Wall-posters of January 1967 purported to give Lin Piao's account (apparently recent) of "coup" plotting by

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

the four party leaders in the greatest degree of disgrace at the time Lin spoke--Peng Chen, Lo Jui-ching, Lu Ting-i, and Yang Shang-kun. In the poster accounts, Lin did not specify the period of the plotting, but pointed to Peng Chen as the key figure, and appeared to include in his remarks the incident or aborted incident of February 1966. Lin reportedly said that he had "smelled gunpowder" in the plans of the four disgraced leaders, and that PLA troops had been sent into Peking to prevent any "counter-revolutionary coup from seizing key positions." In other words, it was not Peng Chen who had moved the troops, but Mao and Lin; and no "coup" was ever staged.

In late April 1967, according to wall-posters of early May, two of Mao's closest comrades commented on the February "coup." Chou En-lai reportedly said that, so far as he knew, there was not even a plot to carry out a coup in February 1966. Chou is said to have gone on to remark that, while suspicions were natural, the storing of food was a routine matter (Peking was still worried about possible expansion of the war). Kang Sheng, who himself had been the main source (among party leaders) of remarks encouraging a belief in such a plot, was reportedly more evasive. He distinguished the general question of Peng Chen's attempt to enlarge his powers from the specific question of a "February coup conspiracy," and reportedly said that Peng Chen's action in ordering two PLA regiments into two Peking universities in February 1966 were the apparent basis of the rumors, but he disclaimed full knowledge (it is not clear whether he meant of the rumors or of the plot).

There are some differences in the reported testimony of Lin, Chou and Kang on the question of plotting a "coup" in or for February 1966, and Kang may have been leaving himself room to return to this subject later. It may turn out that a group around Peng Chen was indeed plotting a coup (although the accounts to date have been either weakly or fantastically specified), but the three party leaders cited above appear to agree on one central point--that no "coup" was staged.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Some Preparations, Spring 1966

In the spring of 1966, the PLA took the public lead in the "cultural revolution" in China. At the same time, however, Mao and Lin made preparations to extend the "revolution" into the PLA itself, and to conduct a thorough-going purge of the PLA. Contrary to the popular belief, the conduct of the "revolution" (and the purge) in the PLA did not lag behind these developments in the party, but ran parallel with them, in the same time-periods. The differences lay in the intensity of the "revolution" and the scale of the purge--weaker and smaller in the PLA than in the party.

In February 1966, Madame Mao, who was to accumulate an impressive list of victims as the purge proceeded, had conducted a prolonged symposium on "cultural" work in the PLA. She then wrote a report in which--judging from subsequent developments--she concluded that the political condition of the PLA was not satisfactory. She included in this report a refutation of the thesis--attributed to the fallen Lo Jui-ching--that there was no "class struggle" in the PLA (and hence no need for a "cultural revolution" in it). This report was approved by Chen Po-ta and then by Lin Piao, in late March. At the end of March, Mao himself, who had been out of sight since late November, was again visibly in command, according to a Japanese Communist party delegation which met with him.

In April and May 1966 the PLA, whatever its own political weaknesses, was well ahead of the party in stating Mao's positions and intentions. Back in November 1965 the Liberation Army Daily, had correctly denounced Wu Han's play as a "poisonous weed" while most of the party press was calling for a "hundred flowers" debate on it. On 18 April with the party press now in line on this issue, the PLA newspaper took the lead again, in a major editorial forecasting the direction of the next several months. It reviewed the "sharp class struggle on the cultural front," introduced the term "great... cultural revolution," reiterated that Mao's works were

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

to be regarded as "supreme guidance," and called for a "new culture." The newspaper followed up on 4 May with an equally important editorial clearly forecasting a purge, and on 8 May with another calling expressly for it.

At the same time (7 May), Mao is said to have sent a letter to Lin Piao--not publicized until 1 August; Army Day--calling for the PLA to be turned into a "great school" which would serve as a model for all of China to become such a school. The PLA, while mastering and emphasizing its military tasks, was also to study politics and economics--specifically, it was to engage in agriculture, industry, and propaganda. (Other components of society were similarly to master their specialties and learn those of others.) When the letter was surfaced in August, it was used to beat those like Lo Jui-ching and Liang Pi-yeoh charged with opposing Lin Piao's directives on putting politics first and with wishing to confine the PLA to the "single" task of training and fighting. Mao's letter was also to serve as a justification for much of the PLA's unconventional activity in the year ahead.

In mid-May (it was later learned), the CCP central committee held a work-conference at which Lin Piao made the principal speech. Appearing in his role as Mao's de facto first lieutenant and as his main instrument for destroying other party leaders who had lost or were soon to lose his favor, Lin is said to have charged that Peng Chen and other leaders sought to bring Mao down, and to have implied strongly that other top-ranking leaders would be purged. A central committee circular of 16 May--revealed much later--made the same point, referring to the existence of "a number" of Mao's opponents at the central committee level and stating expressly that such rascals ("representatives of the bourgeoisie") were operating in the PLA as well as in the party and government. PLA leaders by this time had good reason for apprehension.

It may have been in about this period--although the appointments were not publicized for some weeks--that some PLA leaders were given key new posts in preparation for the PLA's role in the "cultural revolution" as a whole and for the workings of the "revolution" in the PLA itself.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Liu Chih-chen, Hsiao Hua's most important deputy in the General Political Department after the fall of Liang Pi-yeah, and Hsieh Tang-chung, head of its cultural subdepartment, may have been named at once to the central committee's new Cultural Revolution Group, headed by Chen Po-ta and Madame Mao, which was formed in May to replace an analogous five-man committee headed by the disgraced Peng Chen. (The PLA's analogous group was not formed until the autumn.) Hsiao Wang-tung, a longtime political officer and deputy Minister of Culture for a year, may have taken over in May as acting Minister to replace the disgraced Lu (linked with Peng Chen and other of Mao's opponents). And Yeh Chien-ying of the MAC may have been added at this time to the party secretariat (under Teng Hsiao-ping), which was to have a large role in the management of the first stages of the "revolution."

The "Failure" of the Work-Teams, Summer 1966

The main instrument of the "cultural revolution" in June and July of 1966 was the work-team. These small teams, deriving from the "socialist education" work-teams of 1964, were assigned and named by higher party committees, and sent down to investigate subordinate bodies and carry out the "revolution" in them. It is apparent from the testimony of Madame Mao that Mao himself approved the concept of the work-team, and there is evidence that Chen Po-ta--chief of the Cultural Revolution Group--did so too.

The PLA had a double role in this stage of the "cultural revolution." It supplied PLA officers and men for some of the work-teams which acted on non-military organizations, and it was itself the object of the activity of work-teams.

The PLA's role in the work-teams acting on non-military bodies was hardly mentioned by Peking in the summer of 1966. One poster has given a figure of 3,000 for the total number of PLA men taking part, but this seems low. There has been some effort in 1967 to present the PLA personnel as playing a heroic role--that is, as

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

having been the most militant (therefore most correct) elements in the work-teams, and as having been kept down by the party figures who dominated the teams. It may well be, as some observers have concluded, that Mao and Lin knew at the beginning of this stage of the "revolution" that they were going to use the work-team period to disgrace the leaders of the party apparatus--that is, Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping. If so, the role of the PLA personnel in the teams could have been that of discrediting the teams, calling for a militant position in accordance with Mao's wishes (not then revealed) which would necessarily be moderated by the party personnel on the team, who were in retrospect to be found guilty of suppressing the revolution. However, while the basic speculation (Mao's deliberate entrapment of Liu and Teng) may well be correct, the PLA personnel on the work-teams did not consistently follow such a strategy.* Moreover, work-teams operated concurrently in the PLA itself and were found insufficiently militant there too.

Peking has told us so little about the work-teams in the PLA--an embarrassing topic--that we do not know either their composition or the full range of their attention. That is, we do not know whether the teams were composed entirely of PLA personnel or included outsiders, and, whichever the case, what the mix was of military and political PLA personnel; and we do not know how far into the PLA the work-teams got. But the "military academies and schools" were clearly the main concerns of the teams, along with PLA "cultural" organizations, just as "cultural

*A MAC directive of February 1967 revealed that some PLA personnel had led work-teams in non-military organizations, and that some of them had performed so poorly (non-militantly) that they had later been returned to those organizations for weeks or months of investigation of their poor performance. Conservative leadership of work-teams was probably as generally true of the PLA leaders as of the party leaders.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

and educational" organizations were the main objects of the activity of teams working in non-military organizations.

In any event, the relevant development, for the purposes of this paper, is the effort made by Mao and Lin to make the period of the work-teams in the PLA serve the purposes--developed later--of the purge of the PLA. This effort has focussed on Liu Chih-chien, the deputy director of the General Political Department and most active figure in the "revolution" in the PLA from June to November, who (contrary to subsequent assertions) did not really fall out of favor until November 1966.

Red Guard posters and papers, quoting party and military leaders, have condemned Liu both for the PLA's participation in the work-teams acting on non-military organizations and for the activity of the work-teams in the PLA. As for the former, Liu is said to have "eagerly agreed"--as if he made the decision on his own--to the proposal of Liu and Teng for PLA representation on the work-teams, the subsequent conduct of which (in retrospect) "damaged the good name" of the PLA; and Liu is also condemned for supporting Liu and Teng in opposing the withdrawal of the work-teams when Chen Po-ta proposed this. This line has generally not seemed as profitable to the Red Guards, however, as the line--noted above--which presents the PLA participants as having been gloriously militant members of the teams.

In fact nobody at the leadership level was being gloriously militant in that period. It seems established (as our earlier papers have argued) that Liu and Teng did not have a clear directive from Mao to make the work-teams support the "revolutionary" (the most militant) elements in the non-military organizations which the work-teams were acting in, and it seems just as evident that Hsiao Hua as director of the General Political Department did not have a clear directive--from Mao, Lin, or whomever--of this kind for the activity of the work-teams in the PLA. Whereas the insufficiently militant action of the work-teams in general served admirably to bring down Liu and Teng at the time, there was no parallel wish on Mao's

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

part to bring down Lin Piao or Hsiao Hua, who could just as easily have been blamed for the similar behavior of the work-teams in the PLA. Nevertheless it later seemed desirable--when Red Guard posters raised this politically embarrassing question--to have a scapegoat for this admittedly insufficiently-militant period in the PLA's life, and, since Lin and (at that time) Hsiao were not in disfavor and could not be used, Liu Chih-chien was selected.

Thus in 1967 the posters and papers have said that in the summer of 1966 Liu--allegedly acting in the absence of Lin and Hsiao, just as Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping are said to have acted in the absence of Mao--did not want to pursue the class struggle in the PLA and issued a number of "incorrect" directives. He is said to have sent work-teams to "military schools and [civil] localities" where they acted to suppress the revolutionary movement, just as the work-teams directed by Liu and Teng in non-military organizations did this. The work-teams are said to have suppressed the masses in a "fascist" manner, prevented the schools and localities from exchanging experiences (in visits), and in general kept the "revolutionary fire" out of the schools; moreover, Liu personally condemned some right-thinking naval leaders who wanted more emphasis on Mao's thought, he personally prevented the revolutionary students from conducting propaganda in the "front lines" on the ground that they would interfere with the PLA's work, and, when Mao decided on the withdrawal of (all kinds of) work-teams, Liu made false reports, preserved the teams, and continued to suppress the revolution.

It is obvious that Liu Chih-chien is not guilty as charged for this period. Whereas Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping were brought crashing down in early August for the general failure--as defined by Mao in late July--of the work-teams in June and July, Liu Chih-chien was in high favor at that time and for months thereafter. A good account of Lin Piao's remarks of 10 August 1966 [see following section] credibly presents Lin as giving Liu a double vote of confidence, asking Liu to represent him in a talk with Hsu Li-ching (the other active deputy

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

director of the General Political Department), and, moreover, entrusting Liu with the task of making the Liberation Army Daily a "good paper."

It was in this period of June and July 1966, according to Red Guard materials of early 1967, that Ho Lung--acting in Lin Piao's absence as the chief of the MAC--was acting or began to act in collusion with a number of other military leaders to oppose Lin Piao and to enlarge his (Ho's) own powers. The most important of the charges assert that Ho was supporting his own men against those in Lin's favor in the General Staff, the Air Force, and the Navy, and was scheming with certain leaders of the military regions. While it is possible that Mao and Lin believed (in retrospect) that there was something to these charges, the material does not support any judgment as to whether summer 1966 was actually the period (or one of the periods) in question, and the charges will be discussed in a subsequent section centering on the fall of Ho Lung and others in December 1966.

Lin Piao's Outline of the Purge, August 1966

On 8 August 1966 the party central committee--then in plenum--issued a 16-point directive for the conduct of the "cultural revolution." The directive was mixed in character--allowing for periods of retreat--but was predominantly militant. It stated the party's aim of bringing down Mao's actual or putative opponents, called for them to be attacked with "daring" and without fear of "disorder,"* and forbade those attacked to offer resistance or to incite the attacking forces to fight among themselves. The directive informed the country that the revolutionary masses (primarily the Red Guards about to emerge) would be directed by new instruments, the central Cultural Revolution Group and its subordinate bodies.

*Mao is credibly reported to have said, at a party meeting in August, "Let there be chaos."

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The 8 August declaration was not very informative, however, as to how the "revolution" was to be carried out in the PLA. It said simply that both socialist education and the cultural revolution in the PLA were to be carried on in accordance with directives from the Military Affairs Committee and the General Political Department.

Lin Piao provided an analogous directive for the PLA in two interviews on 10 August, of which there is a credible account. These interviews were in amplification not only of the 8 August declaration, but also of Lin's five-point directive of November 1965 and the 1 August (1966) editorial of the Liberation Army Daily which took note of recent opposition to the Mao/Lin line on the primacy of politics and of impermissible concentration on "military matters."

On 10 August, according to the poster account, an unknown person submitted a report to Lin--evidently on the progress of the "revolution" in some part of the PLA--and asked for instructions. In two interviews, one in the presence of Liu Chih-chien and Yang Cheng-wu, the other in the presence of these two and Yeh Chien-ying, Hsiao Hua, Chen Hsi-lien (commander of artillery forces), and some lesser figures. For some reason not apparent, Lin did not assemble the MAC to hear his remarks, but instructed these officers--most or all of whom were members of MAC--to pass his remarks on to MAC and to solicit comments.

Following the line which he took in his speech of the same week to the central committee plenum, Lin told these PLA leaders that all cadres would be judged on the basis of (a) whether they demonstrated their support of Mao or not, (b) whether they gave priority to politics or not, and (c) whether they had revolutionary enthusiasm or not. One who got these big things right although making mistakes on secondary matters (e.g. in his personal life) was to be preferred, Lin said, to one who was personally upright and pleasant but got the big things wrong; in this connection, "we do not want men of compromising nature."

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Lin went over this ground three more times in these two interviews. From now on, he said, in terms similar to those he used in his speech to the plenum in describing the party leadership's policy toward all party cadres--the PLA's policy would be to dismiss anyone opposing Mao, regardless of his ability, and to dismiss anyone who failed to give priority to politics, regardless of his ability. (He may have included a point here on dismissing those who lack zeal, as he did in his party plenum speech, although the account does not report it.) In instructing his audience to report his remarks to MAC, he said it again: there are two lines, one upholding Mao, giving priority to politics and showing zeal, and the other of looking at things "entirely" from "military and technical" points of view. He reiterated this distinction in the second interview, and reiterated that the unfit--as so defined--must be dismissed.

In one of these interviews, Lin is reported (in the same poster account) to have said that he was calling the attention of Yang Cheng-wu (Lo Jui-ching's successor) to the question of policy toward cadres, and was asking Liu Chi-he-chien to have a "good talk" with "Comrade Li-ching" (almost certainly Hsu Li-ching, like Liu a deputy director of the General Political Department, and a one-time specialist in cadres work), because, Lin said, there must be no more undesirable cadres in the PLA; further, Liu was entrusted with making the Liberation Army Daily a "good paper."

In sum, Lin in these interviews stated his intention to carry out a purge of the PLA, stated the principles which were to govern it, and gave the task primarily to the General Political Department under MAC supervision. The purge of the PLA was to be synchronized with the large-scale purge of the party and in accordance with the principles governing that purge, but differed in two important respects: whereas the purge of the party was to affect all party organizations and was to be carried out by extraordinary party bodies and extra-party bodies (the conventional party apparatus having been discredited), the purge of the PLA was apparently to hit the line organizations only lightly if at all and was to be carried out by the PLA's own instruments.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The PLA Above the Struggle, Early Autumn 1966

At the 18 August rally at which the Red Guards first appeared publicly, and again at the 31 August rally, Lin Piao made clear that the PLA would be standing behind these militant students who were being turned loose as quasi-military units against the party apparatus. It was just as clear, however, during the violence which exploded in Peking in other major cities in the last two weeks of August and continued at some points well into September, that the PLA had orders to stay out of it. While some of the general directives to the Red Guards were given by Lin at the two August rallies, their better-defined directives came from others (Chou En-lai and officers of the CRG, thus by-passing the conventional party apparatus), and the PLA did not physically support the most militant Red Guards in their "bombardments" of--including physical attacks on--party headquarters; in fact, PLA units were sometimes the objects of Red Guard attacks. (One of the subsequent poster charges against the commanding officers of the Peking headquarters was that they assigned troops in August and again in October to protect this military headquarters--as well as the new Peking committee of the party--against the "masses.") Posters later quoted Chou En-lai as saying that in the first stage of Red Guard activity, the PLA had indeed been under orders not to interfere, as the "fronts were not clearly defined" and interference could have damaged the revolutionary masses--an admission that the PLA would in some places have intervened against the Red Guards. (Chang Chun-chiao of the CRG told a Red Guard audience the same thing on 7 October.) This directed non-intervention, however, also damaged the revolutionary masses'; that is, many provincial secretaries were able to mobilize workers and peasants in their defense, and thus to beat back Red Guard assaults. Opinion differs as to whether Peking wanted the Red Guards actually to bring down these party secretaries, but in many if not most cases the Red Guards themselves probably wished to do so, and the abstention of the PLA meant they could not.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

There was a temporary truce between the Red Guards and the party apparatus--which would mean also between the Mao/Lin team and the party apparatus--in September and October. This was in effect an admission, made explicitly by Chou En-lai in a speech in this period, that "mistakes" had been made, that the Red Guards must not struggle indiscriminately against the entire party apparatus, and so on. Mao and Lin themselves, at a work conference in this period (October) said that most of the party apparatus was good and would "pass the test." There were indications even then, however, of a difference between Mao and Lin on one hand and Chou En-lai and others on the other hand--namely, that Mao and Lin, despite their reassurances, intended to conduct the purge on a larger scale than Chou and others favored. In any case, Mao and other speakers made clear that another and more severe "test" was ahead for the party secretaries, after they had been given time to prepare for it.

Meanwhile, the "cultural revolution" in the PLA was proceeding quietly--too quietly, too slowly, and in wrong directions, according to later charges against the much-abused Liu Chih-chien. There are virtually no materials dating from the period of August and September which illuminate what was actually going on in the PLA, but a later account of the 5 October MAC directive on military academies permits some conclusions.

The 5 October directive, issued in the name of the General Political Department of the Military Affairs Committee (the GPD had evidently become by this time directly subordinate to the MAC), discussed briefly some earlier orders of the General Political Department (which it was now rescinding). These orders had apparently been given to the PLA by the GPD shortly after Lin Piao's talks of early August with Liu Chih-chien and other PLA leaders.

The discussion in the reported directive indicates that the work-teams were withdrawn from PLA organizations (military academies and schools, and "cultural" bodies) in or about early August and that the leadership of the "cultural revolution" in the PLA--a revolution still

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

concentrated in the military academies and schools*--was then provided by party committees. In other words, the party committees of PLA institutions were not discredited, as were in general the party committees of non-PLA institutions, and the PLA did not feel it necessary at that time to duplicate the cultural revolution teams which were then taking over from the work-teams everywhere in China outside the PLA. The General Political Department (in August) told these party committees, according to the directive as reported, to use the same methods for expanding the revolution in military academies and schools as were adopted for "army companies"; the directive as reported does not state what these methods were, but it is apparent that they were much more conservative than the methods being employed outside the PLA, perhaps amounting to nothing more than lectures and discussions. Further, while the General Political Department from August had permitted the academies and schools some liaison activity and exchanges of experience, the directive as reported indicates that these activities were between schools rather than between the schools and the outside "localities."

Liu Chih-chien was later assigned the principal blame for the defects of the cultural revolution in the PLA in this period from mid-August to early October, as well as for the defects of June and July, and even for a portion of the 5 October directive itself which was later found embarrassing. (This latter was a concluding provision which, while expanding the range of liaison and exchanges to permit contact between the schools and the localities, nevertheless told the students of military academies and schools to stay out of the cultural revolution in the localities; this was clearly not the question of intervention of armed PLA forces in support of the Red Guards or to restore order--a question which arose later--but simply that of interference by military students

*Yeh Chien-ying later identified the work of military academies and schools as his own special province.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

in the affairs of non-military institutions). In the posters and speeches of January 1967 which criticized Liu Chih-chien's leadership in the period from June through October, he was charged (as previously noted) with having taken action against those who wanted more emphasis on Mao's thought, with having prevented the dissemination of revolutionary propaganda, and with having restricted revolutionary exchanges. There may be more justification in the charges against Liu in the later (August-October) period than in the earlier (June-July), in view of Lin Piao's fairly strong statements of early August about getting on with the purge in the PLA, but it is impossible to judge this without knowledge of the specific directives he was operating under. It can only be observed that Liu was neither the head of the MAC (Lin was), nor the MAC officer apparently charged by Lin Piao with supervising the purge (Yang Cheng-wu was), nor the head of the Political Department principally charged with carrying it out (Hsiao Hua was); nor, probably, did Liu have the power to issue on his own any important directives such as the one of 5 October. Moreover, if (as will presently be argued) Liu was named as head of the first PLA/CRG in early October, that almost certainly means that Mao and Lin were well pleased with him at that time. Thus Liu seems to serve largely as a scapegoat for this August-October period, as later viewed and condemned by Mao and Lin.

The Fall of Liu Chih-chien, Late Autumn 1966

The 5 October "emergency" directive cited above--which was endorsed by the central committee on the same day and extended to apply to all middle-schools and universities--moved the revolution in the military academies and schools into a higher gear. There was a concurrent directive which Mao and Lin may have intended to serve as a "cultural revolution" directive for the PLA as a whole.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The 5 October directive noted that "some leading organs and some leading bodies" of the acadmies and schools over-emphasized the special status of these institutions. (The implication was, a special status as institutions too important to be disrupted; and Liu Chih-chien was later specified to have taken just this position.) The directive rebuked them for repressing the revolution and inciting struggle among revolutionary groups and against leftists, and called upon them to strike the shackles from the mass movement and carry out the revolution in the same way that non-military institutions were doing, i.e. by "blooming and contending," by big-character posters and bid debate. (In other words, it radically changed the existing directive that the "revolution" in the academies and schools be conducted by the [conservative] methods used in line organizations; later in the text, it expressly withdrew this earlier directive.) The directive reversed the actions taken by the work-teams of June and July and by the party committees of August and September: it voided their charges against individuals and directed that these persons be publicly rehabilitated, and called for self-critical material to be returned to them and for criticism written by others to be destroyed; it called for putting "daring" to the fore and "dragging out" the handful of "bad elements" in the academies and schools; it called for examination of "leading cadres" on the basis of the three criteria stated by Lin Piao in August (supporting Mao, putting politics first, and showing zeal), meaning, presumably, that Mao and Lin wanted a more militant examination; it cancelled the earlier order for leadership to be provided by party committees, and specified that leadership would now be provided by cultural revolution teams like those that had been working outside the PLA for two months; and it provided for the exchange of visits and experience among academies and the localities (although, as previously noted, it also stated that these academies and schools were not to interfere or intervene in the cultural revolution in non-military institutions).

The PLA almost certainly set up at this time--the time at which it transferred leadership from party committees to cultural revolution teams--a central PLA Cultural

~~SECRET~~

Revolution Group analogous to the central committee's CRG (responsible for the cultural revolution as a whole) under Chen Po-ta. This presumed PLA/CRG would have been an unpublicized forerunner of the PLA/CRG surfaced in January 1967 at the time of its reorganization. This first PLA/CRG--of October 1966--was probably put under the direction of Liu Chih-chien, who was concurrently the senior military figure on the central committee's Cultural Revolution Group; Liu has in fact been generally accepted as the first chief of the PLA/CRG, although this has not been directly confirmed by Peking.*

Yeh Chien-ying, speaking as a vice-chairman of the MAC, discussed the 5 October directive in a speech to a rally of military academies and schools in Peking on the same day. (It will be recalled that Yeh claimed to have special responsibility for the work of military academies and schools.) He emphasized that Mao and his comrades wanted "revolutionized and militant youth," and that the PLA's leading organs must not "fear disorder." (These injunctions were taken to heart; subsequently, some of the most militant Red Guard organizations were those of the military schools, e.g. the Peking Aviation Institute.) In commenting on the "bad elements" to be brought down ("dragged out"), Yeh estimated them as three percent. In emphasizing the importance of examining cadres according to Lin's criteria, Yeh called for the removal (additionally) of those who were given to bourgeois amusements like hunting and card-playing (a notable example would be Ho Lung, brought down in December but largely on other grounds). Finally, Yeh made clear that PLA organizations were not to take part in the "revolution" in the "localities" (regions, provinces and municipalities), as the non-military Red Guards were charged with putting these areas through "the test"; the PLA's Red Guards could have "ties" with them but were not to take part in "bombardments" of party organizations and were to confine their activity to the PLA itself. This final provision of the

*There is a single, doubtful Red Guard assertion that Ho Lung was the first chief of the PLA/CRG.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

directive, as interpreted by Yeh, did not stand up; it was not long before Red Guard organizations of the PLA were doing just these things which were forbidden them.

It is not known whether there was a concurrent directive on the conduct of the "cultural revolution" in the PLA as a whole--that is, for the examination of all PLA cadres on the basis of the criteria stated by Lin Piao in August. There ought to have been something like that--not necessarily a consonant directive, because any such directive would probably have called for a much lower-key revolution in the PLA as a whole than in the schools, but some directive filling the obvious gap; and some of the remarks attributed to Liu Chih-chien and some of the later criticism of him by Madame Mao and others suggests that there was, but the Red Guard press and posters have provided no account of such a directive --covering the PLA as a whole--at that time or at any time up to late January 1967.

There is, however, a generally credible report of a MAC directive of early October, perhaps 5 or 6 October, which the MAC may have intended to serve as such a general directive. The directive reportedly ordered all personnel of the PLA who encountered statements or actions counter to the thought of Chairman Mao or the policy of the MAC --no matter how high the position in the chain of command of the person making the statement or taking the action-- to report the event to higher levels, and to expose such statements and struggle against them. The active defense of Mao's thought and MAC's policy (read, Lin Piao) was described as a "test of party spirit and revolutionary style," in fact the "supreme duty" of party committees and political organs of the PLA at all levels.

It will be observed that this document was in the spirit of the principles governing the purge of the PLA as stated by Lin Piao in August: demonstrating support of Mao or not, giving priority to politics or not, and having revolutionary enthusiasm or not. It may be that Mao and Lin thought that a directive ordering a search for Mao's and Lin's enemies in the PLA--the purport of the document--was all that the PLA as a whole needed in the way of a general directive on the "cultural revolution" at that time.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

It may be true, as posters were later to assert, that Liu never tried to implement the 5 October directive on the revolution in the schools, but tried instead to sabotage it, to keep the revolution in the schools in a low gear. (He may also have never tried to implement the concurrent directive on searching out Mao's and Lin's enemies.) If he did try honestly to implement it (or them), he failed. Either way, it was only a month or so before he was in trouble. He seems to have got in trouble in particular with Madame Mao, who was Chen Po-ta's first deputy in the central committee's CRG and also "cultural advisor" to the PLA, and thus in a position to collide with Liu frequently. There is a credible report that by early November Madame Mao was making dark remarks to other leaders about the condition of the PLA as a whole, even questioning whether as generally believed it was "loyal" to Mao; and it was the Madame who made the first attacks on Liu (10 January) by a party leader.

According to the January posters, Liu opposed the spirit of the 5 October directive (Lin Piao himself reportedly said that Liu was afraid of disorder), and therefore failed to support the revolutionary left; indeed, they charge, by November he was actively suppressing the revolutionary left. One way in which he did this, they assert, was to see that the line taken in speeches given by top-ranking military leaders in November--the drafting of which he supervised--was one which "threw cold water" on the left. (It is not explained why these leaders delivered the speeches, unless this was in fact the approved line at the time.) In other charges which imply misconduct of the revolution in the PLA as a whole, Liu is said to have illegally appropriated the names of the Military Affairs Committee and the General Political Department (for his own policies), issued poor directives (both orally and in writing, it is implied), and "destroyed" the PLA/CRG (another indication that he headed it).

Madame Mao herself made some of these charges in her 10 January speech as credibly reported. In this speech she implied strongly that she had been trying for some time to bring Liu down, saying that it had proved difficult because he--like herself--had been an officer

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

of the central committee's CRG. The Madame went on to accuse Liu of "many plots," of inciting fights among Red Guards and blaming the central CRG for it, and, again with apparent reference to the PLA as a whole, of directing the struggle against "good comrades" in the PLA (a charge which could easily relate to the directive on searching out opponents of Mao and Lin), and of associations (not quite conspiracy, although this was later charged) with Peng Chen and Lo Jui-ching.

There is one very curious charge against Liu, attributed to--of all people--Chou En-lai. This was in the context of an assertion by Chou--as reported in a poster, which may really be a garbled account of Chou's remarks on the 5 October directive--that the question of PLA intervention in the cultural revolution (the kind of armed intervention directed in late January) had come up as early as 4 November. The Military Affairs Committee, Chou reportedly said, decided against intervention at that time, in accordance with the wishes of Liu Chih-chien. Chou's remarks, if accurately reported, were presumably a part of an effort, after intervention had been decided on, to explain why it had not happened earlier, when the need could be said to be as great; and it may be that the question did come up in early November and that Liu was among those who opposed it; but it is absolutely inconceivable that Liu on his own could have prevented it if Mao and Lin had wanted to do it.

The evidence is good that Mao and Lin did not want to do it. Throughout November, Mao's team was giving party leaders outside Peking an opportunity to prepare for the second "test" that had been promised.* Throughout

*The nature of the "test" at this stage had been pretty clearly stated in the work-conference of October (at which Mao and Lin spoke, and Liu and Teng made self-criticisms) and again by Red Flag on 31 October; and was to be reiterated by Red Flag on 12 December. Party officials could pass the test (i.e., could keep from getting purged, at least for a time) by openly admitting to the masses that they had followed a "wrong line," by reversing wrong actions they had taken toward the "revolutionary" (footnote continued on page 43)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

November, these leaders outside Peking convened meetings at the provincial, district, and county level to discuss the October work-conference--which most of them must surely have regarded as ominous--and to work out some means of meeting the early "test." Chou En-lai is reported to have expressly instructed the Red Guards not to jump the gun, i.e. to refrain from breaking up these meetings and thus to give the party leaders every opportunity to prepare themselves well. Chou probably hoped, and may have believed, that a substantial proportion of the party leaders outside Peking could pass the test; but Mao and Lin probably had no intention of permitting them to do so.

In any case, by late November Liu Chih-chien apparently saw the handwriting on the wall. There is a credible report that Liu in late November expressed discouragement over the progress of the revolution in the 13 military regions, saying that fewer than half were really participating; this remark could, of course, serve later charges

(footnote continued from page 42)
masses," and by supporting the "revolutionary activities" of those masses. In other words, they must denounce Liu and Teng in extreme terms, they must make a grovelling self-criticism for the degree to which they had followed the "Liu/Teng line," they must denounce as well any local party officials who could be regarded as following this line, and they must meet the demands of mass organizations like the Red Guards. This latter provision gave the team in Peking a built-in device for 'failing' anybody--that is, the revolutionary masses could make such extreme demands (and in the event, often did) that to accede to those demands would amount to putting one's self and one's organization out of business. Obviously, the "test" was not to be fairly administered, any more than it had been in the cases of Liu and Teng themselves; loyal followers of Mao were to be brought down, and undistinguished officials were to be elevated.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

against Liu, as this state of affairs could be held to be Liu's responsibility, and he apparently recognized that this would be the case. There is also a credible report that Chou En-lai in late November said that Liu had asked to be relieved from his post on the central CRG. Liu apparently was not removed from his posts until mid-December or even early January, the time of the fall of a number of other military leaders, but he seems to have known by late November that he was finished.

The Fall of Ho Lung and Others, December 1966

In the period between mid-December 1966 and the reorganization of the PLA/CRG in early January 1967, it was revealed that a good-sized group of military leaders had fallen from favor, although not necessarily at the same time. Of these, the most important was Ho Lung, for 40 years one of the Chinese Communist movement's foremost military figures, in recent years a full member of the politburo and the second-ranking deputy chairman (after Lin Piao) of the MAC, in high favor with Mao as late as 31 August, and active until late December.

Later materials made clear that Ho, who was in some degree of trouble as early as 4 November for defending a subordinate and for taking a cynical view of Liu Shao-chi's October confession, was in disgrace by mid-December. On 18 December Madame Mao made clear in a speech (according to a credible account) that Ho Lung had been found against--another case in which the first denunciation of a military leader in a leadership statement came from the Madame. In this 18 December speech, the Madame told the Red Guards to turn the screw on Ho's son--a leader of a Red Guard faction discredited by more militant factions--in order to get additional derogatory information about the father. She denounced at the same time Li Ching-chuan, an equally important figure (although not primarily as a military figure), also a politburo member, first secretary of the Southwest Bureau, and

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

concurrently first political officer of the Chengtu Military Region.*

On 1 January a Liberation Army Daily editorial implied again--as had Red Flag on 13 December--that some additional PLA leaders were going to be purged, and on 4 January or 5 January or both a Red Guard rally put on display a number of party and military leaders who had already been purged. The most important party figures were Peng Chen and Yang Shang-kun; the military leaders were Lo Jui-ching (linked with Yang), Hsiao Hsiang-jung (linked with both), and Liang Pi-yeh (a separate case).

A few days later, with the opening of heavy poster attacks on Ho Lung, Liu Chih-chien, and Liao Han-sheng (deputy minister of defense and political officer of the Peking Military Region), there was apparently intense questioning as to the status of other military leaders (some of them also under poster attack), as would be expected when so many with whom they had worked were now clearly or apparently in disgrace. In other words, Red Guards were seeking guidance as to whom else they were

*One of Li's principal lieutenants in the Southwest, Li Ta-chang, was to emerge in 1967 as a shining example of those who passed the "test" by following the prescription stated by Red Flag in October and December, two key elements of which were self-criticism and denunciation of one's comrades. The comrade whom Li Ta-chang chose principally to denounce was Li Ching-chuan (who, like such thoroughly disgraced leaders as Peng Chen and Lo Jui-ching, probably could not have made any kind of statement which would have saved himself). Li Ta-chang, reported in January 1967 as disgraced and shame-paraded, denounced again in April, and presumed purged, emerged triumphantly in August with a very detailed denunciation of Li Ching-chuan, with whom he had been closely associated for at least 18 years. Presumably a place will be found on the imminent revolutionary committee in Szechuan for this repentant and deserving official.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

free to attack. There is a credible report that on or about 10 January, in a conversation with Red Guards, Madame Mao, Chen Po-ta, and Chou En-lai identified military leaders still in favor. Madame Mao, who seems to have taken the lead, is said to have defended Liu Po-cheng, Yeh Chien-ying, and Hsiao Hua (all officers of the MAC), and, without much enthusiasm, Hsieh Fu-chih. Chen and Chou between them reportedly defended additionally Nieh Jung-chen and Hsu Hsiang-chien, also of MAC. (Posters of the following day quoted the Madame and Chou as defending all of these except Hsiao, whose status was soon to be brought into question again.) Together with Lin Piao, whose political status was never in serious question, and Yang Cheng-wu, who also apparently needed no defense, this group apparently comprised the top-level military leaders still in Mao's favor. It seems likely that some account of this conversation reached other military leaders, and that it increased their concern for their own positions.

Within two or three days, Red Guard posters and papers were providing the names of Ho Lung's "accomplices" in plotting against Lin Piao and those in Lin's favor. The various accounts were in disagreement as to when this plotting had taken place. Some asserted that Ho had been involved in the plot for a coup in February 1966. Another version alleged that Ho and Lo Jui-ching had planned to conduct military maneuvers and turn them into a coup at some time or other. Others linked Ho with a string of military and party leaders known to have fallen from favor--Lo, Yang Shang-kun, Hsiao Hsiang-jung, Liang Pi-yeh, Peng Chen, and Liu Chih-chien--thus in effect providing a scenario in which plotting had continued over a prolonged period, with the survivors at each stage carrying on.

The most nearly authoritative account of the official position seemed to be that of a Red Guard newspaper of 13 January; this account appeared to come from insiders, because it gave the names of a number of military leaders not then known to be in disfavor who turned out to be. In this account, Ho was not charged with planning a "coup"

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

but rather of using his position in the summer of 1966 --when he was standing in for Lin Piao in the MAC--to oppose Lin Piao and to enlarge his own powers, a charge similar to one of those against Lo Jui-ching. In this account, Ho supported Wang Shang-jung and Lei Ying-fu (director and deputy director of operations for the general staff) against Yang Cheng-wu (acting chief-of-staff), supported Liu Chen and Cheng Chun (deputy commanders of the Air Force) against Wu Fa-hsien and Yu Li-chun (commander and political officer of the Air Force), supported Su Chen-hua (political officer of the Navy) against Wang Hung-kun (deputy commander), supported Liao Han-sheng of the Peking headquarters (who had just been attacked in posters) and Huang Hsin-ting and Kuo Lin-hsiang of the Chengtu (Southwest) headquarters, sent troops to the Southwest to suppress the "cultural revolution," and protected Li Ching-chuan there against the vengeance of the "revolutionary masses." Another poster of the time agreed on several of the names but was less authoritative, omitting some who were in disfavor and including one (Chin Chi-wei) who apparently was not. Other posters added some names, including Hsu Kuang-ta, commander of the armored forces, and Chiu Hui-tso, director of rear services. Yet other posters accused Ho of offenses directly against Mao as well as Lin; Ho was accused of writing an article in February 1966 which on examination proved to be anti-Mao, and of describing Mao derisively as "Generalissimo Mao" and the "new Emperor." Yet other posters charged that Ho had manipulated conservative Red Guard organizations (one of which was reportedly led by his son) to attack the extreme leftists and to "protect" himself and other anti-Mao leaders.

The case of Ho Lung is similar in some respects to that of Lo Jui-ching. In Ho's case as in Lo's, all that can be demonstrated is that Ho was not regarded as sufficiently trustworthy to be left in a key post. But in Ho's case as in Lo's, some of the charges are credible, or not incredible. To take the superficially less serious first, it is not hard to believe that the tough, irascible Ho did not give Madame Mao the deference she felt she deserved, or that he commented scornfully on the cult of Mao or on the value of Liu's "confession." It is also

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

possible to accept summer 1966 as a period for which Ho--in the hindsight of Mao and Lin--had to accept some part of the responsibility (like Liu and Teng of the party machine, and Liu Chih-chien of the General Propaganda Department)--that is, responsibility for "errors" in implementing the Mao-Lin line at that time. It is also possible to believe that Ho tried to protect some of his subordinates against attack and tried to protect some of the leaders of the Southwest (he had for years been commander of the Southwest Military Region) against the excesses of the Red Guards and against plans to purge them, just as Tao Chu did for leaders of the Central-South. It is also credible that Ho, like Lo, gave preference to his favorites. And in Ho's case there are both professional and personal relationships with disgraced leaders which could be and probably were used against him--e.g., longtime association with Peng Te-huai and others in the Northwest, and with Teng Hsiao-ping, Li Ching-chuan and others in the Southwest, and personal relationships with his own disgraced son, with Li Ching-chuan and his family, and with Liao Han-sheng (reportedly married to his niece). These things add up to more than sufficient reason--in Mao's eyes--for purging Ho, but they do not add up to a confirmation of the charge that Ho and others were conspiring against Lin Piao; in Ho's case as in Lo's it is necessary to look for some development external to the charges which would suggest at least that Mao and Lin believe that there is something in this particular charge.

In Lo's case, the external development was the sudden and simultaneous fall of Yang Shang-kun, months before any other leaders fell. There is the same kind of evidence in Ho's case--the apparently simultaneous fall of at least six others later alleged to be members of Ho's cabal. Li Ching-chuan, as noted, was denounced by the Madame on the same date (18 December), Liao Han-sheng disappeared from the news after 19 December, Su Chen-hua and Hsu Kuang-ta failed to make any appearances after late November and Huang Hsin-ting and Kuo Lin-hsiang of the Chengtu headquarters (not regularly in the news) apparently fell at this time; a seventh, Yang Yung, commander of the Peking headquarters, also dropped from the news after 19 December, and was much later accused of being

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

one of this cabal. The time of the fall of other alleged members of the cabal, however, is not known. And a complicating factor, with respect to both groups, is that most of them were known or believed to be in trouble anyhow.

It may be useful to consider first those who apparently fell at the same time, as if Mao and his comrades in favor had finally decided, in or about early December, that they were indeed a group of conspirators. Li Ching-chuan had been a direct, longtime protege of Teng Hsiao-ping, and as such was expected to fall in any case. (Hsieh Fu-chih, still in high favor, was another such case, but reportedly turned on Teng in the summer of 1966 and saved himself; Li apparently declined to do this.) Li was obviously in disfavor also for the treatment accorded the Red Guards by organizations subordinate to the Southwest Bureau in the fall of 1966, was clearly marked as an object of the next wave of Red Guard attacks, and was pretty clearly marked for purging. Similarly, Liao Han-sheng was already in trouble; long associated with Peng Te-huai, he was both an in-law of Ho Lung's and a brother-in-law of Yang Shang-kun's (enough in itself to sink him, as the materials have shown that Chinese Communists like other Chinese take family relationships very seriously), and there is a credible charge that he helped to protect the Peking headquarters and the new Peking committee (the one which succeeded Peng Chen's group) against Red Guard attacks in the autumn of 1966. Similarly, the Navy man, Su Chen-hua, had been so closely associated with Teng Hsiao-ping that he was suspect in any case; and in fact a statement attributed to a military leader then in favor (Hsu Hsiang-chien) denounced Su not for conspiracy with Ho but for being Teng's "nail" in the Navy.* Hsu Kuang-ta had had some unfortunate associations (he had had a

*Peking later charged that a "handful" in the Navy's Political Department revealed their opposition to Mao's line in August, but Su himself continued in evident favor until at least late November.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

great deal to do with the Russians, and had been close to Peng Te-huai and other discredited leaders), and could have been found against on that basis. The two officers of the Chengtu headquarters, Huang and Kuo, were already in trouble, held responsible--like Li Ching-chuan--for armed resistance to the Red Guards there during the fall. Yang Yung was probably in some degree of trouble, like Liao, for the Peking headquarters' opposition to Red Guard groups.

The timing of the fall of the others alleged to be members of Ho's cabal is not known. The two deputy commanders of the Air Force, Liu Chen and Cheng Chun, had not made appearances for months; one of them (Liu) had already provided enough ammunition to bring him down, in an article of 1965 which gave high praise to Liu Shao-chi as a military leader (this may also explain the disappearance from the news after late November of another military leader, Chang Ai-ping, who had written an even more fulsome piece on Liu in 1965), and either or both of the deputies may have run afoul of the two senior officers of the Air Force in 1965 in the maneuvering for position which probably followed the death of the commander, Liu Ya-lou. The two officers of the operations subdepartment of the general staff, Wang and Lei, had been out of the news for some months and had had past associations with a number of leaders in disfavor. (Some posters linked Wang and Lei with Lo Jui-ching rather than Ho, and at least one suggested that they had got into trouble at the time of the "February coup" by failing to act rapidly to bring in reliable troops; but both Wang and Lei appeared to be in good favor as late as August or September, so both of these charges seem weak.) Finally, Chiu Hui-tso, although in trouble for some weeks, was defended by party and military leaders in favor and thereafter appeared to be in good favor himself.*

*Red Guard materials subsequently charged that a bad "handful" in the CCAF tried to seize the leadership of the CCAF in June 1966 and again in January 1967, thus failing to clarify whether the Air Force leaders fell in June or January, and that similar elements had tried to take over the rear services department in January 1967, thus tending to confirm that Chiu Hui-tso's enemies had been brought down at this time after trying unsuccessfully to bring down Chiu.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

It can be argued that there was a single issue arising only in December which precipitated a negative judgment on several members of this group, and that they are linked by their position on this issue, rather than by bonds of collusion. It might be contended, for example, that the question of whether to send the PLA into action against Mao's opponents arose in late November or early December and that some members of this group--e.g. Ho Lung and the commanders of service headquarters and the operations chiefs--expressed their opposition, and that--after Mao and Lin had decided upon intervention--this made them (objectively) guilty of "collusion" with some of the regional leaders who were to be moved against. There is no good evidence, however, that Mao and Lin were discussing as early as late November the question of sending the PLA into action.

Another possibility, of course, is that some of them were simply framed by rivals, that there was no real basis for moving against them. Since this is an occupational hazard for Communist leaders, it may have happened in any number of cases in the purge; but evidence is lacking.

On balance, the roughly simultaneous fall of at least seven of this group--Ho Lung, Li Ching-chuan, Liao Han-sheng, Su Chen-hua, Hsu Kuang-ta, Huang Hsin-ting, and Kuo Lin-hsiang--suggests that Mao and Lin may really believe that some of them were in collusion. It seems likely, however, that Mao and Lin do not believe these military leaders to have been guilty of "conspiracy" of the kind that Lo Jui-ching and others are charged with, and which Mao may really believe to be true in the case of Lo and others--namely, conspiracy aimed at actually overthrowing Mao and Lin. Peking's failure to classify Ho and these other military leaders in the same category as Lo and the other three (Yang, Peng, Lu) most serious offenders, and its different treatment of Ho Lung and the other military leaders of this group, seems to support this view. On this reading, the true charge against Ho Lung and the others denounced in December is that of acting together to resist the onslaught of the "cultural revolution" in the PLA. This was a resistance which

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

developed, which grew, in the latter half of 1966: it had been expressed in a small way by Ho and some others in the summer of 1966 and was known to some of Ho's associates (but not to Mao), as witness the charge that Ho had begun his opposition in the summer (as his associates presumably testified later); it grew further in October, after the MAC directive had called for a militant cultural revolution in the PLA and set up a group (the PLA/CRG) to conduct a purge of the PLA; it was fully developed by early November (by which time Ho had made his cynical evaluation of Liu's "confession" and thus offended against a central proposition of the "test"); and it was further expressed in late November or early December, by which time Ho had made clear his opinion of Madame Mao and the Madame was ready to denounce him. In sum, most of the opposition by Ho and the group brought down with him was a created opposition, as has so often been the case with Mao; these military leaders, or some of them, were acting together in opposition to what they regarded as the disruptive and dangerous plans of Mao and Lin, and their opposition grew as the "revolution" in the PLA intensified.

Lin Piao has reportedly spoken of Ho Lung as the "man behind" Lo Jui-ching, and it may be that, following the line of some early Red Guard posters, Peking will sooner or later accuse Ho officially of acting with Lo in late 1965 to plot a "coup." Because this charge is inherently incredible, however (owing to Ho's survival for a year after Lo's fall), if the "coup" charge is taken up officially it will probably relate to the latter half of 1966--e.g. that in that period Ho Lung, Tao Chu and other leaders at the center, together with Li Ching-chuan and other leaders in the regional party and military headquarters, conspired against Mao and Lin with a view to dislodging them, and that this scheme for a "coup" was discovered and smashed in or about early December, as some observers have conjectured. However, no such charge has yet been made in official materials, and recent semi-official accounts of Li Ching-chuan's crimes have not accused him of plotting a "coup" against the central leaders, but rather of prolonged resistance to Mao's policies and defense of his own empire.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The Purge of the Regional and Provincial Commands, 1966

It was apparent in August 1966 that the political apparatus in the PLA's military regions and military districts, and in the armies disposed in these areas, would be hit at least moderately hard. Many of the ranking regional and provincial political officers were concurrently the first or second secretaries of the regional bureaus and provincial committees, and the 8 August declaration on the conduct of the "cultural revolution" incited the Red Guards against them. Moreover, the purge of both party and military leaders in Peking seemed certain to have consequences down the line, and the purge of the General Political Department and the PLA/CRG toward the end of 1966 could also be expected to have some consequences for military commanders and political officers outside Peking. Moreover, it was evident that the PLA might have to be sent into action in order to remove some of Mao's opponents at various points in China and to restore order in the wake of the "revolutionary rebels" sent into action in December. This raised another question, because some of the leaders of the military-political apparatus to be used against Mao's opponents were Mao's opponents. While it looked as though Peking could manage, sooner or later, to bring down any or all of these leaders of military regions and military districts (on the assumption that most of the armies in the field would prove reliable), it also seemed likely that Peking would have made the effort during 1966 to get fully reliable military commanders and fully reliable political officers in place --that is, as many as possible--in the regional headquarters and district headquarters before the need arose for the PLA to go into action. Although information was and still is far from complete and is lacking entirely with respect to the armies in the field, it is sufficient to indicate that for all of these reasons--a purge of party secretaries, a purge of political officers, a purge of military commanders, and a desire to make replacements if possible by the end of the year--Peking did indeed replace the leaders of the military regions and districts at an extraordinary rate in 1966. While there is evidence that not all of those regarded as unreliable were in fact

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

dislodged by the end of 1966, it is evident that one important object of the reorganization was achieved: the PLA served Mao well in the critical period of January-March 1967.

Of the 24 key figures of the 13 military regions (12 military commanders and 12 political officers, rather than 13 of each, because in two regions one man occupied both posts), at least 10 were replaced in 1966, and an eleventh was soon to fall. (Of these 11, two were military commanders, eight were political officers, and one was both.) Ten others appeared to be in favor at the end of 1966, but some of them insecurely. The status of the other three was obscure.

Beginning with the Peking military region, Liao Han-sheng, the political officer, was apparently removed in the latter half of December, and the military commander, Yang Yung, was soon to fall. There was no difficulty in seizing them.

Proceeding more-or-less clockwise, the military commander and concurrently political officer of the Inner Mongolian military region, Ulanfu (also first secretary), was probably removed from the troops (although not formally replaced) by the end of 1966; he was denounced in the fall and made no appearances after October. The commander of the Mukden headquarters, Chen Hsi-lien, once associated with Teng Hsiao-ping, was one of those whose status was in doubt, because, while not denounced, he made no appearance after October; the political officer Sung Jen-chiung, seemed in good favor in late 1966, but, as a protege of Teng Hsiao-ping, not secure, and he was in fact to be criticized in posters in early 1967. The military commander of the Tsinan headquarters, Yang Te-chih, long with Lin Piao, was apparently in favor; the political officer, Tan Chi-lung (also first secretary in Shantung), was denounced and disappeared in November, although he was not to be officially dislodged until February.

The status of both the military commander and the political officer of the Nanking headquarters was obscure; the commander, Hsu Shih-yu, had not appeared since November,

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

and the political officer as of late 1966 was not known. The accepted commander of the Foochow headquarters, Han Hsien-chu, who once served with Lin Piao's forces, was apparently in favor; the political officer, Yeh Fei (concurrently first secretary in Fukien), was reportedly removed in or about October.

Down in Canton, the military commander of that military region, Huang Yung-sheng, for many years with Lin Piao, was apparently in favor; the political officer, Tao Chu, was taken into the top leadership in Peking in July but purged in December.* Up in the Wuhan Military Region, the military commander, Chen Tsai-tao, who had once served with Lin Piao, was apparently in favor; the probable political officer, Wang Jen-chung, who had been closely associated with Tao Chu, like Tao was purged in December.

In the Kunming headquarters, Chin Chi-wei, once closely associated with Hsieh Fu-chih, was apparently in favor, although perhaps not securely, as Red Guard posters denounced him; the political officer, Yeh Hung-yen (also first secretary in Yunnan), once close to Teng Hsiao-ping, was purged and replaced in October, and killed himself (or was killed by Red Guards) in early January. In the nearby Chengtu headquarters, once the command of Teng Hsiao-ping, both the military commander, Huang Hsin-ting, and the political officer, Li Ching-chuan (also first secretary of the Southwest Bureau), as well as the deputy political officer, Kuo Lin-hsiang, were denounced in December and apparently dismissed almost at once, as Li was reportedly shame-paraded in January.

*Teng Hsiao-ping in one of his reported confessions accepted the responsibility for bringing Tao into the central leadership; this may be true, but Tao achieved his elevation to that of fourth-ranking leader of the party after Teng had been broken and when Mao was clearly dominating the scene.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Up in the Lanchow headquarters, the military commander, Chang Ta-chih, was apparently in favor, although perhaps not securely, in view of denunciations of him in Red Guard posters; the political officer, Hsien Heng-han, was also apparently in favor (although the regional first secretary, Liu Lan-tao, a man close to Teng Hsiao-ping, was purged and cruelly used). In the Tihua (Sinkiang) headquarters, Wang En-mao, who was (and is) both the military commander and the political officer, was apparently in favor, but not securely, because he had had a lot of trouble with the Red Guards and seemed a possible instance of a local leader in a tricky area with whom Peking was willing to temporize--for the sake of order--until it was convenient to bring him down.* Finally, in the Lhasa (Tibet) headquarters, Chang Kuo-hua, the military commander and also one of those who was hard hit by the Red Guards, was apparently in favor, but he too did not seem entirely secure, in view of persistent Red Guard denunciations of him; and the political officer of the Lhasa headquarters, Tan Kuan-san, was transferred to a meaningless job in Peking during 1966.

There was less information on the leaders of military districts, in particular on the dates of changes, but there was enough for a picture to emerge. Of the 44 key figures of the 22 provincial military districts subordinate to nine military regions (the military regions of Inner Mongolia, Szechuan, Sinkiang and Tibet have no subordinate military districts, but are self-contained, single-jurisdiction military regions), at least 14 were replaced in 1966 (not all purged); of these known replacements, however, only two were military commanders (and neither was purged), the rest political officers. Only 14 were known or believed to be in favor and in place, with the status of 16 obscure.

*Peking's propaganda treatment of Wang during 1967 supported the view--that of some observers, including OCI's, from the start--that Wang was indeed in disfavor with Mao, and would sooner or later be brought down.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Of the two military district headquarters subordinate to the Peking regional headquarters: in Hopei, the military commander, Ma Hui, was left in place, but the political officer, Liu Tzu-hou (who had replaced Lin Tieh prior to September 1966), was removed around the end of the year and put on display; while in Shansi, the military commander, Chen Chin-yu, made no appearance after January 1966, and the two political officers, first Tao Lu-chia and then Wei Heng, were both apparently purged and replaced before the end of 1966.

As for the three military districts subordinate to the Mukden headquarters: in Heilungkiang, the military commander, Wang Chia-tao, remained in place, while the political officer, Ouyang Chin, was apparently replaced by August; in Kirin, the fate of the military commander, Lo Kun-shan, was obscure (he made no appearances after January 1966), while the political officer, Wu Te, was transferred to Peking in mid-1966 (not to be purged); and in Liaoning, the status of the military commander, Ho Ching-chi, was obscure (he had not appeared since October), while the political officer, Huang Huo-ching, was replaced and probably purged, perhaps before the end of 1965.

In the single military district subordinate to the Tsinan headquarters, the Shantung military district (the only case in which a one-province military region also has a military district for the same area), the status of both the military commander and the political officer was obscure, as neither incumbent in 1966 was known, although Tung Kuo-kuei (who appeared in February 1967) may have been the military commander in 1966 and Ho Chih-yuan may have been assigned in 1966 to replace temporarily the political officer.

Of the three military districts subordinate to the Nanking headquarters: in Kiangsu, the military commander, Chao Chun, may have been replaced late in 1966, and the political officer may likewise have been replaced (if he was still Chiang Wei-ching); in Chekiang, the military commander, Chien Chun, had not appeared since October, while the political officer, probably Chiang Hua, was replaced in the fall of 1966; and in Anhwei, the military

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

commander, Liao Jung-piao, was replaced by Yen Kuang sometime in 1966 (but was not purged), while the political officer, Li Pao-hua, was denounced, purged, and replaced in the late months of 1966.

As for the two military districts subordinate to the Foochow headquarters: in Fukien, the military commander, Chu Yao-hua, appeared in November, and the political officer, believed to be Lu Sheng, was apparently in favor in November; and in Kiangsi, the military commander, Wu Jui-shan, was left in place, while the political officer, Yang Shang-kuei (reportedly the brother of the doomed "conspirator" Yang Shang-kun), was definitely purged during 1966.

Of the three military districts subordinate to the Canton headquarters: in Kwangtung, the military commander, if Liu Hsing-lung, was apparently in place in December, and the principal political officer, Chen Te, also remained in place; in Kwangsi, the military commander, Ou Chih-fu, appeared in December, and the political officer, if he was still Wei Kuo-ching, remained in place; and in Hunan, the military commander, Lung Shu-chin, had not appeared since October, while the political officer, assuming he was Chang Ping-hua, was denounced and replaced in the fall of 1966.

As for the two military districts subordinate to the Wuhan headquarters: in Honan, the military commander, Chang Shu-chih, survived poster attacks and remained in place, while the political officer, if he was still Chung Sheng-i, may have been replaced in 1966; and in Hupei, the military commander, Han Tung-shen, was left in place, while the political officer, Chang Ti-hsueh, was denounced and probably replaced late in 1966.

Of the two military districts subordinate to the Kunming headquarters: in Kweichow, Tien Wei-yang, the reported military commander in early 1966, was replaced by Ho Kuang-yu sometime in 1966 (but Tien was not purged or demoted), and the political officer, Shih Hsin-an, was apparently still in place in late 1966 (although Shih was replaced by Li Tsai-han in 1967); and in Yunnan, the

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

identity of the military commander was uncertain (possibly Li Hsi-yu), and the status of the political officer, Chou Hsing, was in doubt.

Finally, of the four military districts subordinate to the Lanchow headquarters: in Kansu, neither the military commander nor the political officer was known (the commander may have been Kang Chien-min, the political officer may have been the purged Wang Feng); in Ninghsia, the probable commander, Chu Sheng-ta, was out of sight, while the probable political officer, Yang Ching-jen, had probably been purged; in Shensi, neither the military commander, Hu Ping-yun, nor the probable principal political officer, Yuan Ko-fu, appeared after August; and in Tsinghai, the military commander, Liu Hsien-chuan, was left in place (although his deputy was later purged), while the political officer, first Yang Chih-lin and then perhaps Wang Chao, was replaced at least once and perhaps twice in 1966.

Reorganization of the PLA Purge Group, January 1967

On 10 January, speaking to the Red Guards, Madame Mao denounced Liu Chih-chien, believed to have been the first chief of the PLA's Cultural Revolution Group (the instrument for purging the PLA), and told the Guards that the PLA/CRG was about to be reorganized. The MAC decision was in fact approved by Mao and the central committee the next day, and announced on 12 January. The MAC document stated that the decision was taken in order to "strengthen the leadership over the great proletarian cultural revolution in the entire army," and that the new PLA/CRG would "carry out its work under the direct leadership" of the MAC and of the central (and superior) Cultural Revolution Group of the central committee.

The new chief of the PLA/CRG was to be Hsu Hsiang-chien, an independent (i.e., not closely associated with any particular party or military leader), a politburo member and perhaps already a vice-chairman of the MAC who had been criticized by the Red Guards in the days

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

preceding his new appointment and had been defended by Chou En-lai, Chen Po-ta and perhaps Madame Mao (reports differ). The Madame, who had acted as "advisor" to the PLA/CRG at least since late November, was now to take the title officially, and--as events were to show--was to have more authority than Hsu himself had. Liu Chih-chien (on whom poster attacks had begun on 9 January) had been dropped entirely, and lost his post on the central CRG (which he had wished to resign) at the same time.

Hsu's deputies were to be (in apparent order of rank): Hsiao Hua, secretary-general of the MAC and director of the General Political Department; Yang Cheng-wu, acting chief-of-staff; Wang Hsin-ting, a deputy chief-of-staff, once connected with Teng Hsiao-ping; Hsu Li-ching, the other active officer (with Hsiao) of the general political department; Kuan Feng, a member of the central CRG and a writer for the PLA newspaper; Hsieh Tang-chung, director of the cultural subdepartment of the general political department, once associated with Tao Chu; and Li Man-tsun, director of the propaganda subdepartment of the General Political Department.

The other members of the group (without titles) were to be: Wang Hung-kun, senior deputy commander of the Navy, who had had an early association with Hsu Hsiang-chien and then Teng Hsiao-ping; Yu Li-chin, political officer of the Air Force, who had appeared (in party material) to be an able man; Liu Hua-ching, a little-known Navy officer; Tang Ping-chu, a former editor of the PLA newspaper who had taken over People's Daily, the party newspaper; Hu Chih, an editor of the PLA newspaper; Yeh Chun, an unknown who turned out to be Lin Piao's wife and thus probably the de facto second-ranking figure of the Group, behind Madame Mao (a later report of Madame Lin's remarks at this time about discredited leaders suggested a character much like Madame Mao's); Wang Feng, another unknown who remains so; Ho Ku-yen, reported to be a military propagandist; and Chang Tao, another unknown.

The Liberation Army Daily on the same day (12 January) called for an attack on the "handful" of persons in the PLA who were taking the wrong road or the wrong line.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

On 13 January a Red Guard newspaper printed an authoritative list of military leaders who had fallen with Ho Lung, and on 14 January the PLA newspaper made clear that the purge of the PLA still had a long way to go. This editorial, insisting that the revolution in the PLA be carried out thoroughly, spoke of the "circle upon circle of resistance" (mainly from the military equivalents or followers of discredited party leaders like Liu and Teng), and declared that the PLA must be manned by those "truly loyal" to Mao, Mao's thought, and Mao's line. Rejecting the argument that the PLA did not need such a revolution, it stated that the struggle between the two lines "not only exists, it is acute and complicated..." The editorial went on to call for an intensive and ambitious program in "all high-ranking leading organs, military colleges and schools, and cultural organizations" of the PLA ("daring to advance...and drag out one after another" those taking the wrong road or wrong line, "struggle against them, pull them down, and discredit them"), while calling only for a low-key program in the PLA's "armed units," a program featuring "correct education." In other words, Mao and Lin were apparently willing at that time to accept a good deal of disruption at the upper levels of the PLA, but not of the military units which would have to do any actual fighting if the PLA were sent into action. It is not known whether this line was embodied in any directive prior to the appearance of the 28 January directive--which in fact changed the line in some respects, in the interest of reducing disruption in the high levels as well.

In a sensational development, within a few days of their appointment several members of the new PLA/CRG were being attacked by the Red Guards in posters and apparently in interviews with leaders of the central committee's CRG. Two of the deputies, Hsieh Tang-chung and Kuan Feng, and four of the ordinary members--Wang Hung-kun, Tang Ping-chu, Hu Chih, and Ho Ku-yen--were denounced in this way. The initiators of the attacks were not known, but the contents clearly disconcerted some of the leaders of the PLA/CRG and of the superior central CRG and put them on the defensive; Chen Po-ta, for example, was reportedly soon telling the People's Daily staff that it was all right to struggle against Tang, that he (Chen)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

had hardly known either Tang or Hu, that they had been recommended by the discredited Liu Chih-chien and had disappointed him, and so on. The leaders of the new PLA/CRG soon regrouped, however; Hsu Hsiang-chien reportedly defended Hsieh, and Wang and Tang soon appeared in a better light in the posters (Wang was reportedly named deputy chief of the Navy's new CRG; and Tang was described as one who had admitted and corrected his mistakes). Of those attacked at that time, only the relatively unimportant Hu and Ho apparently failed to survive the attacks; they did not reappear in even limited favor.

There was some speculation at the time that the attacks were really aimed at Lin Piao--through the standard practice of following the thread from the lower figures to the higher. Lin had been out of sight and may have been sick, and his name had curiously not appeared in the authoritative 14 January editorial. Lin's opponents--who may conceivably have included Madame Mao--may indeed have thought that this was a good time to start a process envisaged as ending with the fall of Lin. If so, however, the initiative failed.

These first attacks on members of the reorganized PLA/CRG made a disorderly episode, at the least; all of those attacked had surely been investigated and found virtuous before their appointment. And the attacks may have been conceived as the beginning of a campaign against some top-level military leaders. But the attacks did not serve to discredit either the new PLA/CRG or the central CRG as a body; both continued to function, although little publicity was subsequently given the PLA/CRG.

The Teeter and Recovery of Hsiao Hua, January 1967

Hsiao Hua, director of the General Political Department, had come under poster attack in early January but had been given a vote of confidence on 12 January with his appointment as senior deputy chief of the reorganized PLA/CRG. Nevertheless, Hsiao apparently continued to be criticized by other leaders in favor for errors (of a

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

"rightist" kind) in the conduct of the "cultural revolution" in the PLA--as, indeed, he should have been, inasmuch as his subordinates, Liang Pi-yeh and Liu Chih-chien, had been not only criticized but purged for them. And he had apparently been invited to make a self-criticism.

It is not clear whether Madame Mao and Chen Po-ta took the initiative, among party leaders, in criticizing Hsiao Hua. But according to poster reports, they took the initiative in at least one meeting of the Cultural Revolution Group, on 19 January. Chen, in addition to accusing Hsiao of "elitism," (the kind was not specified), is said to have charged either that Hsiao was trying to turn the PLA into a "bourgeois" army or that he had succeeded in doing so (this latter version would, of course, be heresy, as that was not Mao's view of the PLA). Madame Mao, who had seemed to believe that nobody except Mao and herself could be fully trusted, is said to have declared that she was now withdrawing her support of Hsiao (she had defended him in conversation with Red Guards on 10 January), that Hsiao had been responsible for the errors of Liu Chih-chien (indeed, was "directing" Liu), that Hsiao had failed to submit some important matters (an editorial was specified) to Lin Piao for judgment (a charge similar to Mao's charges against Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping), that Hsiao had looked down on the central CRG (read, Madame Mao) and had failed to attend one meeting on the plea of a previous appointment, and that Hsiao did not intend to make a self-criticism.

Yang Yung, commander of the Peking Military Region and a key figure in the Chinese military leadership, reportedly took the initiative on the same day to make public the charges made in the meeting. His eagerness seems explained by the probability that he was in trouble himself, and his calculation that he could deflect or reduce the charges against himself by inciting the Red Guards against Hsiao. (There seems to have been no position for which they were competing.) Yang had been out of the news for several weeks, having disappeared from it on the same day as Liao Han-sheng, his colleague in the Peking headquarters (Yang was the military commander, Liao the political officer); Liao had just been "exposed" as one

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

of Ho Lung's co-conspirators, and it may be that Yang knew or thought himself vulnerable through his close association with Liao, as well as to the charge (made later) that he had worked with Liao to frustrate the Red Guards in the autumn. (The Red Guards later provided a long list of Yang's "crimes" over the course of many years, most of them incredible.)

Yang is said to have described Hsiao to the Red Guards as the man responsible for the "promotion" (or persistence) of the "Liu/Teng line" in the PLA, to have asserted further that Hsiao had shifted all the responsibility for mistakes to Liu Chih-chien, and to have alleged further that Hsiao planned to charge Yeh Chien-ying and Chen I--also officers of the MAC--with obstructing the "revolution" in the PLA. The first of these charges was a very harsh way of putting the general charge, and may have distorted the line taken by other leaders. The second was credible as it stood, although it would have applied with equal justice to Mao and Lin. And the third was not incredible, as both Yeh and Chen were 'soft' figures who could easily be attacked on these lines.

On the same day, and for two days thereafter, posters attacking Hsiao were observed on army trucks in Peking. Whether these were Red Guard trucks or trucks supplied for the occasion by Yang Yung is not clear, but it is apparent that the Red Guards were encouraged by the reported remarks of Yang, Chen, and the Madame, which were in fact quoted in the posters. Hsiao's home was reportedly raided in this period, and he was reportedly paraded as well. Although that is unconfirmed, some posters did name a successor for Hsiao (Kuan Feng of the CRG, who was himself soon attacked in posters but remained in favor until autumn).

Chou En-lai was chosen to repel the attack on Hsiao on 21 January, on which day PLA troops were also sent out to tear down the posters attacking Hsiao. (Presumably, neither Chen nor the Madame would have made these remarks even in the supposed privacy of a CRG meeting if they had not believed that Mao would support them, but, unless one is willing to believe that Chou had the power to reverse Mao, the outcome of the affair demonstrates that

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

they were wrong about that.) Reportedly speaking to "cultural revolution" cadres of the PLA, Chou did not deny that Hsiao had been under criticism within the party, but said that this was an "internal question" which should not have been publicized. He further said that the criticism had been "distorted" in the posters. In particular, Chou said, it was "slanderous" to assert that Chen Po-ta had "slandered the PLA" in the way reported, as Chen understood Mao's thought too well to have done that. In other words, Hsiao had made errors which he would have to recognize and admit, but these errors were not serious enough to purge him for, and Yang Yung had been fatally wrong to blab about it. On the same day, posters went up, denying the statements attributed to both Chen and the Madame.

Yang Yung was broken on the next day. According to posters, Chen Po-ta and Hsu Hsiang-chien, chairmen of the CRG and PLA/CRG, on 22 January denounced Yang as being as bad as Peng Te-huai, and said further that "others in Yang's group should confess." Chen reportedly linked Yang with the earlier-discredited Liao Han-sheng, declaring that the question of the Peking headquarters which they had commanded was "extremely grave" and that power must be seized back from them; and further, that it had been intended (from what date is unclear) to decide Yang's fate later, but his attitude had been bad and the Red Guards could settle it themselves. Yang was reportedly paraded the same day.

The most interesting feature of the affair was the motivation of Chen Po-ta and Madame Mao in attacking Hsiao. It is entertaining to speculate that one or the other (if so, more likely the Madame) was engaged in an operation to bring Lin Piao down, and that Chou's defense of Hsiao was a way of telling Lin's enemies that they could not hunt any further down this path. In other words, Chou could have been saying that, whereas under the rules governing the purge of the party they were permitted to follow the thread from Wu Han to Teng To to Peng Chen to Teng Hsiao-ping to Liu Shao-chi, in this case the thread

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

would lead from Liu Chih-chien to Hsiao Hua to Lin Piao, and they should recognize that there was nobody below Lin's level who was strong enough--not even Madame Mao--to bring Lin down. However, while it was and remains possible that the Madame would like to dislodge Lin, the evidence for this proposition in the Hsiao Hua case is very thin.

The Order to the PLA to Intervene, Late January 1967

Throughout November, as previously noted, Mao's team had given the party leaders outside Peking an opportunity to prepare for another "test." At the end of November, Madame Mao (apparently in Mao's absence) had publicly stated that the time had now come to undergo the test, beginning with thorough self-criticism and exposure of others. The point had soon been underlined by a public display in Peking (in the hands of the Red Guards) of the four most serious offenders, by raising the public campaign against Liu and Teng to a new level and by Red Flag's 12 December reiteration of the requirements first stated on 31 October.

In the same period of November and early December, while Red Guards continued to denounce virtually all of the leaders of the party apparatus in Peking and outside Peking, Mao's team had made preparations for dealing with those who would be judged--or had already been judged--as having failed the "test," in other words those who had already become or were soon to be called Mao's opposition. As revealed later, they were to become the victims of "seizures of power" by the "revolutionary rebels" being shaped up in this same period, although many or most had probably been removed from actual power before the "rebels" got around to them.*

*Developments in this period of November 1966 to January 1967 are examined with care in POLO-XXIV, Philip Bridgham's account of the origins and development of the "cultural revolution."

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Mao's team had begun in November to form new "revolutionary rebel" organizations in party and government organs, in industrial and mining enterprises, and to some degree in peasant organizations--"rebels" who were to supplement the Red Guards, who retained their separate identity. In November and December, Peking had issued directives officially extending the "cultural revolution" to industry and mining and the countryside, and in the same period had sent to Shanghai a Red Guard group which was apparently to conduct the pilot program for the coming "seizures of power." (The party's Shanghai committee had already been judged an irredeemable failure.) The "revolutionary rebel groups" formed in Shanghai, and this Red Guard group from Peking, together had made such extreme demands on the East China Bureau and the Shanghai party committee that these party organs could meet them only by putting themselves out of business. (Thus they were doomed: if they did not fully support the "revolutionary activities" of the "masses"--as called for by Red Flag--they had failed the test; if they did fully accede, they liquidated themselves.).

In mid-December, apparently encouraged by developments in Shanghai, Madame Mao issued the first known official call for a seizure of power. She told the Red Guards in Peking to "rise up" and "take over" some untrustworthy organs in Peking (notably the municipal public security bureau, which was finally "seized" in mid-January). A week later, the Madame endorsed the "seizure" of the Ministry of Labor by revolutionary rebels, and praised their intention to take over Chinese labor organizations.

On 1 January, People's Daily and Red Flag jointly announced that a "general offensive" would be undertaken in 1967. The revolutionary rebels in Shanghai soon announced that they had "seized power," and were praised as examples for the entire country. Soon thereafter, there were reports of widespread, serious disorder in many provinces and cities of China where analogous "revolutionary rebels" were acting on their new orders, or at

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

least on what they took to be their new orders.*

In any case, by mid-January the country was obviously in a mess, if not in a state of chaos. In Shanghai, for example, a general strike--called by a very large workers' "rebel" group to protest the excesses of a very small group later endorsed by Peking--had resulted in a breakdown of local government, a breakdown which the ignorant "revolutionary rebels" were simply not equipped to repair. In Peking itself, partly as a result of Peking's own directive authorizing trips to Peking by "rebels" from the provinces, hundreds of thousands, perhaps more than a million, workers from the provinces and cities were milling about the capital, where no plans had been made to receive them. Reports from other parts of China gave a similar picture.

Perhaps the most alarming feature (for Mao's team) of developments from November to mid-January--more alarming than the failure of many or most party leaders to step forward with their denunciations, self-criticisms, and so on because, after all, these party leaders could be brought down by the "rebels" and/or the PLA--was the inability of the various components of the "revolutionary rebel" movement to work together constructively. This in part reflected conflicting policies in Peking: that is, at the same time that the executors of the "cultural revolution"--Chou En-lai, Madame Mao, and others of the CRG--were rebuking the Red Guards for fighting among themselves, attacking other components of the movement, and even assaulting units and organizations of the PLA--these same officials were inciting and taking practical

*It is hard to judge the truth about this. Chou En-lai later asserted that the "rebels" had got out of control, that party officials had been targeted too broadly and hit too rapidly, and that the movement had spread too fast from the pilot areas and had become nation-wide before it could be arrested. Information is lacking as to what kind of orders the various "revolutionary rebel" groups really had.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

actions on behalf of, the most militant elements of the Red Guards, those mainly responsible for the violence and disorder being condemned. There is no doubt that this favor for the most militant faithfully reflected the position of Mao himself; and Mao's persistence in this attitude was to cause a great deal of trouble in the months ahead.

It may be, as some observers have surmised, that Mao would have sent the PLA into action earlier than he did if he had been confident of the loyalty of the PLA, and that he acquired such confidence only after the purges of December and early January (and, some would add, the easing of those purges in late January). The evidence indicates to this writer, however, that Mao's scenario called for the PLA to be used only as an absolutely last resort; surely it would have been much better in terms of Mao's doctrine if the "rebels" had managed to "seize power" and to wield it effectively without any assistance except for that offered by the enlightened masses and those party officials who had passed the "test." Mao apparently was not persuaded that they would be unable to do this until after the middle of January. Whatever the case, it seems likely that by mid-January Mao himself had become concerned with the scale and potential of the disorders in China at the time, and that he was also given counsel--on the need to restore order--by Chou En-lai and his associates, who needed a greater degree of order if they were to operate the government, and by the military leaders still in favor, who had probably been unhappy about the role of the "rebels" from the start.

On 17 January, Madame Mao expressed for Mao the leadership's concern about "anarchy" among the rebels and about certain other of their failings. On 19 January, the Military Affairs Committee met, almost certainly to consider the question of armed intervention by the PLA.

On 21 January, according to posters, Mao told Lin Piao that the policy of non-intervention had proved to be a failure and that the PLA must now intervene. On 22 January, according to posters, Chou En-lai reaffirmed the need to send the PLA into action. And on the same day the central Cultural Revolution Group reportedly sent

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

a telegram to the "rebel" headquarters in Shanghai sharply criticizing the "rebels" there for such impermissible actions as seizing the chief-of-staff and political officer of a PLA division in Shanghai.

On 23 January, the PLA was officially ordered into action by a joint directive of the central committee, State Council, Military Affairs Committee, and Cultural Revolution Group. The provisions of the directive soon appeared in a Red Guard newspaper and a number of posters.

This directive opened by speaking of the "new stage" of the revolution--the "struggle for seizure of power"--and called upon the PLA to support the "proletarian revolutionaries" in this struggle. It cited Mao's "recent" statements that non-involvement was a false concept and that the "demands of all true revolutionaries for support and assistance from the PLA must be satisfied." The directive declared that "all past directives" which had kept the PLA out of action were now rescinded, that when "genuine" leftists asked for help the PLA must "send out troops" on their behalf, and that counter-revolutionary individuals and organizations must be "resolutely suppressed."

There was the obvious problem of how the "true" or genuine leftists were to be distinguished from the false. This in fact proved to be a very complex task for the PLA, in those cases--perhaps the majority--in which guidance was not provided. It was provided in some cases; for example, on the same day (23 January), according to later accounts from official sources, the PLA in Harbin came to the aid of the "true" rebels, surrounding and disarming the counter-revolutionaries; the "true" were almost certainly identified for the PLA by the party leaders in favor there, Pan Fu-sheng, whose list had presumably been approved by the party leaders in Peking. But this was a "model" province, and in many if not most places, it seems, the leaders in Peking and the PLA locally were not in happy possession either of a Pan Fu-sheng or of thorough knowledge of the local situation. Thus the PLA seems in fact to have been given a good deal of discretion in sorting out the good comrades from the rascals and the

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

"true" rebels from the false, and--judging from the fact that only a few revolutionary committees were approved by Peking in the first half of the year--it seems to have had its troubles.

On 24 January, the Peking Radio, as might be expected, claimed the allegiance to Mao of "all officers and men of the PLA, and on 25 January the Liberation Army Daily smoothly explained everything to the troops. The editorial, entitled "The Chinese PLA Firmly Backs the Proletarian Revolutionaries," presented the argument in terms of a struggle against the bad "handful" in the party, although much of the PLA's activity for some months was in fact to be directed against some of those calling themselves "rebels." It was stated that the proletariat was now struggling to "seize power," and that Chairman Mao had called upon the PLA to "firmly support and assist them," even where and when the (true) rebels were in a "minority temporarily."

The 25 January editorial went on to dismiss the argument of "some people" that the policy of non-intervention should be continued; it pointed out that non-intervention (at this stage) would have the effect of assisting the opponents of the revolution. This line appeared to be (as several observers noted) an admission that some of the leaders of the PLA itself opposed Mao's decision. In this connection, posters denouncing Hsu Hsiang-chien, chief of the reorganized PLA/CRG, and Hsiao Hua, who had just been "cleared" by Chou, reportedly appeared on the day the decision was announced and on the next day. However, neither was named as an opponent of the decision, and no other individual opponents were named, either at the time or subsequently, even in posters.

Insofar as the mission of the PLA, under the new directive, was the destruction of the remains of the party apparatus and the restoration of order, few if any military leaders would be expected to oppose it. The hardest people to convince, of the need for a directive aimed at restoring order, would seem to have been the extreme militants like Mao himself, those who all along had demonstrated a willingness to accept a large degree of "disorder"

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

in the interest of a thorough revolution. Nevertheless, the directive was couched in terms of supporting the leftists, and it is reasonable to believe that some military leaders were concerned about this. That is, the genuine leftists as defined by Mao were something close to the natural enemies of the PLA (as well as of the party), which had already had a number of disagreeable experiences with them. Moreover, even if an alliance between these two improbable partners could be formed, there was no clear guidance for the order's implementation.*

Reassurances to the PLA, Late January-February 1967

The militant line on the conduct of the "cultural revolution" in the "leading organs" of the PLA--the line affirmed, or perhaps reaffirmed, in the editorials which followed the reorganization of the PLA/CRG in mid-January--was eased within a few days of the time of issuance (23 January) of the order to the PLA to intervene in support of the "true" leftists. Some observers have interpreted the MAC directive or directives of late January as halting the "revolution" in the PLA; while this is clearly not correct, it does appear that the late January line and the elaboration of it in mid-February substantially modified the conduct of it--at the higher levels of the PLA--as prescribed in mid-January.

*Some readers may recall that the discussion of this directive in the original draft of this paper treated it entirely in terms of its usefulness in restoring order. However, some observers [redacted]

[redacted] rightly pointed out that the directive explicitly called for support of the leftists, which was another matter, and that the military in general chose to interpret their mission as primarily that of restoring order (regardless of whether it was the leftists or the rightists who had to be suppressed).

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

In order to estimate the extent of the change, a brief recapitulation may be helpful. The work-teams of June and July had been found to be far too conservative. Lin Piao in August had supplied a more militant directive, but the purge of inadequate cadres was still to be carried out in only a portion of the PLA and by the PLA's existing instruments, as directed by the General Political Department; the task was given to party committees, which were told to carry out a program of what was still a fairly conservative nature, probably emphasizing "education" rather than "struggle." The 5 October directive had changed this with respect to military academies and schools, telling these institutions to pursue a more vigorous program employing the more disruptive methods already in use by non-military organizations (contending, posting, debating, exchanging experiences), and transferring leadership from party committees to special cultural revolution teams under a PLA/CRG; there may have been a concurrent directive for the conduct of the revolution in the PLA as a whole, under the direction of the PLA/CRG, but, if so, it surely called for less disruptive methods in the PLA as a whole than in the schools. In early January this PLA/CRG had been reorganized and put under the direct leadership of the MAC and the central CRG, and editorials which followed the event called for an intensive struggle in all high-level organs (under the slogans of "daring..., dragging out..., pulling down...", and so on).

The new orders--changing the mid-January line--were embodied in a MAC directive of 28 January. This may have been preceded by a directive of 27 January--dealing with one part of the problem--which may be worth a moment's diversion. It will be recalled that Liu Chih-chien had reportedly, in late November, expressed discouragement over the progress of the revolution in the 13 military regions, saying that fewer than half were really participating. The 27 January directive, as reported in posters later, was concerned entirely with this question; it reportedly placed the military regions on the [Sino-Soviet] "frontier" (at least three) on the alert against the "revisionist" military threat and stated that (in consequence of this concern) the "cultural revolution" could be postponed

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

in some regions. This reported directive was later criticized in Red Guard posters as representing the personal initiative of Yeh Chien-ying rather than Mao's will, but in fact it is consistent with the 28 January directive as reported and with some remarks attributed to Chou En-lai a few days later. What is uncertain is whether there was in fact a separate 27 January directive; it is possible that the Red Guards whose posters reported it had simply got hold of one portion of the 28 January directive and misdated it by a day. In this connection, there would seem no great need for a separate directive on a matter essentially covered in a directive issued one day later.

No official text of the 28 January directive is available, but a purported reproduction in a Red Guard newspaper--confirmed in part by posters--is probably generally accurate. It was a MAC directive, endorsed and praised by Mao on 28 January and published (on Mao's order) the same day. Like the 23 January directive ordering the PLA into action, it spoke of the "new stage" in which intervention by the PLA was necessary, and gave directions appropriate (as it said) to this new stage. The first of its eight points reiterated the central point of the 23 January directive as to the need to suppress the counter-revolutionaries, while the rest of its points concerned the conduct of the cultural revolution in the PLA.

The most important of these points provided: that the revolution would be conducted--meaning, perhaps, would continue to be conducted--by means of "big contending, big blooming, big-character posters, and big debates" (but not exchanges of experience) in "units of the armed forces where the great cultural revolution has been launched" (thus evading the question of where it had been launched and also failing to call explicitly for bad leaders to be brought down); that the revolution should be conducted by reason and not by force; and that those criticized should not be lightly classed with the enemy; that there were to be no arrests without orders, and no physical harassment (torture and parading; Westerners had observed officers forced to lie on the ground with their men's feet on their heads); that those who had gone to exchange

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

experience should return to their units to handle their own struggles; that there were to be no more assaults on military "leadership" (later reported as "guidance") organs; that PLA organizations above division-level could carry out the revolution either at different times or by easy stages (either reading is possible, meaning 'as opportunity permits'); and that military formations of army level and below must undertake "positive education."

There was reportedly an elaboration of this MAC directive in a central committee directive of 11 or 21 February. Again there is no official text, but again there is a detailed account, this one from posters. According to a Japanese account of these posters, which appears to give the provisions of both the 28 January directive and the 11 or 21 February elaboration, the main points of the two were: that military organizations above division-level should conduct the revolution by posters and debates, but in separate groups and at separate times, while lower-level units should conduct the revolution entirely through "regular education" and in particular should not take part in "exchanges of experience"; that "seizing of power from below" in the "military guidance organs" (earlier reported as "leadership" organs) was absolutely forbidden (probably the most important provision of this directive, and one presumably addressed to the "revolutionary rebel" groups known to exist in some of these organs); that there were to be no further "invasions" of these organs (there had reportedly been some more, since 28 January); that the cultural revolution in units of division-level and above was to be directed by party committees rather than cultural revolution teams, in the interest of maintaining a strict command system; and that PLA leaders who had made "mistakes" were not to be treated harshly and were not to be irresponsibly classified with the enemy.

It is apparent that the two reported directives added up to a substantial modification of the line being expressed as late as 14 January--with its exhortations to have daring, drag out, pull down, and so on. Some observers concluded at the time that the PLA "agreed"

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

to join the revolution--that is, consented to support the rebels in seizures of power, and to restore order generally--because these two directives promised that the purge of the PLA would be "called off." But they did not promise that. Where they differed from the 14 January line was that they were evasive or conciliatory on the question of pace at the higher levels, and more conservative with respect to the treatment of those criticized. This was a 'promise' which was not very hard to make, because Mao and his team had already conducted a large-scale purge of the PLA leadership, had already purged what was probably the majority of those who were scheduled to be purged--although Mao went on to create additional opponents among PLA leaders. (As it turned out, the purge of the PLA did continue, but at a much slower pace.) It can be argued that this modification represented a "price" for, or the "terms" of, PLA assistance in the "cultural revolution" outside the PLA; but, apart from the question of whether Mao and Lin would have to buy the obedience of a military leadership which they had already showed themselves capable of cruelly purging, it seems better to put the case in terms of reassurances rather than hard coin. On this reading, the military leaders, and in particular the military units which would have to do the actual fighting (if any), were being given public reassurances, in the interest of the smooth operation of the PLA in the months ahead--reassurances that the purge of the PLA would not be carried out to anything like the degree or in anything like the wild way that the purge of the party had been. The military leaders may additionally have got private reassurances that only a few PLA leaders were yet to fall. While it was possible (and may have been recognized by the military leaders as possible) that these reassurances--like the assurances given party leaders by Mao and Lin in the work-conference of October 1966--would prove to be worth nothing, the reassurances probably did help to make the PLA a reliable instrument in the "new stage" of the revolution.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The PLA Occupation of China, Late January - March 1967

Military commanders everywhere in China apparently responded loyally and swiftly to the 23 January directive ordering the PLA into action. Contrary to early reports in the Western press of defiance by various regional and provincial military leaders, there was not one known instance of such defiance. Within a few weeks, the PLA was in effective occupation of all or virtually all centers of authority--that is, it had restored order sufficiently to be able to take further steps in those provinces and cities in which it knew what steps to take.

The paucity of effective resistance to this occupation--resistance in a plain military sense--was a striking feature of the early months of 1967. While it had been presumed all along that the PLA was the ultimate base of power in China--in other words, that political power in China would continue to rest on military force--it had also been presumed that some of those in disfavor, i.e., party-machine leaders, individual military leaders, and long-entrenched party secretaries in the provinces, would attempt and would be able to make some part of the PLA responsive to them personally. Indeed, in the early months of 1967, when all three groups were under attack at the same time, some observers predicted a PLA split down the middle and civil war, and most observers (including this one) expected that at least a few combinations of party and military leaders marked for purging would be able to offer effective, prolonged resistance, especially in some of the outlying areas like Szechuan; but, so far as we know, this did not happen anywhere.* In

*Yen Hung-yen, the party's first secretary in Yunnan, was later charged with having been prepared to take his followers into the mountains and wage guerrilla war; but in fact he did not do it, he was dead even before the PLA moved into action in late January.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

sum, the solidarity of the PLA as an operating instrument --despite the network of controls in it established by the old party machine, and despite the purge of a number of military leaders and the threat to a number of others-- was truly an impressive thing.

This placid picture requires, however, some qualification. While there seems not to have been any organized opposition to Mao, in the form of declared opponents who mobilized military forces for conscious resistance, there remained in place in many parts of China--as subsequent events were to prove--political and military leaders whom Mao and his new team did not trust. These were officials who actually occupied important party and military posts, people through whom it was necessary to work, people who in some cases--as some observers surmised at the time--controlled entire provinces, such as Wang En-mao in Sinkiang. With respect to these cases, which represented de facto compromises between the new team in Peking and strong local leaders, Mao's team had simply put off coming to grips with its problem; sooner or later the team in Peking would have to install its own men, and it presumably calculated early in 1967 that at some points it would be able to move more effectively later in the year. In moving against these leaders whom he distrusted as being closer to Liu and Teng than to him, Mao might again create an opposition, alienating regional and provincial party and military leaders who were willing to work for him so long as they were not asked to liquidate themselves but who, when Mao's intentions became clear, might then organize the kind of armed resistance which had been expected at some points in early 1967. In addition, there were probably thousands of lesser figures of the party apparatus--at the town and county level outside the provincial centers--who were in limbo, presiding over party committees to which no orders came (because the superior committees had been destroyed and the occupying troops at that level did not know what to do), and who could also join the 'opposition' when it became clear that there would be no place for them in the new order; and there may have been hundreds who just disappeared, abandoning their posts and finding some other livelihood.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

According to official accounts of PLA operations in this February-March period, the PLA did not have to do much fighting; the threat of force was usually enough. Its first task everywhere seems to have been to restore order sufficiently to permit it to play--or try to play--its predominantly political role, to this end occupying if necessary the headquarters of the local party committee. According to the scenario given for the few provinces where things went more-or-less smoothly, the PLA, once in visible command, then "analyzed the nature" of the party officials there and of the various "rebel" organizations, some of which had been set up by party officials still in place*; the next step was to consult the "good" cadres and the "true" leftists as to whether a complete "seizure of power" was necessary; if not, the PLA "helped" to reorganize the leadership to whatever degree was required; if, however, a full-scale "seizure" was judged necessary, the PLA "supported" the good cadres and true leftists in effecting this seizure--that is, it installed them in office, together with its own representatives, as a "three-way alliance," looking toward formation of a "revolutionary committee." In so doing,

*There may have been an additional directive of early February, enlarging on the 23 January directive's provision for the suppression of counter-revolutionary organizations, or a number of directives may have been sent to individual provinces, perhaps in response to urgent requests for guidance. In an article in a Red Guard newspaper (July 1967), an "investigator from the military tribunal" (control commission?) in Hunan refers to a "4 February directive" which, he writes, was produced in the heat of the moment when it was necessary to suppress what looked like rebellion. (This could, of course, have been a directive from the Hunan MCC itself, rather than from Peking.) Apparently on the basis of this directive, he conducted a prolonged investigation of a large mass organization classified as counter-revolutionary, looking into such matters as whether it had made a deal to protect the provincial first secretary, whether it aimed at seizing military power, and so on. Of some interest, the investigator concluded that the organization had been wrongly classified.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(still according to the official scenario), the PLA would do such things as preventing the bad cadres from staging a "sham" seizure, assuming control of "vital organs" like the public security bureau and propaganda media and legal organs, setting up patrols, and assigning armed guards to protect those cadres and "rebel" leaders in favor; after this, the PLA would sometimes have to repel propaganda assaults and physical attacks--including attacks on PLA installations--by false "rebel" groups, sometimes incited and organized by bad cadres; this repulsion of hostile actions would entail a propaganda offensive, "exposure of plots" (using Mao's thought), suppression of a "handful" of counter-revolutionaries and disbandment of their organizations, the holding of demonstrations and parades, protection of the "revolutionary committee" (if one had been formed), and even assistance to the rebels in carrying out their own "rectification" (mainly of trends toward "anarchism").

This account, however, is of the PLA's operations in those few provinces and municipalities in which the PLA's intervention proceeded smoothly enough to permit a "revolutionary committee" to be established which was in turn good enough to be recognized by Peking. (Wang Li of the CRG reportedly told a press group in mid-March that provincial delegations were coming to Peking one after another for "investigation", that only when "seizures of power" had been investigated by the CRG and approved by Mao could they be recognized.) It seems apparent, from the failure of Peking to recognize more than a handful of these committees, that in most cases the course of events was not so smooth.

There seem to have been two main factors in this. One was that in many if not most cases Mao's team in Peking did not know enough about the local situation to be able to give the PLA commander on the spot clear directives about whom to support, with respect both to party officials and to competing "revolutionary" organizations. Where that was the case, and where Peking did not choose to step in, the PLA seems to have engaged in a holding action

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

while it tried to sort things out.* It seems apparent that the PLA had a terrible time trying to do this. Where it was on its own, it had little more to help it than the searchlight of Mao's "thought." In other words, just as the party press in early 1966 had been expected to denounce Wu Han's plays without a specific directive to do so, just as the work-teams of summer 1966 had been expected to support the most militant students without explicit orders to do so, just as the Red Guards in the autumn of 1966 had been expected to distinguish those party officials faithful to Mao's thought from those unfaithful without specific targetting by Peking, so now the PLA--as that component of Chinese society which had proved itself most faithful to Mao--seems to have been expected, in those cases in which guidance was not provided, to recognize and bring forward the other good servants. In some cases, probably, the PLA on the spot recognized its inability to do this, and in other cases it found this out only when Peking disapproved its selections. In yet other cases, the PLA on the spot and the leaders in Peking probably agreed on the lists but ran into such spirited opposition from those who had been excluded that they chose not to go ahead.

*In some cases--we do not know how many--Peking took action to inform itself quickly on the local situation. For example, with respect to Honan province, Chou En-lai in mid-February told the PLA to intervene to separate the warring factions and to seize control of the newspaper, but then directed all elements on the spot--the PLA, the party committee, the struggling groups and other revolutionary organizations--to send representatives to Peking to get things sorted out there. As testimony to the difficulties, the most important Red Guard body in Honan was reportedly classified as reactionary by the Honan authorities after the Peking meeting, was supported by Peking in April, was still being oppressed by the local authorities in May, and got another affirmation of Peking's support in late May, but this province continued in turmoil until August.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The other main factor seems to have been that what guidance there was--in leadership statements and the party press--was in apparent conflict with the general directive the PLA was operating under. That is, the 23 January directive had ordered the PLA to support the "genuine" leftists and to suppress counter-revolutionaries. The PLA in the field had good reason to believe that those regarded as "genuine" leftists, at the time the order was issued, were the most militant of the "rebels"--those symbolized by the Red Guards of the 3rd Headquarters in Peking--and the kind of local party officials who would find favor with such elements. Yet the signals from Peking, after 23 January, were increasingly to the effect that the extreme militants were, if not out of favor, at least in very qualified favor. And they had lost favor for a reason that must have appeared to the PLA leaders in the field as a very good reason--their inclination to "anarchy."

While the leaders in Peking were not yet ready to declare against disorder per se (as some of them were by June), the extreme militants among the Red Guards were criticized repeatedly in this period by officers of the Cultural Revolution Group and, according to posters, also by Mao himself, who was without doubt the person mainly responsible for their earlier preferment; and militant leaders were criticized--sometimes sharply--by name. Many of their organizations were suppressed or dissolved; e.g., the three Red Guard headquarters in Peking were merged in late February, apparently looking toward a national organization. They were ordered to keep out of the military establishment, were told that they could not "seize" ministries without permission from the central committee and could only "supervise" those seized, and were forbidden to seize power in the countryside. They were apparently put in the bottom layer of the "three-way alliances." Travel by the rebels to "exchange experience" was suspended, and Red Guards were ordered back to

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

school and were told that they would have to undergo "rectification" there under supervision of the PLA*.

In the same period, the strong defense of the PLA --in the party press--against any and all detractors was pretty clearly aimed mainly at the rebel extremists. A typical editorial (22 February) praised the work of Lin Piao, insisted that the rebels could not do without PLA support, demanded that all rebels in turn support the PLA, asserted that this was in fact a test of true revolutionaries, and declared that no one was allowed (under pretext of the cultural revolution) to incite the masses against the PLA.**

The PLA seemed increasingly to take these developments as a mandate to find against, and to suppress, the

*In the same period, the Peking press began to emphasize again the importance of the role of good party cadres. This added to the troubles of the PLA authorities on the spot. There is testimony from several points that the PLA authorities felt obliged to re-examine the cases of local party leaders, and that factionalism among the "revolutionary rebels" developed for this reason among others.

**Red Guards in Szechuan have asserted the existence of a '17 February letter' from the MAC, said to have been widely distributed in Szechuan, which authorized PLA action against elements of the Red Guards, in part on the ground of their verbal and physical attacks on PLA installations. The Red Guard sources assert that Kang Sheng on 1 April denounced this letter as a fake, and that it had been written by Yeh Chien-ying without MAC's permission. Developments of the time were consonant with the existence of such a MAC directive--which could have been withdrawn and described as a "fake" when the line changed in late March and early April--but the letter or directive has not been confirmed.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

most militant of the "rebel" groups, contrary to the earlier directive to support the leftists. By late March, as indicated by Lin Piao's reported remarks at that time and by the new directive to the PLA in early April (discussed in the following section), the PLA was acting so aggressively against the most militant rebels that Mao and Lin were concerned for the continued good health of the young "revolutionary successors." The Red Guards themselves were later to describe the month of March in particular as a period of "counter-current."

There seems little doubt that the PLA's actions in February and March were an important source--perhaps the most important source--of the serious ill-feeling between the PLA and the militant Red Guards and other "rebels" in the subsequent months of 1967, ill-feeling expressed in persistent "rebel" denunciation of PLA leaders in the military regions and districts, defiance of the PLA's orders, and even physical attacks on PLA personnel. In the first place, as soon as the local party apparatuses were made inoperable, the PLA replaced the party as the main instrument of authority to be attacked for its shortcomings. In the second place, insofar as the mission of the PLA was that of restoring order, it would have to bring under discipline even (or especially) the reddest of the "rebels" and, as suggested above, there is reason to believe that it discharged this part of its task with enthusiasm. In the third place, even where it chose to "support" the militants (in line with the 23 January directive), it would have to find against other "rebel" groups, including some who regarded themselves as being just as militant and righteous as those who were supported. Finally, Mao's team in Peking could and did change the signals on the PLA, both in general (i.e., the degree of Peking's favor enjoyed by the militants) and in particular cases. Thus, in general, "rebel" denunciations of PLA leaders in the military regions and districts seem better explained by the PLA's political actions against elements of the "rebels" than by the hypothesis that Mao's team in Peking was even then determined to bring down any and all PLA leaders attacked by the "rebels," or by the hypothesis that the PLA leaders under attack were even then determined to resist the will of Mao's team.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

As will be argued later, however, some PLA leaders were probably turned into opponents of Mao's team, either by the fact of persistent "rebel" attacks on them or by their judgment that the attacks indicated that they were indeed in disfavor in Peking; in other words, as had been the case with Mao's team and much or most of the party apparatus, Mao was again creating opposition to himself where it had not existed.

Throughout March, however, Mao continued to provide the PLA with expressions of his confidence in it. In early March Peking called for PLA personnel to be represented in all units "seizing power" at the provincial level and below, and by the end of March the PLA was deeply involved in the civilian sector (including industry and agriculture). It was clearly replacing the shattered party apparatus as the main channel through which policy instructions were issued and the main instrument by which these instructions were supervised and enforced. In sum, the positions of Mao and Lin appeared to rest directly on the military leaders in Peking, in the regional headquarters and provincial districts, and in command of armies.

The "cultural revolution" in the PLA itself, which had been substantially modified at the higher levels of the PLA and kept in very low gear at the lower levels, continued to move slowly. In late February the Peking press appeared to be rejecting the notion--from what source was not clear--that revolution in the PLA itself should be speeded up, and it asserted that the revolution in the PLA was in fact "vigorously developing" in line with Mao's and Lin's instructions.* The main visible

*That Mao's thinking on the direction of the revolution in the PLA continued to be simplistic and retrogressive was indicated by a poster of the time reporting his remarks on the subject of military academies. Expressing his displeasure with the state of these in China, Mao went on to say that the armed forces had fought better when they did not have such schools, to say also that "a little" reading was all right but a lot was harmful, and to conclude that a few months of academic training was enough for military leaders.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

evidence of this, however, was the continued appearance of poster attacks on PLA leaders.

Lin Piao himself was not attacked, but remained out of sight, and speculation continued that his status was declining. He may have been sick for a time, but there were probably not significant fluctuations in his status. Most of the PLA leaders attacked in posters in this period were people who had got into trouble in an earlier period, i.e. prior to the PLA's intervention in the revolution; these cases have already been reviewed. There were a few new names, however: Hsiao Ching-kuang, commander of the Navy (probably for his association with Su Chen-hua and for errors in conducting the revolution in the Navy); Li Tso-peng, Hsiao's deputy in both jobs (probably for the same reason); Hsiao Ko, the PLA's one-time director of training (for alleged pro-Soviet feeling); and Yuan Tzu-chun, a deputy director of the General Political Department who had apparently been added to the PLA/CRG (probably criticized for bonds with Liu Chih-chien, who was said by posters to have been replaced by Kuan Feng). Most of these attacks appear to have been speculative investments which failed; that is, most of those first attacked in this period continued in favor. Hsu Hsiang-chien came under additional criticism in this period, and he too continued for a time in favor, being identified in late March as a deputy chairman of the MAC, perhaps only recently appointed; but within two weeks, when the line changed, Hsu was to be hit hard in posters.

The Leashing of the PLA, April 1967

A counter-current to the conservative "counter-current" of the period from late January to sometime in March--the latter the period in which the PLA dominated developments and dealt harshly with the most militant and disorderly of the "rebels"--became visible in March and was dominant by early April. Although Mao's opponents made no comeback, his most reliable ally, the PLA, was leashed again in April, and one of the PLA leaders concerned with directing its operations in the conservative period of February and March was set aside.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

In the second week of March, Tan Chen-lin, a vice-premier who for some years had been one of the party-machine group around Liu and Teng but had recently been defended by Chou En-lai and Madame Mao against poster attacks, had begun to be attacked again. These attacks --centering on Tan's alleged role in arranging "false power seizures" (i.e. by conservative forces)--were a new expression of the line of the most militant "rebel" forces, and raised the question of whether Mao meant to reverse the conservative "counter-current" which was then dominant.

The Military Affairs Committee met in the latter half of March in a session or sessions described as agitated by one of the most militant of the Red Guard leaders --who may have known that the MAC was working out a new line governing the conduct of the PLA in the "cultural revolution," a line which could only dismay many leaders of the PLA. There was no public expression of this new line in March, but it was clearly visible in an unpublicized speech (received later) by Lin Piao on 30 March. (Lin had been out of the news for several weeks, and may --as some observers have surmised--have been making an inspection trip on Mao's behalf to see how the PLA throughout China was dealing with the "rebels.")

Lin's speech, as credibly reported in posters, was of interest on several counts--e.g., his admission of substantial production losses and many deaths in the course of the revolution but his dismissal of this as necessary for the production of reliable "successors," his description of the party apparatus outside Peking as entirely "rotten" (the question being only that of degrees of rottenness), and his confirmation that his own health remained poor. But the speech was of greatest interest for its clear signal of a change in line for the PLA. Stating that the PLA was now in control of more than 7,000 party and government organs throughout China, Lin said that the conduct of the PLA in the present stage was of even greater importance than in the past struggle against Liu and Teng. Citing the MAC's formulation of "ten points" (not made public until 6 April) to guide the PLA, Lin said that the most important of these were

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

those restricting the PLA in its use of arms, physical force, and the power of arrest (the first, second and sixth of the points as published). Calling for the PLA to rely on the "left" and admitting that it was hard for the PLA to discover the difference between left and right, Lin emphasized that PLA units were not to take action on their own initiative but were to act only on orders from above--not from the party committees outside Peking (all "rotten") but, presumably, from superior echelons of the PLA and local bodies dominated by the PLA.

Just two days later, on 1 April, a central committee directive reportedly told party committees and the new revolutionary committees everywhere (including those in military regions and districts) not to classify "rebel" organizations as counter-revolutionary without the central committee's permission (later specified to be that of the MAC of the central committee) and forbade arbitrary arrests and physical humiliation. Just two days after that, Madame Mao and Hsieh Fu-chih reportedly told some Red Guards that it had been a mistake to disband some of the Red Guard organizations and promised that steps would be taken to revive them. Moreover, the leaders of the militant Red Guard organizations at the college and university level--leaders criticized in February--returned to the limelight, making important (and militant) statements.

On 6 April the Military Affairs Committee embodied all of this in a 10-point directive, endorsed, and ordered published, by Mao. Declaring that the work of the PLA in supporting the revolutionary leftists had been "examined" for several weeks and found uneven in quality, the directive imposed several specific restrictions on the PLA and added several inhibiting observations. The directive as reported in posters told the PLA not to open fire on "rebel" groups (as reported, there was no allowance even for extreme provocation) but to confine itself to propaganda, not to make "mass arrests" (only of hard-case individuals), not to classify rebel organizations as "counter-revolutionary" unless and until authorized by the MAC, not to initiate investigations of or legal proceedings against the rebels (one version called for investigations to continue but to be reported to the CRG or PLA/CRG),

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

and not to use force (including physical humiliation) to extract confessions or to punish. The directive as reported exhorted the PLA to remember class standpoint (i.e. to recognize that the militants were on the right side), to recognize its main mission as propaganda, to ensure that only "politically reliable" PLA cadres dealt with the masses so as to preclude rightist cadre from suppressing leftist rebels (the directive cited a deputy commander of the Tsinghai military district as guilty of the kind of "brutal" suppression of rebel groups which was now prohibited), to remember that the PLA itself must "obey" and "learn from" the masses, and to correct all of its earlier mistakes in accordance with the foregoing.

Lin Piao's speech of 30 March had taken away from the PLA most of the large degree of discretion it had enjoyed in dealing with disorderly elements and in sorting out local officials and competing revolutionary groups. And the spirit of the 6 April directive--and of editorials of 6 and 10 April calling on the PLA to be humble before the masses--was in sharp contrast to that of the 23 January directive. That is, whereas the intent and effect of the 23 January directive was that of restoring order, placing the party apparatus and the "revolutionary rebels" in subordinate positions in which they would obediently play their assigned roles, the 6 April directive placed the restrictions on the PLA rather than on the rebels, with the predictable consequence that the most militant rebels would assert themselves more aggressively than ever.

As previously suggested, this change in the line could only dismay many leaders of the PLA. To their certain knowledge, they had given many components of the "revolutionary rebels"--especially the most militant Red Guards--good reason to detest them and to seek to bring them down, and the new line meant that the leaders of military regions and districts would now be either virtually helpless against those seeking vengeance (or simply 'action'), or, by taking action to protect themselves, would incur Peking's disfavor. That some PLA leaders began deliberately to resist Peking's will at this point--for example, by building mass organizations of their own to protect themselves against the "rebels"--seems likely, and

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

in any case this was clearly a chance Mao was taking. Mao was not only creating opposition to himself, but he was creating it among those in command of the only reliable instrument that remained in his hands--the party apparatus having been wrecked, and the "revolutionary rebel" movement being both undisciplined and unarmed.

On the same day (6 April) that the new directive was issued, there appeared intensive poster attacks on Hsu Hsiang-chien and Yeh Chien-ying, who had been prominent in the MAC in the period following the 23 January directive and who had probably played large roles in directing the conduct of the PLA in that February-March period. Both the timing and the content of these poster attacks suggested that Hsu and Yeh were to be held responsible for "errors" in implementing the line of that period--that is, were to be the scapegoats for the line now judged by Mao and Lin to have been in error, as Liu Chih-chien had been but as Yang Cheng-wu and Hsiao Hua (both close to Lin Piao) had escaped being.

The poster charges against Hsu--made by the most militant of the Red Guards--emphasized that he had carried out the "Liu/Teng line" and had oppressed the revolutionary masses (e.g. with "rectification") and suppressed mass organizations. Secondary charges related to his conduct (as chief of the PLA/CRG since January) of the revolution in the PLA itself (he was held responsible for a 4 March directive on this matter which has not come to hand), his protection of discredited figures like Liu Chih-chien but at the same time his use of Liu as a scapegoat to save himself, his responsibility for specific bad situations (Szechuan, where serious fighting was reported, and Hupei and Wuhan), his effort to restrict the role of Madame Mao (his "advisor") in the work of the PLA/CRG, and his opposition to Lin Piao in a recent MAC meeting (possibly on the matter of the change of line). The poster charges against Yeh were similar although less emphatic, charging him with suppression of the revolutionary rebels, linking him with bad situations in several areas (Szechuan, Hupei, Tsinghai, Inner Mongolia), accusing him too of opposition to Lin in the MAC and to the Madame, and asserting that he had protected Madame Liu Shao-chi.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

A few days later, officers of the central CRG reportedly told the Red Guards it was not worth while to attack Hsu, as Hsiao Hua and Hsieh Fu-chih (recently added) were already running the PLA/CRG. Shortly after that, on 16 April, posters reported that Madame Mao (de facto chief of the PLA/CRG) had "dismissed" Hsu and had said that the group (and/or revolution in the PLA) would be run by Hsiao, Hsieh, and Yang Cheng-wu. On the same day, the Madame reportedly described the situations in Chengtu and Wuhan as "extremely grave," and, according to most accounts, incited the "rebels" to take action there--an exhortation that was presumably in part responsible for the large-scale fighting that developed in those areas in subsequent months.* At the same time, Chen Yi, less important as a military leader in recent years but for several years carried as a member (perhaps even an officer) of MAC, who had been under poster attack with Hsu and Hen, reportedly said that he had been dropped from MAC.

On 20 April, with the inauguration of the Peking Municipal Revolutionary Committee, the Chinese leaders appeared to be saying that they would proclaim further "seizures of power" only when revolutionary committees of this type had been put together--meaning that most of China would remain under the control of the PLA indefinitely. On this same occasion, Madame Mao tried to put the best possible face on the differences between the MAC directive of 28 January (a directive conciliatory to the PLA) and the directive of 6 April (hard on the PLA), asserting that they had the same spirit. They did not, but the Madame was making or trying to make an important point: that Mao wanted it both ways, that he hoped and believed

*There is a credible report that Chou En-lai in the same week visited Canton, endorsed the military commander of the Canton Military Region, and transmitted to this officer (Huang Yung-sheng) Peking's classification of good and bad "rebel" organizations in the Canton area. This action by Peking, however, did not prevent the eruption of large-scale fighting in Canton later, just as in Chengtu and Wuhan.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

that both the Red Guards and the PLA would reward his confidence by correcting their errors (through their respective "rectification" programs), meeting in cooperation on a middle ground. Mao's reported "instructions" to the new PMRC in fact demonstrated this attitude: he criticized the mistakes of the PLA in handling mass organizations, but he said that they could be and were being corrected and went on to assert that some people were being overly critical of the PLA. He reportedly expressed his confidence in all three components of the "revolutionary alliance"--the masses, the PLA, and the (good) party cadres.

Criticism of the rebels continued. In fact, Kuai Ta-fu himself (the worst of all militants) publicly condemned "anarchy" in mass organizations. In the same week, officers of the central Cultural Revolution Group (including Madame Mao) met with rebel groups and told them again to stop fighting among themselves and to stop attacking the PLA (there had already been a number of physical assaults), and editorials of the week again defended the PLA. But the thrust of developments in the first three weeks of April was clear: the PLA's control of events in China had been severely qualified by the directives it was now operating under, and the PLA had been placed on the defensive, meaning that individual PLA leaders were also on the defensive.

On 23 April, posters reported the recent promotion of four members of MAC to posts as vice-chairmen or members of the standing committee: Hsiao Hua, Hsieh Fu-chih, Yang Cheng-wu, and Su Yu. (Red Guard materials had indicated that Su, the onetime chief-of-staff, in recent years had been concerned with national defense industries and a reported speech by Chou En-lai on 30 April also connected Su--along with Hsiao and Wang Shu-sheng--with these.) At the same time, the MAC apparently quietly dropped Hsu Hsiang-chien as a vice-chairman; neither Hsu nor Yeh Chien-ying (who had been criticized in posters along with Hsu) was denounced as a conspirator, or disgraced, and both were identified as politburo members on May Day; but Hsu at least was evidently set aside as a military leader. The status of Yeh--and of Nieh Jung-chen and Liu Po-cheng, carried also as vice-chairmen--or

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

members of the standing committee--was not made clear. At the end of April, the only top-level military leaders still clearly in favor, in addition to Lin Piao, were the four new officers of MAC: Hsiao, Hsieh, Yang, and Su.

In late April Su Yu, one of this small group of top military leaders in Peking clearly in Mao's favor, reportedly helped his military comrades outside Peking to read the writing on the wall. He is described in posters as making a speech on 29 April in which he specified a number of incidents in which the "masses" were suppressed, and went on to assert that each of these incidents was the fault of the principal officers of the military regions in which they took place, as these PLA leaders had not got permission from the MAC to take these actions. In other words, Lin Piao had meant exactly what he said in his 30 March speech, and the military leaders in the regions and provinces would have to get MAC's permission even to defend themselves.

Chou En-lai at the end of April (30 April) made an unpublicized report to the State Council which included an account of the situation in the 26 provinces of China (including the "autonomous" regions). According to a credible report of this speech, Chou confirmed indications in the press that local governments approved by the central committee had been established in only four provinces (plus the cities of Peking and Shanghai), and went on to speak of ten provinces which were simply under military control, four others (and one municipality) in which some preparations had been made but which were not ready to proclaim "alliances," and seven provinces with which Peking was not yet negotiating (on the matter of "alliances"). (Chou did not mention Ninghsia.)* Chou's speech gave an

*Chou's groupings were as follows: (a) approved revolutionary committees--Shansi, Shantung, Kweichow and Heilung-kiang (plus Peking and Shanghai); (b) under military control, despite proclaimed "alliances"--Chekiang, Kiangsi, Shensi, Yunnan, and Sinkiang (although in fact Wang En-mao was in control in his party as well as military post); (footnote continued on page 94)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

official stamp to the impression given by the Peking press: that PLA leaders on the spot had been so confused by conflicting directives and by local situations, including the competing claims of "revolutionary" organizations, that in most places they had not been able to move very far forward. What Chou did not say was that in some instances PLA leaders on the spot may have been --probably were--deliberately resisting Peking's will, refusing to prefer "revolutionary" groups which they well knew to be in Peking's favor and organizing "revolutionary" groups of their own to protect themselves against Peking's favorites; and that Peking knew this to be the case in some areas, but was not yet prepared to deal with the problem.

An important question at this time was that of the initiative for the radical change in the emphasis, during April, in the line governing relations between the PLA and the "masses." Only three leaders--Mao, Lin, and Chou--were capable of taking the initiative on a matter of this importance. It is possible that the initiative was Lin's, following an inspection tour in March in which he collected the necessary data for a judgment, but he had been made to look foolish by the radical change, and his PLA had been put into a most uncomfortable situation; it seems doubtful that he would have taken the initiative for a change so radical. It also seems probable that the initiative was not Chou's as he had shown a much greater concern for order--from the start of the "revolution"--than had either

(footnote continued from page 93)

(c) also under military control, for various reasons--Anhwei, Kwangtung, Inner Mongolia, Tsinghai and Tibet; (d) those in which some progress had been made toward "alliances" --Hopei, Honan, Kwangsi, and Szechuan (plus Tientsin); and (e) those with which negotiations were not yet underway--Fukien, Hunan, Hupei, Kiangsu, Kansu, Kirin, and Liaoning (plus, perhaps, Ninghsia). The implication, as several observers noted, was that the situation was the least satisfactory in the final grouping--and in fact there were to be especially serious disorders in several of these provinces in the summer of 1967, although there were equally serious disorders in some provinces in other groupings.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Mao or Lin. That leaves Mao, who seems again to have declared his favor--as on several occasions in 1966--for the most militant elements of the "masses," accepting (at least for a time) whatever degree of disorder might ensue.

Disorder and Response, May-June 1967

At the May Day rally, Mao and Lin put on display their first team, which took the field on several occasions in following weeks: the core of the politburo, Mao, Lin, Chou, Chen Po-ta, Kang Sheng, and Li Fu-chun; the top-level military leaders (in addition to Lin), Hsieh Fu-chih, Hsiao Hua, Yang Cheng-wu, and Su Yu; and five leaders of the central CRG and PLA/CRG, Madame Mao, Wang Li, Kuan Feng, Chi Pen-yu, and Madame Lin.

This small, mismatched group was presiding over what appeared to be a deteriorating situation, in part the result of the 6 April directive placing crippling restrictions on the PLA and thus in effect inciting the Red Guards to make trouble. Hsieh Fu-chih, who had assumed office on 20 April as head of the new Peking Municipal Revolutionary Committee, is said to have described the situation in Peking itself as poor, because the leftist rebels were again splitting up and fighting among themselves; he is said to have specified that serious fighting was going on in schools, factories and "various organs." At the same time, there were reports of serious clashes in recent weeks in at least nine provinces; these were said to be especially severe in Szechuan, where troops of the Chengtu headquarters were reportedly embroiled with militants representing the 3rd Red Guard headquarters in Peking. (Those clashes were apparently not, however, on anything like the scale that developed later.)

There was general agreement that much of this fighting (perhaps most of it, as Peking itself implied) belonged in Peking's category of "unprincipled civil war"--that is, fighting among "rebel" organizations over their shares of the spoils, their strength in the new structure of power which was being or was to be built. This issue--representation

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

in the structure of power--would of course carry the "rebels" into conflict on some occasions with other elements in the structure, i.e. the party cadres in favor and the PLA. Beyond this, much of the fighting (some observers thought most of it) represented "principled" struggle, with a pattern apparently emerging in which the fighting groups tended to divide between elements aligned with and defending the local authorities--predominantly military leaders--and extremely militant elements, apparently directed by Red Guards from Peking of the 3rd Headquarters type, who were attacking the local (generally military) authorities and the local "rebels" who were aligned with them. (Some of the attacks by the militants continued to include physical assaults on government and PLA personnel and on government organs and PLA installations.) This situation was confirmed in some provinces, and may have been widespread; and some observers concluded that it was the aim of the most militant of the "rebels" to discredit the PLA as a whole by forcing it to take actions which were forbidden to it in the 6 April directive. Other observers believed that the operation was selective, representing initiatives by individual "rebel" groups against individual military commanders. Still others agreed that the operation was selective, but thought that it was directed by Mao's team in Peking--a way of keeping pressure on some local leaders who were not trusted by Peking but with whom Peking felt obliged to work for a time, and as indication that these particular leaders would eventually be brought down. Yet others thought that the operation might be regarded as a part of the overall "testing" of PLA leaders, and might imply nothing with respect to the individuals attacked. All that seemed clear in this was that Peking was keeping both forces--attackers and defenders--in the field. That is, Mao's team in Peking was encouraging and logically supporting at least some of the "rebel" groups who were on the offensive, and it was leaving in place the local authorities being attacked by these "rebels." On balance, it seemed likely that some of these PLA leaders were already out of favor with Peking, and it was a nice question why then they were left in place. One could argue that those in disfavor could simply be recalled to Peking (as even those regional secretaries clearly out of favor had come docilely to

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Peking the previous October when summoned to the party work-conference, and as Chen Tsai-tao of the Wuhan headquarters was soon to be summoned), but one could also argue that in some instances Peking was afraid that it could not simply summon a military leader to his doom (Wang En-mao was a case in point). In any case, it seemed apparent that the growing disorders could not begin to be controlled under the existing directives.

Mao was not ready to reverse himself, however. According to later posters, Mao on 7 May directed Lin Piao to give PLA units up to two weeks of "rectification" training. In other words, his immediate concern was still more with correcting the faults of the PLA in dealing with the "rebels" than with the troubles caused by the "rebels" themselves. As previously noted, Mao wanted it both ways--wanted the rebels too to carry out a "rectification"; but the directives under which the PLA was operating were not such as to give the rebels any incentive to correct their faults, or to encourage the PLA to help them to correct them.*

Mao's bias--in favor of his Red Guards and other "revolutionary rebels," and against the military leaders on whom his position directly rested--was evident in Peking's comments on the same day (7 May) on its reorganization of the PLA command in Chengtu, which was the governing authority for all of the populous and important province of Szechuan.** Hsiao Hua, speaking to Red Guards

*This was clearly illustrated in reports from schools at which the PLA was supposed to be supervising the students' training. The students did as they pleased, because the soldiers were not allowed to use arms to enforce discipline.

**The military commands in Anhwei, Tsinghai and Inner Mongolia had been reorganized during the previous five or six weeks.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

in Peking on behalf of Mao's team, announced that various military leaders in Szechuan had been making "mistakes" consistently since late February in supporting "conservative" organizations in Szechuan and in suppressing the "masses," and were responsible for an especially serious incident in which the PLA had opened fire (there was no consideration of why the PLA had opened fire). Hsiao further announced that the two ranking officers of the Chengtu Military Region (installed only a few months before, replacing the two commanders discredited in January) had been summoned to Peking, had been brought to recognize their mistakes, and would be replaced as the commanders, although they would return to Szechuan in subordinate posts.*

*The new leader in Szechuan--as first political officer and head of the new preparatory group for a revolutionary committee--was Chang Kuo-hua, who in his post as commander of the Tibet Military Region had been under sustained attack for months by Red Guards in apparent high favor with Mao's team in Peking. Chang's appointment (concurrently) to the much more important post in Chengtu seemed a clear sign of Mao's favor, and it was explicitly stated in the 7 May interview that Mao had confidence in Chang (and the newly-appointed military commander). Following Chang's appointment, the Red Guards in Tibet reportedly ceased for a time to attack him, but then returned to the attack. One observer's explanation--not consonant with this writer's sense of Mao's relations with the PLA--is that Chang's appointment was imposed on Mao by powerful armies in the field in the Chengtu Military Region, armies which refused to cooperate in the pacification of the province unless a leader acceptable to them were named. It seems better to put this in terms of Peking's own calculation that Chang would be able to deal effectively with all of the forces in Szechuan--the military, the remains of the party apparatus, the "revolutionary rebels" and the workers and peasants.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

A similar line was taken in a reported talk by the commander of the Canton Military Region in the same week. He admitted that the officers of the Canton headquarters had made many "mistakes" in supporting conservative organizations and in failing to support the left, and, while contending that the PLA had done much better since Chou En-lai's mid-April visit to Canton, went on to condemn the Military Region's political officers en masse for supporting conservative organizations and to promise to implement Lin Piao's directive (not previously reported) that political officers who failed to support the left effectively should be replaced.

The line which had been encouraging the most militant of the Red Guards began to shift a bit in the 12 May editorials of People's Daily and Red Flag, but the PLA was still put on the defensive. People's Daily praised the PLA and asked the masses to recognize that its "general orientation is correct," but the PLA was nevertheless enjoined to "sincerely learn" from and "humbly listen" to the masses, in order to learn to recognize the leftist forces they were supposed to be supporting; this editorial was especially interesting for its confirmation that the 6 April directive was being "used to undermine"--that is, was being interpreted correctly as being in conflict with--the directives of late January which had given the PLA the dominant role. Similarly, Red Flag gave a list of arguments (undoubtedly used by some PLA and government leaders) in support of the case for strong measures to restore order--that the "revolutionary masses are disobedient," that "the left has also committed errors," that "revolutionary mass organizations are not pure," that "organizations of various factions" (not only the militants) have their strong points, that revolutionaries are not concerned with production, that the situation is "confused"--but it also rejected each of these arguments; this editorial took note that the PLA had sometimes supported the wrong groups, and went on to imply that the PLA could hardly go wrong if it supported the most militant.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Sometime prior to 14 May, however, Madame Mao, who was probably as good a friend as the Red Guards had but had been telling them for weeks to shape up, went so far as to say that Red Guard leaders (those ordering attacks on other Red Guard groups and on government and military organs) were "not necessarily following the central committee's instructions." And on 14 May, the same day on which Red Guards reportedly invaded the Foreign Ministry and destroyed documents and beat up some Foreign Ministry officials and PLA personnel they found in their way, the Peking municipal revolutionary committee served notice that it had had enough.

The Peking committee's new line came in the form of a stiff six-point notice, obviously addressed to the most militant rebels, telling them that they must carry out Mao's directive to use reason and not force and that offenders against this principle would be punished (it was specified that the Peking garrison command had the authority to take action), forbidding them to destroy or seize state property, calling for efforts to overcome the "anarchy existing in many localities," speaking of the "sacred duty" of maintaining "revolutionary order" in the interest of protecting the state and state property, and telling all students (Red Guards) to return to their home areas. Hsieh Fu-chih of the PMRC made a commentary on this notice, reportedly stating that there had been a great increase in armed struggles in Peking, that more than 60,000 Red Guards had been involved, that there had been much beating, destruction, looting, and illegal search and arrest, and that the situation was getting worse.

While the situation in Peking apparently improved after the issuance of the 14 May notice, there were still some serious incidents there,* and reports of serious

*Hsiao Hua, director of the General Political Department and one of the principal figures of both the MAC and the PLA/CRG, was himself blamed for one of these incidents, which may have occurred just before the PMRC's six-point notice was issued. Hsiao was held responsible (in posters (footnote continued on page 101)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

disorders continued to come in from the provinces. There were reports of large-scale clashes between "rebel" groups--in some of which PLA units were reportedly involved, as objects of attack or in attempts to make peace or restore order--in which hundreds of people were sometimes killed. "Rebel" posters of course blamed the PLA for initiating incidents in which the PLA was involved, but neutral observers--from whom reports were available in a few instances--placed the blame on the militant "rebels." In view of the directives under which the PLA was then operating, the judgment of those neutral observers was probably correct, at least in the majority of instances.

On 22 May, People's Daily finally called for an end to violence. It took note that these clashes had shifted the focus of the struggle, "wrecked production," upset the "orderly process" (sic) of revolution, destroyed state property and taken lives. It described "struggle by force" as a form not of revolution but of "degeneration," cited both Mao and Lin Piao as opposed to it, and told the Red Guards either to resolve their disputes by discussion or agree to disagree. It set forth the six points of the PMRC notice of 14 May--prohibiting the use of force and destruction of property, calling for an end to anarchy and for maintenance of order, and sending the Red Guards home--and implied that this notice was to be applicable throughout China. The trouble was, however, that an implication of this sort was not nearly enough.

(Footnote continued from page 100) (Continued from page 100)
of late May) for an incident of mid-May in which "his supporters" broke into a building and caused a fight in which hundreds were injured, and was further charged with not recognizing his mistakes and with covering up poster-criticism of those mistakes. More ominously, Lin Piao was said to have joined in this criticism of Hsiao, in effect returning to the charges of January 1967 that Hsiao had made mistakes and would not admit it. That military leaders (like party leaders) were supposed to make self-criticisms was illustrated in the same period (28 May) by the Shantung MD, the party committee of which issued an account of its "errors" which was soon praised by Peking.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

What was still required--if Mao's team was serious about wanting to restore order--was a new directive to the PLA, and some new, clear, tough directives to the Red Guard leaders in private talks.

By late May, there were reports of serious disorders in at least 10 provinces--Kiangsu, Chekiang, Kiangsi, Hupei, Honan, Yunnan, Szechuan, Tibet, Kansu, and Sinkiang, and in an eleventh, Hunan, in early June. Lesser disorders were reported from almost all other provinces. In most of the areas of serious disorder, the local military authorities were being denounced by elements of the "rebels," among other things for supporting opponents of the "rebel" groups doing the denouncing, and in several of these cases there was reason to believe that the "rebel" charges had some basis in fact.* There were only a few reports

*The military commanders of military regions and districts denounced by the Red Guards for offenses against them included: Wei Chieh, commander of the Chengtu MR prior to the reorganization of 7 May; Chen Tsai-tao, commander of the Wuhan MR; Chang Kuo-hua, commander of the Tibet MR; Wang En-mao, commander of the Sinkiang MR; Yang Chao-jui, deputy commander of the Lanchow MR; Chang Shu-chih, commander of the Honan MD; Chang Wen-chun, deputy commander of the Heilungkiang MD; and Chao Yung-fu, deputy commander of the Tsinghai MD. In some cases, Peking supported the judgment of the "rebels" and took appropriate action: Wei Chieh was demoted, and Chao Yung-fu was removed and held up officially as a bad example. In other cases, Peking apparently made a contrary judgment and acted on it: Chang Kuo-hua was assigned concurrently to an even more important post in Tibet, Chen Tsai-tao was publicly defended by an important official of the authoritative CRG (it was conceded that he had made mistakes but asserted that he was correcting them, a line of special interest in the light of the Wuhan Incident of mid-July), and Chang Wen-chun was praised by People's Daily. Wang En-mao was apparently a special case, one in which the judgment of the Red Guards was concurred in by the leaders in Peking but in which those leaders were not yet prepared to act.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

of PLA intervention between the contending groups. In some cases, this general non-intervention seemed explained by the hope of the PLA leaders on the spot that the militant "rebel" groups whom they knew to be opposed to themselves would be beaten in the fighting, and in other cases by the reluctance of the PLA to take action in the light of its orders of late March and early April not to take action without orders from above and in particular not to open fire. (In other words, the March-April orders served some military commanders as an excuse for not intervening, and were for other military commanders the genuine reason for not intervening.) In some or perhaps most of those few instances of PLA intervention, the PLA units themselves were attacked, but there was no good report of the PLA's use of armed force on a significant scale, either in intervening in the first place or in repelling attacks on PLA units. Even those PLA leaders who were not afraid to support "conservative" forces seemed to be afraid of defying Peking's order not to open fire on the masses.

Some observers conjectured at the time that Peking had ceased to announce the establishment of additional three-way alliances and revolutionary committees in the provinces and municipalities because of the inability of the Chinese leaders in Peking to agree on the people to be named to lead them. This may have been true in some instances, but, as other observers (e.g. of DIA) have contended, it seems likely that the revolutionary committees were being formed "from below," and that the failure of new committees to appear represented in the first place the inability of the components of the "alliance" to agree among themselves as to its composition. The clashes among "revolutionary rebel" groups and between the rebels and other components of the alliance were in large part an expression of this inability to agree, and it seemed that in many places further steps could not be taken (e.g. submission of a slate to the local authorities, and then to Peking for approval) until order was again imposed.

A number of provincial broadcasts of the period suggested that disruptive activity by the rebels was the

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

principal factor in their failure to make good progress, and the revolutionary committee in Shantung said this flatly on 28 May. Noting that all of the things cited in the PMRC notice of 14 May had also been taking place in Shantung--"assaults, destruction, looting, confiscation, and illegal arrests"--the committee argued that this violence stood in the way of the "revolutionary great alliance." The Honan Daily took note of the same developments, and emphasized the difficulties of operation caused by the "struggle against the PLA"--including repeated assaults on PLA organizations--by the Red Guards there. The Honan radio went over the same ground on 1 June, reiterating that the 6 April directive was being used to "undermine" the 28 January directive, describing the aim of the militants as that of bringing about a "state of wild confusion," and concluding that it was "necessary to depend on guns...to maintain and consolidate political power." (The Honan broadcasts were special pleading, as there was good evidence that the Red Guards making most of the trouble in Honan were in Peking's favor.) There were similar broadcasts from other provinces, arguing pretty clearly that it was time to send the PLA into action again.

A joint editorial by Red Flag and People's Daily on 1 June stated Peking's apparent agreement with this position--that is, the agreement of most of the leaders in Peking, those in charge of the daily direction of the regime's affairs. The editorial affirmed that new revolutionary committees were "in preparation," but argued that, unless "anarchism" were overcome, the struggle for "seizure of power" would be simply a struggle for power for "small groups" and, even after the seizure of power, it would be "absolutely impossible" for the organs of power to function. Whether a new directive to the PLA was imminent was still debatable, as Mao's own position was not clear;* but there was no doubt of the need for it.

*A poster later reported that Mao had stated a position on 29 May. According to the poster, Mao ordered Hsieh Fu-chih, a senior officer of MAC and Minister of Public Security, to take action to stop armed struggles. However, an order to the commander of public security forces would not seem sufficient; a directive to the PLA as a whole would seem required.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

A new directive was provided on 6 June, in a "circular order" (nation-wide directive) of the central committee, State Council, MAC, and central CRG. The order as reported explained that it was issued "in order to maintain order" in the cultural revolution and specifically to put an end to "assaults, destruction, pillage, raiding, and unauthorized arrests..." The directive expressly forbade unauthorized arrest and detention, theft and destruction of state documents and public property, struggle by force, assaults, fighting in groups, and unauthorized search and confiscation. The directive as reported gave responsibility directly to the PLA ("garrison forces and the armed forces in the various localities"), and it called for "stern" measures to be taken (presumably by the PLA) against violators. Finally, the directive as reported called expressly for "revolutionary mass organizations" (the "rebels," including the Red Guards) to set an example in carrying out the directive.

This directive was more of an appeal to the "rebels," however, than a directive to the PLA. Even as an appeal, the 6 June circular seemed to be defective. It did not, for example, order the warring "rebel" groups to turn in the weapons they already had, as a directive several weeks later was to do. Neither did it clearly signal a change in Peking's attitude toward "rebel" operations against all three types of military leaders in the regional and provincial commands: those who were in apparent good (even high) favor, like Chang Kuo-hua in the Southwest, a type of pressure which Peking took at least a tolerant view of; those who were still in place but not fully trusted or not trusted at all (e.g. in Sinkiang), a type of pressure pretty clearly authorized by Peking; and those whom Peking evidently intended to bring down (e.g. some of the leaders in Chengtu and Wuhan, against which headquarters Madame Mao had explicitly incited the "rebels"), a type of operation positively encouraged by Peking. Beyond this, as a perceptive diplomatic observer noted at once, the student "rebels" could not be expected to abandon their operations on order, because their entire career had come to depend--indeed, had been made by Peking to depend--on their identification with a bona fide revolutionary group. So long as the "rebels" found that they could get away with it, the violence was sure to continue.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The 6 June directive was not satisfactory as an appeal to the PLA either. In the first place, as noted above, it did not call off attacks on military leaders, and therefore gave no incentive to leaders under attack to dissolve "conservative" rebel groups friendly to themselves which they could use to protect themselves. Even with respect to military leaders who were not under attack themselves and had only to intervene in "unprincipled" struggles among rebel groups, the 6 June order tended to give them responsibility without authority, as it did not (as reported) authorize the PLA to use whatever degree of armed force was necessary to make the order effective, and it did not even give the PLA explicit permission to defend itself against attack.

A fuller account of the 6 June directive, received several weeks later, showed that it was even less satisfactory than it had appeared to be in the version first reported. The fuller version showed that the PLA had been given the responsibility in general terms for the enforcement of the order and was authorized to "take into custody and punish" individual "trouble-makers, behind-the-scenes instigators, and murderers," but it was not authorized to use armed force against organizations. This was not a question of the degree of force; the PLA was not authorized to use armed force against organizations at all. With respect to organizations that violated the 6 June directive, they were to be "brought to public notice and criticized." This was hardly any advance on the 6 April directive which had placed crippling restrictions on the PLA and had placed the "rebels" in the dominant position. In particular, while the order apparently modified Lin Piao's 30 March directive to the PLA not to act without express orders from above, it left standing the MAC's 6 April directive which had forbidden them to open fire on mass organizations. This was a critical weakness.

Even without the benefit of the fuller version of the 6 June directive, most observers agreed at the time that it was an open question as to whether the PLA--meaning those PLA leaders on the spot who had no interest in keeping their "own" rebel forces in the field--would

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

proceed aggressively under the terms of this directive. The PLA had been badly burned before--in late March and early April, after it had acted aggressively on the orders of late January--and it would serve Mao right if the PLA were now to proceed very cautiously, allowing Mao's team in Peking to live with the disorder which its own earlier directives had encouraged.*

Mildness and "Mediation", June and Early July 1967

The 6 June circular on the restoration of order did not initiate any new stage in the "cultural revolution." It was clearly not regarded by the regional and provincial military authorities as the answer to their problems with the "rebels." On the contrary, the directive was in general interpreted as promising that, if the PLA were to act aggressively, as it had in February and March, it would be called to account for it again.

So far as could be judged from the provincial radio and from reporting from the field, disorder in all parts of China continued in general much as if the 6 June directive did not exist. Indeed, there was evidence from Wuhan and Chengtu--despite the reorganization of the Chengtu command in early May--that disorder actually increased after the issuance of the 6 June circular, and there were similar indications from Tibet; at Wuhan, "rebel" groups in apparent favor with Peking were reportedly increasing.

*It seemed to this writer, in early June, that the directive (as reported) would be taken by some commanders as permitting aggressive action against disorderly elements, and that some would take such action, while some would not. In the event, so far as could be judged, very few commanders interpreted the directive as an assurance of Peking's support in an aggressive course. In the light of the fuller version of the directive, this is not surprising.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

their pressure (including physical attacks) on PLA units and individual PLA leaders, and these rebel groups were reportedly expressing confidence that their actions would be supported by Mao and Mao's team. In other words, the "rebels" interpreted correctly the 6 June directive--individuals might be punished, but violence by mass organizations would not be. Moreover, evidence was lacking that PLA leaders under attack dissolved any of their "own" rebel organizations. There were only a few reports of PLA leaders being willing to use armed force to intervene between warring groups or even to repel assaults on PLA units.

There were a few pronouncements from Peking and elsewhere during June which were apparently designed in general support of the 6 June directive. For example, the press continued to condemn "anarchism" among mass organizations, and Peking announced that more than 120 Red Guard organizations representing 58 colleges and universities in Peking had agreed to "unite." Similarly, Wen Hui Pao on 27 June called for the masses to cherish and support the PLA, arguing that the PLA's fundamental position was in support of Mao, that it was "extremely wrong" to bombard departments of the armed forces, and so on.

There was no heavy follow-up to the 6 June directive, however, and there were ambiguities in the press and counter-indications from other sources. For example, violent clashes between Red Guard organizations in Peking continued to be reported despite the agreement to "unite," apparently without effective intervention by the Peking garrison forces which had been given the responsibility back in mid-May and again in the 6 June circular. Similarly, the Wen Hui Pao editorial in defense of the PLA condemned only the "frequent" direction of the struggle against the PLA and only the "frequent" dragging-out of PLA leaders, rather than forbidding these actions altogether, as might have been expected if the PLA were supposed to move aggressively against the forces of disorder. Further, Hsieh Fu-chih reportedly said privately that it was impossible to judge when the revolution would end, that even in the top leadership of the party there were frequent "heated discussions" of this question.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

On the same day (27 June) that Wen Hui Pao was stating an ambivalent or at least qualified attitude toward the PLA, the PLA's own newspaper made clear that PLA leaders throughout China had made a wise decision in declining to act aggressively under the terms of the 6 June directive. The Liberation Army Daily reaffirmed the task of supporting the forces of the "left" against the conservatives, and then went on to reaffirm that the PLA was not to use force against mass organizations. In dealing with "various organs of the revolutionary left that hold differing views," the editorial said, the PLA should refrain from giving strong support to one side while attacking the other side--in other words, should not use force against either--and should help them to "seek a common ground while maintaining minor differences of view..." The editorial went on to advise the PLA not to try to "see new things...through old glasses," as in this case it would "fail to understand or even view with disgust the revolutionary spirit of rebellion and the revolutionary actions of the left," and would "be unable to discern the left or to support them." The PLA, the editorial said, should not regard as the "enemy" even those elements of the masses which had joined conservative organizations. (This could have been a useful line to some PLA leaders, in that it would permit them to mediate between their "own" and other Red Guard forces if Peking did not interfere.) Finally, in dealing with mass organizations of any kind, the PLA must not subject them to methods used on enemies, but should discuss things ("have a nice talk") with them, should be ready to admit the PLA's own "errors," and should suffer criticism patiently.

It was apparent that order would not be restored by PLA forces in the field acting under such a directive. In the first place, the editorial indicated clearly that the leaders in Peking did not agree with some of the judgments made by the PLA in the field, and that Peking intended to reverse such judgments--a message which would of course encourage anew those "leftists" who expected to be vindicated. Beyond this, even if a particular judgment were upheld by Peking, the PLA commander was not permitted to use force to carry out the judgment, i.e.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

to suppress or disband the competing organizations; instead, the PLA commanders were expected to find a common ground among competing groups which were killing each other by the thousands, and in many cases for "principled" differences which could not be compromised but could only be overridden. Finally, even if the PLA commanders were somehow able to dissuade the "revolutionary rebel" groups from killing one another, the PLA clearly could not impose order unless it was authorized to use armed force against those "rebel" groups which were physically attacking the PLA itself; far from being authorized to use this force, the PLA was being told again to "support" the forces most hostile to itself. If the team in Peking were at all serious about restoring order through "mediation" among rebel organizations, then Peking would have to send help, for example in the forms of (a) the dispatch of delegations from Peking, to attempt mediation on the spot or to choose between the competing claims and authorize the PLA to enforce the decision, and which in either case would have to order "rebel" organizations on the spot --through explicit orders from Peking leaders which could not be evaded--to cease and desist from attacks on one another and on the PLA, or (b) the dispatch of clear directives from Peking, with Mao's authority and name behind them, to impose the terms of a compromise and subdue the rebels.

Within a week or so, it was apparent that Mao's team in Peking did intend to undertake mediation in some especially troubled areas. In other words, Peking intended to try to get agreements from "rebel" groups to obey the provisions of the 6 June directive. This intention may have been stated officially in a joint MAC/CRG directive of 30 June or in a central committee directive of about the same date.* Peking was to do this by the

*The Yunnan press in mid-July cited as authoritative documents--leading to the agreement in Yunnan--the 6 June central committee directive, a joint MAC/CRG four-point directive of 30 June, Kang Sheng's 1 July directive addressed explicitly to Yunnan, and "other central committee directives" of the time. A poster later identified (footnote continued on page 111)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

dispatch of delegations to some of the most troubled areas and by mediation in Peking itself among the representatives of competing organizations from some of these areas. On 3 July, Hsieh Fu-chih of the Military Affairs Committee and the PLA's Cultural Revolution Group, Wang Li of the central CRG, and Yu Li-chin, Political Officer of the CCAF, were revealed to be in Kunming, where they had spent some days sorting out local problems; the trip was to take them also to Chengtu and Chungking in Szechuan, and to Wuhan in central China. And at about the same time (it was soon revealed), representatives of "mass organizations" in Honan were in Peking working out an agreement. (There was also an unconfirmed report of the period of welcoming posters in the Northeast for Lin Piao.)

As for the Kunming affair, first, Hsieh Fu-chih reportedly announced his mission as that of resolving conflicts between the PLA and the revolutionary rebels and among the rebels themselves. It was stated publicly that Chairman Mao "had sent" Hsieh's delegation and that the delegation was bearing Chairman Mao's "instructions," although the local press reported that the directive on Yunnan (dated 1 July) had actually been drafted by Kang Sheng.

Kunming's account of the talks at the time--and of the agreement reached--indicated that Hsieh's delegation (speaking for Peking) did not choose officially between the two principal "rebel" organizations. Peking's directive, however, probably worked to the advantage of the more clearly "Maoist" group which had seemed to enjoy Peking's favor, but which was much smaller than the other

(footnote continued from page 110)

a central committee directive of 6 July calling in general terms--as Mao had reportedly called on 29 May--for an end to violent struggles. Nothing further is known about this reported directive; it was presumably regarded as a useful supporting document for specific mediation efforts.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

and, in the absence of strong support by the local PLA leaders, would be expected to lose out in an open struggle.* According to the Yunnan press in mid-July (received later), the 11 July agreement between the two Red Guard bodies--an agreement reached "on the basis of" Kang's directive--called for them to cease their poster attacks on local military leaders and to stop breaking into military organs and assaulting PLA personnel, to stop stealing and using weapons and to put an end to all forms of violence against Red Guard opponents, to concentrate fire on discredited party leaders, to stop denouncing party cadres indiscriminately, to maintain labor discipline, and to halt sabotage of all forms of transportation. This was essentially an agreement to carry out the 6 June directive, plus an explicit agreement not to attack the PLA (the latter being implicit but not explicit in the 6 June directive).**

*This was probably the case in most of those areas in which the lines of struggle were drawn between (a) a local organization responsive or at least friendly to the local military authorities and (b) another organization--sometimes guided by 'outsiders' from Peking--hostile to the local military authorities. That is, in the nature of the case, the local military authorities, with the resources at their command, could bring the groups friendly to themselves into a position of dominance over the others, unless prevented from doing so by direct orders from Peking or by agreements of this sort which would compel them to ensure the continued good health of the minority group.

**On 10 July, a reported CCP central committee statement on a report by the party committee of the Honan Military District--a report on its "errors...in supporting the left"--revealed that representatives of Honan "mass organizations" meeting in Peking had concluded a six-point agreement--presumably similar to Yunnan's--on cessation of the use of force and on other matters. The tactic chosen was to blame the second political officer of the military district for these "errors" (bypassing the first political officer, long deposed, and the military commander, out of sight), and to name as head of the preparatory group for a revolutionary committee in Honan a party secretary (footnote continued on page 113)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The official account gave no indication of what action Hsieh's group may have taken with respect to leaders of the Kunming Military Region and the Yunnan Military District, some of whom had apparently been at odds on the question of which Red Guard organization to support. Posters reported, however, that the Peking directive did deal inter alia with the reorganization of the Kunming MR, and it seems likely, despite the delegation's official neutrality on the divisive issue of which "rebel" organization to support, that the directive confirmed or revealed the reassignment of the military commander (missing two months) and/or some other officers of the regional headquarters.

Hsieh's delegation went on to Chengtu and Chungking in Szechuan, where the headquarters of the Chengtu Military Region had been thoroughly reorganized in May but where the disorders seemed nevertheless to be much more serious now than in Yunnan. The picture was very confusing, but the trouble seemed to derive both from competition for position among "rebel" organizations and from Peking's determination to clean out every scrap of the party apparatus in the province--regarded as corrupted utterly by Teng Hsiao-ping and Li Ching-chuan, two of the principal "anti-party" villains who had been first secretaries of the Southwest Bureau. Portions of this apparatus were apparently thought to be dug into many parts of the province, and to control a formidable body of mass organizations, in particular a so-called "Industrial Army" in the cities. There was no official account of the line taken by Hsieh's delegation in either Chengtu or Chungking,

(footnote continued from page 112)

in favor with Peking and in apparent favor with the militant Red Guards. Similar talks may have been underway with representatives of the contending forces in other provinces, e.g. Tsinghai, Fukien, and Kansu. In these provinces, however, Peking's interest was not in "mediation" but in the selection and imposition of preferred groups.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

but posters reported Hsieh as saying, on his return to Peking, that the Southwest as a whole (including Kunming, Chengtu, and Chungking) was in better shape than "Wuhan" (i.e. part of central China, the Wuhan Military Region), as the Southwest's problems related to such "comparatively easy" questions as internal conflicts among the leftists and attitudes toward conservative organizations. This suggested faintly that Hsieh's line in Chengtu and Chungking was to try to get a cease-fire among the several acceptable "rebel" groups identified by Chou En-lai in May, and to encourage them in a combined operation against the "Industrial Army." If so, the agreement apparently fell apart, as another mission was reportedly sent to Chengtu to arrange a cease-fire several weeks later.

While Hsieh's mission was touring the Southwest, the party press in various parts of China continued to denounce "unprincipled civil wars" and "anarchism," and on 11 July the Congress of Red Guards in Peking (including the groups in highest favor) announced that they would resume classes in the universities to "make revolution" (i.e. to make it there, in the universities, rather than at random around China). The PLA newspaper on 16 July was moved to praise the "thousands of young revolutionary fighters" (Red Guards and other "rebels") who were conducting the struggle against the "bourgeois reactionary" line and its exponents. The newspaper called again for the PLA to support the "left," learn from the masses, correct its mistakes, and so on.

At this time, mid-July, the time of the arrival of Hsieh Fu-chih's delegation at the troubled military region headquarters at Wuhan, a survey of the reporting from all parts of China indicated more widespread, and generally more serious, disorders than had been apparent in late May and early June (for a recapitulation of which see page 102).* It was obvious by this time that the

*An excellent compilation of the materials bearing on both periods was prepared by OCI in July and August. The above summary of the situation as of mid-July makes heavy use of the materials compiled by OCI, as supplemented by reports coming to hand later.

~~SECRET~~

6 June circular had positively encouraged the forces of disorder--by making clear to them that they could still get away with it, that the PLA was not allowed to take aggressive action against them.

There was detailed, credible reporting of serious disorders in June and early July in nine of the 11 provinces in which such disorders had been reported in May (the situations in Yunnan and Kansu had apparently improved), plus serious disorders in four provinces from which disorders on this scale had not been reported in May (Liaoning, Kirin, Fukien, and Kwangsi), plus (as before) lesser disorders in almost all other provinces. To break it down by military regions: the Peking MR was pretty quiet, with a few serious incidents reported in Peking itself, but with only minor incidents in the rest of Hopei and in Shansi; only minor incidents were reported from the Inner Mongolian MR; in the Mukden MR, Heilung-kiang was quiet, but serious trouble was now reported from both Liaoning (mainly in Mukden) and Kirin (mainly in Changchun); in the Tsinan MR, Shantung was pretty quiet; in the Nanking MR, Anhwei was generally quiet, but serious clashes were again reported from both Kiangsu (Nanking, Shanghai, Hsuchow, Hangchow, and Wuhsi) and Chekiang (especially Amoy and Wenchow); in the Foochow MR, Kiangsi (especially Nanchang) remained in disorder, and much violence was now reported from Fukien; in the Canton MR, Kwangtung had not yet erupted on a large scale (it was soon to), but Hunan (especially Changsha) continued in turmoil, and serious trouble was now reported from Kwangsi (especially Nanning); in the Wuhan MR, large-scale clashes continued in Hupei (especially in the tri-city complex of Wuhan) and in Honan (despite the agreement of early July); the Kunming MR appeared to be pretty quiet in the wake of Hsieh's mission, with only minor incidents reported in both Yunnan and Kweichow but serious fighting may have resumed in Yunnan at just about this time; the Chengtu MR clearly continued to be in turmoil, despite Hsieh's mission, with serious clashes reported from many points in Szechuan; in the Tibet MR, serious clashes had apparently resumed after early July; the Kansu MR was quiet, with only minor incidents reported in all four of its provinces, Kansu, Shensi, Tsinghai, and Ninghsia; and, finally, in the Sinkiang MR serious clashes reportedly continued.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

With respect to the question of PLA support for the "left" in June and early July, it was again the case, as in May and early June, that in most of the areas of serious trouble the local military authorities were being denounced by elements of the "rebels" on the spot, for failing to "support" them properly (or actively supporting their opponents); and these charges now sometimes included the accusation that elements of the PLA were arming the opponents of elements of the "rebels." Moreover, as in May and early June, PLA units were sometimes being physically attacked by elements of the "rebels" (seeking weapons or revenge), and apparently on an increasing scale; there were many more reports of this in June and early July than in May and early June (most often in the areas of serious trouble), some of them confirmed by spokesmen for the regime. As in May and early June, in June and early July the PLA was in general reluctant to intervene in the interest of restoring order; there were a few reports--some probably true--of the intervention of this or that PLA unit to avert or halt a clash between "rebel" groups or to protect military installations, but even in these few cases the PLA rarely if ever chose to use its weapons as more than a threat, and there were many more reports that the PLA was standing clear of the clashes or even had refused a request to intervene. Further, as in May and early June, PLA units under physical attack apparently rarely if ever used their weapons to defend themselves against attack, and it was credibly reported--as would be expected from the 6 June circular--that they continued to be under orders to get permission from higher levels before opening fire even to defend themselves. The PLA was still, then, in an indefensible position from almost any point of view, and it had Chairman Mao to thank for it.

The Wuhan Incident and Its Backlash, Late July 1967

Hsieh Fu-chih's delegation from Peking was in Wuhan for about eight days in the middle of July, and during that period was subjected to indignities which have since become known as the Wuhan Incident. The incident, in

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

which the commander of the Wuhan military region clearly failed to do as much as he could to ensure that these emissaries of Chairman Mao were deferred to and obeyed, has been interpreted by some observers as marking an important stage in the development of the "cultural revolution"; the argument is that Peking "failed" to take prompt action against this commander and thus made him look successfully "defiant," which encouraged others to flout Peking. Other observers (including this writer), however, think the record shows that Peking punished the Wuhan commander not only promptly but severely, and believe further that Mao's team took a hard line in the Peking conference of regional military leaders which immediately followed it.

Hsieh Fu-chih's delegation arrived in Wuhan on or about 14 July, just prior to an especially vigorous demonstration against the Wuhan commander, Chen Tsai-tao, by militant "rebel" groups which had long been denouncing Chen for his demonstrated preference for another organization friendly to himself. As reported by the Red Guard press, the announced mission of Hsieh's delegation, in Wuhan as in Kunming and probably Chengtu and Chungking,* was to mediate between the principal warring groups--to get them first to stop fighting and then to work out an agreement on the basis of the "six points" formulated by the CRG. (It will be recalled that the joint MAC/CRG directive of 30 June cited in connection with the Yunnan agreement was said to have four points, whereas Kang Sheng's directive for Yunnan had six points; it is not clear to which one Hsieh was referring here, but they were presumably congruous--that is, the MAC/CRG document existed first as a general directive, directives for specific areas were prepared from it, and agreements in specific areas

*Hsieh is quoted as saying that the delegation had gone to "other places" besides these four; it is not known whether the reference is to other regional centers, (he was later alleged to have come to Fukien) or to side-trips to smaller towns.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

followed the lines of the directives.) Hsieh's delegation spent a few days talking with the warring factions and criticized both sides for fighting and for reviling their opponents, and cited Mao's instructions that members of "conservative" and even "reactionary" organizations were to be brought over by ideological work. Even if Hsieh's delegation had continued to be impartial in this sense, his mediation mission in Wuhan, as in Kunming and perhaps in other places he visited, would have worked to the advantage of Peking's favorites, because on Hsieh's own showing the militant Red Guards had a smaller organization than their opponents and were getting the worst of it in the fighting. But Hsieh's delegation went further than this. On 19 July, Hsieh and Wang Li (the second-ranking member of the delegation) told the Wuhan authorities that the latter had been backing the wrong set of revolutionary rebels (mainly the strong organization called the 'Million Heroes'), and that the delegation had a directive from Chou En-lai making official Peking's support of other "rebel" groups and classifying the opposing groups as "conservative";* this would have course have placed the Wuhan authorities in the position of being openly defiant of Peking--which they had not yet been, although they had probably long recognized Peking's preference--if they were to persist in their support of groups now officially classified as "conservative."

This official decision in favor of one set of "rebel" organizations over another set--a decision which almost

*According to a later (22 or 23 July) speech by Hsieh, the "conservatives" refused to accept this ruling as coming from Chou, and attributed it to the delegation itself --perhaps on the ground that the delegation had not produced it on arrival. Hsieh made clear in this speech that at least one action by his mission was predetermined --he was to "reverse the verdict" on one of the militant "rebel" organizations which had been proscribed by the Wuhan MR, possibly for persistent physical attacks on PLA units.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

certainly was, as Hsieh claimed, made in Peking, or made on the basis of a directive from Peking--seems to have marked the beginning of a shift of emphasis in Peking's policy toward competing "rebel" organizations, and consequently toward the dual objectives of maintaining revolutionary momentum and controlling disorder. While Peking continued to speak in terms of mediation, voluntary agreement, and amalgamation, in the next few weeks Peking officially designated its favorites (some of them of long standing) in several areas and took steps to place them in positions of dominance over their competitors, and even reorganized some of the military commands to this end. This shift may have represented a sudden decision in Peking, on the basis of intelligence on the results of Hsieh's "mediation" in Kunming and Szechuan, and on Hsieh's findings in Wuhan; that is, Mao's team in Peking may have had word that serious fighting had resumed in Yunnan soon after Hsieh's departure (it is not clear when it resumed), may have learned that any agreements concluded in Szechuan had already come apart (there was no discernible break in the fighting there), and may have been advised by Hsieh after his first few days there that mediation would not work in Wuhan. The shift was not radical, as the "mediation" agreements were presumably meant from the start as the first stage in a process by which Peking's favorites would be brought to the top (where the favorites were not yet determined, an agreement to cease the use of force would protect all groups until a determination was made), but the shift meant that a stage or two in the process would be eliminated.

Events in Wuhan did not work out according to the script; instead, the situation came apart at once. Upon learning of the delegation's statement, components of the "conservative" organizations staged a demonstration during the night of the 19th. According to Red Guard accounts, Hsieh prevented a battle between "rebel" groups by getting word to the now officially-favored groups that they should not come to the scene, whereupon Chen committed his first offense by telling Hsieh that Hsieh's delegation would have to work out its own measures to secure its safety. (In other words, Chen was putting Hsieh and Wang in the position that Chen and other PLA leaders had been

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

in for months: that of being the object of "rebel" attacks against which they could defend themselves only by relying on other rebel forces responsive to them.) Still according to the Red Guard material, Hsieh and Wang then confronted the clamoring demonstrators, and were making some headway with them when elements of an independent PLA division and some public security troops arrived on the scene. At least under the protection of these forces, and possibly in conjunction with these forces, elements of the "conservative" rebel groups, after vainly beseeching Hsieh and Wang to change the announced decision, surrounded them and roughed them up. This would be Chen's second offense--his failure to intercede with these "rebel" forces believed responsive to him, or to order the military forces on the scene or other military forces to protect the distinguished visitors. Hsieh was apparently kept under seige in the building, but Wang--according to the account--was seized by the "rebels" or a joint force of rebels and soldiers and taken to a room in the Military Region headquarters for a typical Red Guard interrogation (in which he got roughed up again), after which he was locked up. The accounts imply that Chen's third offense came at this point, in that he failed to do what he could to find and rescue Wang; but it is not clear whether Hsieh was attempting to work through Chen. (There are poster reports that Chou En-lai made a trip or two in this period to arrange the release of Hsieh and Wang; these are unconfirmed, and Chou is given no role in the only detailed account available--that of the militant Red Guards--or in Hsieh Fu-chih's account, but this may have been true.*.) At any rate, according to the Red Guards, Wang escaped detention on the following evening (20 July) and made contact with elements of the 29th Division. (As this may be

*Whatever Chou's role, there is some reason to believe the Red Guard account of the central role of the CCAF in rescuing and protecting Hsieh and Wang in Wuhan itself. Two high-ranking officers of the CCAF were assigned as acting commander and senior political officer of the Wuhan Military Region within a few days of the incident.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

the same "independent" division to which those forces belonged who were protecting or assisting the oppressors of Hsieh and Wang on 19 July, it may be that elements of this division were responding to different orders, or that the division as a whole was brought into line by Chen Tsai-tao on 20 July in an effort to make amends; in this connection, it is of interest that Hsieh himself, in his 22 or 23 July speech as reported, did not blame Chen Tsai-tao principally for having caused the incident, but assigned the principal blame to the commander of the independent division and the political committee of the Wuhan MR [probably headed by the political officer who was soon dismissed along with Chen], and thus in effect charged Chen only with failing to have the forces under his command actually under his control. (This is not to minimize Chen's offense, which on any reading was serious; but it was apparently short of a capital offense.) Still according to the Red Guard account, elements of the 29th Division, with the assistance of CCAF units in Wuhan, got Wang to the airport and protected him. On the following night (the early hours of 22 July), in the same account, CCAF units surreptitiously rescued Hsieh from the building in which he had been "blockaded" since the 20th and re-united Hsieh with Wang at the airport. They then "gloriously returned" to Peking.

The managers of the "cultural revolution" were clearly infuriated by the Wuhan Incident, and some seem to have been alarmed. Chen Po-ta and Kang Sheng are said to have told the Red Guards on 21 July that "conservative" rebel forces from both Wuhan and Szechuan were moving in large numbers towards a junction with similar forces in Honan, raising the spectre of an enormous armed opposition roaming the countryside of central China. (So far as we know, this did not happen.) On 22 July, Madame Mao, speaking to a "revolutionary rebel" group, denounced the 'Million Heroes' of Wuhan and declared that the "revolutionary masses can use weapons in self-defense." Spelling it out, the Madame told them that if, for instance, their opponents, following the conclusion of an agreement on the cessation of armed struggle, failed to put down their weapons, then the "rebels" need not put down their own weapons. (She cited the recent cease-fire agreement in

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Honan as an example of the kind of agreement that should not be broken; ironically, Peking itself was soon to subvert this agreement.) The Madame's counsel, in slogan form, was "Attack by words, defend by weapons" (also given sometimes as 'Attack by reason, defend by force'). The Madame's counsel probably contributed heavily to the increased seriousness of the fighting in several parts of China after the Wuhan Incident. There was a great increase in fighting with serious weapons--not just sticks and stones--after Wuhan, reportedly the result in part of direct supply by the PLA but probably in larger part owing to the seizure of weapons by "rebel" groups acting on the Madame's counsel. The Madame in effect withdrew this counsel in early September when Peking finally took serious steps to control disorder.

On 23, 24 and 25 July there were rallies in several cities of China to denounce Chen Tsai-tao, who had evidently been chosen to play the role of "negative example" for other military leaders involved with the Red Guards. Wuhan broadcasts of 25 July indicated that Chen had been relieved of his command by that date, and posters reported that Yu Li-chin, the third-ranking member of Hsieh's delegation and the political chief of the CCAF, had been left behind as acting commander of the Wuhan MR. On 26 July, the Wuhan Military Region made a public examination of its "errors" (under Chen Tsai-tao) and on the same day, according to posters, Chen was "dragged out" and "interrogated" by Red Guards in Peking. (The date of his recall to Peking is uncertain, presumably sometime between the 22nd and 25th; there is no indication that he resisted this recall.) In late July Red Flag and Liberation Army Daily denounced the bad "handful" in Wuhan responsible for the incident (People's Daily asserted that there was still a bad "handful" in Wuhan, where serious clashes reportedly continued for a time), and in the first week of August Chen and his political officer were officially replaced by Tseng Szu-yu (from the Mukden MR) as commander and Liu Feng (previously deputy commander of the CCAF in Wuhan) as political officer.

In the same period, Mao's team in Peking reportedly moved with dispatch to bring its favorite Red Guard organization in Honan (a favoritism which had been evident for

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

months) into a position of dominance. There is credible reporting that the decision was made official on or about 25 July, that local military authorities in Honan were ordered to support Peking's group (the '7 February commune'), that they did so (thus overriding the cease-fire agreement), and that the PLA-backed rebels were dominant among "rebel" groups throughout Honan by early August. The operation was perhaps not perfectly smooth, as Peking may have partially reorganized the Honan MD in August, but the end was achieved.

During the last week of July, several of the military commanders and political officers of the 13 military regions of China were identified in Peking. In addition to the commanders and political officers of the Peking Military Region itself (normally based in Peking), these included: Chen Hsi-lien, commander of the Mukden MR, and the former political officer, Sung Jen-chiung; Yang Te-chih, commander of the Tsinan MR; Han Hsien-chu, presumed commander of the Foochow MR; Huang Yung-sheng, commander of the Canton MR; and Hsien Heng-han, political officer of the Lanchow MR (Chang Ta-chih, the commander, remained out of sight, although he later reappeared). Probably present as well were the new commander and political officer of the Wuhan MR, and one or another of the principal figures of the Nanking MR (e.g. Chang Chun-chiao, the political officer, although the military commander, Hsu Shih-yu, was still missing). No officers from the Kunming MR or from the Chengtu MR--both of which had recently been visited by a delegation from Peking--were identified; nor were any from Sinkiang (a special case). While some observers have surmised that these military leaders invited themselves to Peking to make a demarche to Mao and Lin,* it seems much more likely that Lin and other leaders of Mao's team present in Peking at the time summoned these regional military leaders to Peking to state a hard line to them.

*Lin met with these leaders at least once, but Mao was not identified in Peking after 11 July.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Those observers who believe that the regional military leaders invited themselves to Peking further surmise that they successfully put pressure on Mao and Lin--or Lin and Chou--not to take action against the disgraced Chen Tsai-tao. This surmise seems contrary to the evidence, as Chen in that same week was removed from his command, recalled to Peking, subjected (reportedly) to Red Guard harassment, and denounced, and was soon to be officially replaced.* However, the Peking conference, which reportedly considered the Wuhan Incident, would have given the assembled regional military leaders an opportunity to point out to Peking in an acceptable way that all of them were faced with the kind of problems with "revolutionary rebels" that Chen in Wuhan had been faced with, and that their directives from Peking had put them in an impossible position. The case could not have been put as baldly as this to Mao (perhaps not in any terms to the fantastically vain and self-righteous Mao), but one can imagine it being put in a polite Chinese way to Lin and Chou, who in Mao's absence (which was apparently the case) would probably have been to some degree sympathetic to it. The case--discussed among these old comrades who were not in a hostile relationship--would be: that most of the PLA's regional military leaders were faced with increasing disorder, mainly initiated by the militant "rebels", including a mounting number of attacks on PLA units themselves; that this disorder could be controlled if the PLA were permitted to use armed force in implementing either "mediation" efforts or directives to support given groups (and, as part of this, to disarm those groups that were armed), and if Peking were concurrently to withdraw material support from fighting groups and to order all "rebel" groups to cease and desist from attacks on the PLA, and if Peking in particular were to allow the PLA to use armed force against "rebel" groups which violated

*Peking does not normally announce further punishments, such as imprisonment or execution or pulling out fingernails, at the time, and, on this reading, had already punished Chen sufficiently anyway.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

such an order; but that, in the absence of such orders, the PLA would continue to suffer attacks, would continue to fail in mediation efforts, and would continue to make "mistakes" in attempting to identify the "genuine" leftists (meaning both genuine mistakes and the deliberate support or mobilization of other groups in self-defense), and that disorder on a large scale would continue or even increase.

Judging from developments both before and after the conference, the party leaders present in Peking--Lin and Chou, principally--probably did give the assembled leaders some further guidance, but for the most part it was apparently the kind of guidance they did not want to hear. In other words, the line taken was hard on the PLA, no matter how politely phrased.

The party leaders presumably informed the military leaders that the agreements reached in Yunnan and Szechuan had broken down, and that agreements on the Yunnan model (which had included an agreement to cease attacks on PLA personnel and installations) would be included wherever they seemed practicable, but that the emphasis had shifted now to discrimination among these groups and the installation of Peking's favorites; and further, that local military authorities, whether operating under a directive calling for "mediation," amalgamation, or frank discrimination, would now be held responsible for placing the groups selected by Peking in the dominant positions --meaning that some of them would now have to stop supporting "conservative" organizations. The party leaders may also have told the military leaders of their intention to order "warring" rebel groups to turn in their weapons (although this was not yet, apparently, a major problem) and of their intention to authorize PLA units to use force if this authorization should be regarded as necessary at a later date; and they may have given the military leaders assurances that continuing Red Guard attacks on them did not mean that they personally were in disfavor with Peking or not fully trusted by Peking. But the party leaders under existing directives clearly could not give the military leaders an assurance that they would not continue to be subject to such attacks, as neither "mediation" nor

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

the preferment of Peking's favorites in itself would ensure an end to such attacks; moreover, the military leaders, charged with restoring order, surely wanted faster action from Peking on the matter of turning in weapons and on the matter of authorization to use military force if necessary. (Subsequent developments and reports indicated strongly that the PLA throughout August still lacked orders which would permit it to disarm "rebels" or to back up "mediation" efforts and Peking's other decisions by the use of armed force or even to open fire to defend itself against physical attack.) Moreover, these regional military leaders were surely aware--from the fate of regional party leaders given reassurances in the October 1966 work conference and from the fate of some of the military leaders reassured early in 1967--that any reassurances given them on this occasion could not be relied upon.

In this connection, the party leaders at this conference may not have given the military leaders any reassurances at all, but may have told them frankly that they would either shape up or be purged. There were intimations in editorials in the party and military press at the end of July (surrounding Army Day) that Mao's team in Peking intended, in the wake of the Wuhan Incident, to purge a number of other military leaders, both outside of Peking and in Peking itself; and it may have given this bad news to the military leaders assembled in Peking in late July. In addition to the People's Daily reference to a bad handful still active in Wuhan, Red Flag asserted that the Wuhan Incident was "by no means an isolated and fortuitous struggle." This party journal, in describing the bad "handful" of party and army leaders in Wuhan as having acted not fortuitously but as agents of the biggest party persons" in disfavor, went on to call for the "overthrow" of the bad "handful...in the army," and declared that the movement of criticism and repudiation then unfolding was directed against the bad "handful" in both the party and the army.* Liberation

*There is good evidence that the Red Flag editorial in particular was taken by militant "revolutionary rebels" as a call to intensified action against PLA leaders. Wang Li, one of the editors of Red Flag, was apparently made (footnote continued on page 127)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Army Daily, the PLA's own paper, also strongly implied that another stage of the purge lay ahead, in calling for the liquidation of the continging influence of the bad "handful" in the army. Moreover, posters of the time soon accused Hsu Hsiang-chien and Yeh Chien-ying of the military leadership in Peking of having bonds with the bad elements at Wuhan, and Peking was soon to charge the General Political Department with a share of the responsibility for the Wuhan Incident. Further, the military leaders could surely assume, from the line taken by the party and military press in this period, that their "rebel" antagonists would be encouraged to make fresh attacks and assaults on them--which in fact happened. Finally, Chou En-lai reportedly announced in this same week that the Hunan MD--subordinate to the Canton MR--had made "errors" and would be reorganized, an earnest of the fate awaiting those regional military leaders who did not fully cooperate. In sum, the leaders of the PLA had abundant reason at the end of July to be concerned about Peking's intentions toward them.

(footnote continued from page 126)

a scapegoat about a month later when the "leftist" line changed, a line which of course had been approved by Mao and Lin. Wang was also charged, however, with the responsibility for encouraging (in this 30 July editorial) the young militants to "drag out" additional leaders of the PLA, a line which Mao and other leaders were soon to repudiate; while it is impossible to know the truth about this, it may be that Wang in this editorial exceeded his instructions. This does not mean that Mao and others did not intend to purge any additional PLA leaders--in fact they went on to do so; but they may not have wished to encourage any further disorder by the "rebels."

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Momentum and The Fall of Hsiao Hua, August 1967

The problem for Mao's team in Peking as of early August was still that of maintaining the momentum of the "revolution" (as Mao clearly wished) while at the same time bringing under control the disorders which were already serious at the time of the Wuhan Incident and which apparently increased at several points thereafter. The first of these objectives, apparently as an over-reaction to the Wuhan Incident, seemed to have the priority as of early August. The new emphasis on the rapid preferment of Peking's favorites, looking toward the early formation of additional "revolutionary committees," together with a new stage of the purge of unsatisfactory military leaders in Peking and the provinces, served more to maintain momentum than to control disorder. Whatever the mixture of the two objectives, there were the questions of whether the PLA would be properly responsive, whether the various "rebel" groups would be responsive, whether Mao's team in Peking would be able in all cases to act effectively against PLA leaders who were not responsive, whether Mao's team would be willing to give the PLA the kind of directives it needed to deal with "rebels" who were not responsive, and, in sum, whether the result might not be greater disorder than ever, posing in turn the question of whether Mao's team might so mismanage its affairs in general and its relations with the PLA in particular as to cause the PLA at the center to try to overthrow Mao's team or the PLA leaders outside Peking to try to set up regional alliances against the team. As it turned out, after mid-August there was a shift back to an emphasis on measures to control disorder, even if revolutionary momentum had to be sacrificed--a shift of emphasis which was given practical expression in early September.

Posters and the party press from early August occasionally--not emphatically--associated Mao himself with the wish for greater order. He was reported to have expressed displeasure with "chaos," describing it as greater in 1967 than in 1966, and to have called for a concentration on major targets (the bad "handful"). He was also

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

said to have commented scornfully on the qualifications of the Red Guards for high office, and a People's Daily editorial of the time quoted Mao's famous dictum about rebellion being justified and then went on to explain that of course not all rebellion was justified.

Along the same lines, members of Mao's team were reportedly telling representatives of some contending groups among the "revolutionary rebels" that they must stop stealing arms from the PLA and indeed must turn back those they had already stolen. Further, Kuan Feng of the CRG was reportedly sent to the Northeast, where clashes were said to have disrupted industry and mining, and "revolutionary" groups in a few places were reported to be adopting resolutions--of the Kunming type--promising to work for "unity."

In the same period, Peking was moving aggressively to install its favorites in some places and to reorganize some of the military commands which had not been or were not now fully cooperative. As previously noted, Peking had officially stated its favor for one set of "rebels" in Honan in late July, and now reportedly moved troops inside the province to make its will effective and, perhaps, to reorganize the Honan military district. It may have taken steps at the same time to reorganize the Hunan MD for the same purpose of ensuring military support for its favorites there; the 47th Army was soon reported to be acting as Peking's main instrument in Hunan. The Wuhan Military Region, already reorganized, was apparently ordered to take action against the discredited 'Million Heroes,' as this organization was soon reported to be collapsing; and the Hupei military district subordinate to the Wuhan MR was apparently being reorganized along with the MR. In the Kansu MD, Kansu radio in early August reported that "Mao himself" had formulated a solution to the Kansu question, the radio identified the Red Guard organizations in Kansu that the masses were henceforth to "follow," and the press soon praised the PLA for supporting them. In Tsinghai, another "revolutionary committee" appeared and was recognized--the first since April--and Liberation Army Daily praised the Tsinghai MD and PLA units there for having supported the correct revolutionary

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

groups (although in fact elements of the PLA in Tsinghai had been purged earlier for repressing Peking's favorites). There was some evidence from Red Guard materials that Peking was taking steps to reorganize the Chekiang MD and had already moved troops in support of its favorites. Finally, Peking reorganized the Kiangsi MD--reportedly moving two PLA divisions into the province to back up the decision--under a directive (attributed to Mao personally) which reportedly ordered the new military commander and new political officer to arm the "revolutionary masses" (i.e. the groups which Peking had given its favor to).* This last provision was of course of special interest, because, taken together with the reported private remarks of Chinese leaders in this period (about turning in weapons), it suggested an intention to try to get all arms back in the hands of the PLA and other local authorities and then to distribute some of them to favored Red Guard groups, a very hazardous policy.

In the same period, while some steps to restore order were taken and some agitated areas (e.g. Wuhan) were reported to be quieting down, there were reports from several areas of continued, large-scale, and well-armed violence. Hsieh Fu-chih reportedly stated on 10 August that fighting was "especially serious" in Wuhan, Changsha, and four cities in Kiangsi (in all of which areas the military commands had been or were being re-organized): other evidence did not support Hsieh's evaluation of the situation in Wuhan, but it supported him on Changsha and Kiangsi, and he might have added Chengtu and Canton.

Moreover, some of the "revolutionary committees" already in place in five provinces were proving unstable

*In September, Peking was to report that Mao himself had just returned from an "inspection" trip of the five provinces of which the MD commands had been or may have been reorganized in August--Honan, Hunan, Hupei, Chekiang, and Kiangsi.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

--that is, were under attack by disgruntled "revolutionaries," or were suffering internal divisions. Posters indicated that the Shansi revolutionary committee, while still in business, was now split into groups headed by its chief and by one of his deputies, and suggested that the local MD commander may have been supporting the latter instead of the former; and the Heilungkiang committee was reportedly split along similar lines. Further, it was soon revealed that the Kweichow revolutionary committee was under local pressure to "completely reorganize." Madame Mao was to reveal in early September that all of the established revolutionary committees had been under attack--a development which surprised and displeased the leaders in Peking.

It was apparent at this time, near mid-August, that there had been no change in the directives forbidding the PLA to use armed force against mass organizations, despite the obvious need for such a change. It was also apparent in the second week of August that at least some PLA leaders were questioning whether Mao's team in Peking really had a coherent plan for restoring order (as distinct from a plan which would have the effect of maintaining or increasing disorder). Peking's answer was that Mao knew what he was doing even if they could not understand it. Liberation Army Daily on 11 August stated helpfully that "While we usually implement only what we can understand, we will also implement what we for the time being do not understand," and on the following day pointed out to the military leaders that they "should not have the least hesitation about Mao Tse-tung's thought or about his instructions." Wu Fa-hsien, commander of the Air Force, said it all again on 13 August: "we do not understand many directives of Chairman Mao thoroughly or even partially in the beginning, but gradually...in the course of implementation, or after several years. Therefore we should resolutely implement both those of Chairman Mao's directives which we understand and those which we for the time being do not understand."*

*A delayed Red Guard journal reveals that Lin had spoken to other military leaders on 9 August, making the same points. Lin emphasized again and again in this speech that in dealing with mass organizations PLA leaders must make no important decisions on their own, but must clear everything with Mao, Chou, or the CRG. Not only was the PLA still forbidden to use armed force, it was set back all the way to the 6 April directive.

-131-

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

This line was to be stated even more strongly later, in both August and September.

Immediately following, in mid-August, there was a resumption of heavy poster attacks on Hsiao Hua, the director of the General Political Department who had been attacked earlier in the year but had been defended by party leaders and had survived. Denounced along with Hsiao were two of the four active deputy directors of this department, Fu Chung and Hsu Li-ching. Hsiao and the department were accused in general terms of carrying on the Liu/Teng line and of offenses against the party, and of a specific but unclear offense ("blocking information") related to the handling of the Wuhan Incident. Also attacked in posters were Hsu Hsiang-chien (again), Peng Shao-hui (a deputy chief-of-staff), Tsui Tien-min (political officer of the Railway Corps), Wu Kuo-hua (commander of the Artillery Headquarters), and Wu Tzu-li (deputy commander of the Hunan MD); none of these except Hsu was known to have been under attack previously. At the same time, there was an unsourced and unconfirmed but not incredible report that Wang Li of the CRG had recently asserted that the commander of the Nanking Military Region (Hsu Shih-yu) and the commander of the Foochow Military Region (believed to be Han Hsien-chu) were "opposed to" the central Military Affairs Committee. (This report, if true, may have reflected their behavior at the late July conference in Peking, although only one of these two --Han--was reported there.)*

Those of these ten who had been in the news (several as recently as Army Day, 1 August) did not reappear in August. Although Hsiao was reported as reappearing briefly in early September, in mid-August Chou En-lai (who had defended Hsiao in January) reportedly said that Hsiao had

*Wang Li himself apparently fell from favor in late August or September. It may be that Mao and Lin found in favor of these two regional commanders and punished Wang Li for this initiative among other things.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

been set aside, and at the same time Madame Mao (who had attacked Hsiao in January) reportedly called for fresh criticism of Hsiao for his offenses against the "cultural revolution." As noted earlier, it would not have been surprising if Hsiao had fallen long before, because he had long been in one of the most dangerous jobs in the Chinese party (all posts in the political department and the propaganda department are abnormally hazardous), and two of his deputies (Liang Pi-yeh and Liu Chih-chien) had in fact been purged in 1966 for the department's "errors" in the conduct of the "cultural revolution"; whereas in January Mao and Lin Piao had blocked the purge of Hsiao, in August they were apparently willing to hold Hsiao and two of his remaining deputies (Fu and Hsu) responsible to some degree for the political condition of the Wuhan Military Region. (Hsiao was not, presumably, made a scapegoat for "leftist" errors, i.e., the restrictive line toward the PLA since late March. He fell before the line changed, and reportedly for further "rightist" mistakes.) Hsu Hsiang-chien, onetime head of the PLA/CRG, had been out of favor for months, denounced periodically. The reasons for attacking the deputy chief-of-staff and the commanders of the railway and artillery forces were not clear, but all might have failed in assignments related to the Wuhan Incident. The Nanking commander (out of sight for months), the Foochow commander (still visible in early August), and the Hunan deputy commander all could have been held responsible for the serious disorders there, charged inter alia with supporting "conservative" elements. In all, the August purge seemed also an over-reaction to the Wuhan Incident, an over-reaction which Mao and Lin might have second thoughts about.

A Shift in Emphasis, Late August 1967

Shortly after mid-August, according to posters, Mao himself offered an assessment of the state of the "cultural revolution." The dominant impression given by the assessment was of Mao's confidence that he could get--was getting--China into good shape an area at a time. Surveying the scene in terms of the most important geographic regions and military headquarters, and stating his satisfaction with recent developments (e.g., reorganizations of military commands), Mao seemed to be expressing

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

confidence also that he had reliable leaders in place in most of the key regional military commands (he expressly cited those in Changtu and Canton, two of the most disturbed areas). He did not mention, however, the Nanking or Foochow headquarters (both of which had reportedly been denounced by an officer of the CRG), did not speak directly of the Kunming headquarters (which had recently been visited by Hsieh Fu-chih's delegation and perhaps reorganized), and, in discussing the three large "autonomous" regions, said nothing about Tibet. The most sensational item related to Sinkiang; Mao reportedly expressed a lack of confidence in Wang En-mao and implied strongly that Peking intended to move against Wang sooner or later),* thus indicating his contempt for Wang's capabilities for resistance.

Beginning shortly after mid-August, there was a shift back to the emphasis on measures to control disorder. While Peking continued to speak of a "life-or-death" class struggle and to call for a "ruthless struggle" against the forces symbolized by Liu Shao-chi, it reaffirmed Peking's intention to bring under better control the "revolutionary" forces engaged in this struggle

*It may be contended that Mao's expressed satisfaction was insincere or uninformed, in view of the serious disorders continuing at several points, and in view of Mao's also-expressed interest in reducing this disorder. We agree, however, with those observers (e.g., of the Department of State) who have contended that Mao all along has seen a large degree of disorder as necessary to the "revolution," and has been confident of his ability to keep China as a whole from getting out of control. In the words of a State Department observer, the disorders in China have taken place in a "framework of control"; as of mid-August, however, the disorders seemed to be spreading on such a scale as to endanger the framework itself.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

and to direct their attention to this struggle rather than continuing their "civil war." The 18 August anniversary of the appearance of the Red Guards was observed in a very low key, and in the next week there were several statements of the high regard of Mao's team for other elements of the "three-way alliance." For example, People's Daily on 19 August condemned the excessive claims of mass organizations, Red Flag on the same date gave great praise to the PLA and minimized the PLA's "mistakes," and People's Daily on 18 and 25 August argued again that most party cadres were good and that revolutionaries should make "bold" use of them. Of greatest importance, in that it suggested at least a postponement of any further purge of the PLA, other party journals strongly condemned those revolutionaries who saw a "new stage" in the revolution in which they would be free to "drag out" leaders of the PLA, and in particular condemned those who intended to travel about China doing this. And it was on 25 August, according to later posters, that Mao himself revived the public campaign to "support the PLA and love the people." These various initiatives were apparently designed in particular to cancel Madame Mao's 22 July exhortation to the "rebels" to arm themselves and to reverse the line taken in the 30 July Red Flag on the need to bring down additional military leaders, and were designed in general to deter the "rebels" from seizing arms from the PLA and from attacking PLA personnel.

There were at least two general directives to the "revolutionary rebels"--mainly the Red Guards--in this period which gave sharp expression to the line taken in the press. On 22 August, speaking in Peking, Hsieh Fuchih told them (according to Peking radio) that "now is not the time to go out to stir up winds and kindle fires," that they should "sit down and think," stop their "civil wars" and "unite" to carry out the "mass criticism and repudiation" of the party leaders already in official disfavor. (In this connection, there were reports that Mao and Chou had set various deadlines for an end to violent struggles among "rebel" groups, and would order the PLA to intervene where this was not met.) Of greater practical importance, [redacted] in the last week of August Peking issued a directive [redacted]

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

to "revolutionary" groups everywhere to surrender their weapons to local military authorities. The directive was attributed to Mao himself, and there seems little doubt that Mao at least approved it.

As a similar practical step, Peking continued its efforts to "mediate" in the areas of the most serious disorder. It was credibly reported that Kuan Feng (back from the Northeast and Wang Li (second-ranking in Hsieh Fu-chih's earlier delegation) were in Szechuan as of 25 August trying to mediate between the warring Red Guard organizations; whatever arrangements had been made by Hsieh's delegation in July--e.g., a cease-fire agreement--had obviously broken down. Reports from Canton later suggested that a similar delegation was in Canton at about the same time; the delegation may have included Chou En-lai, and at least bore instructions from Chou. There were credible reports that Chou had ordered the warring organizations to stop fighting and to surrender their weapons (as Peking's general directive was soon to order all "revolutionaries" to do), and that the delegation was taking practical steps to compose the differences between the main combatants and between them and the PLA there. (The delegation may also have made some strong remarks to PLA leaders in Canton--if, that is, they accepted Red Guard reports that some of these leaders were deliberately arming some of the warring Red Guard organizations.) It was also reported that Hsieh Fu-chih was leading another delegation at this time, in this instance to Fukien, another troubled area; this report was unconfirmed, however, and may simply have reflected the source's knowledge of Hsieh's earlier missions elsewhere.

At the same time there were further reports of Peking's intention to give arms to reliable Red Guard groups: two of the most militant groups in Peking--those of the Aviation Institute and of Tsinghua University--were reportedly actually given them and reports from Canton specified that some Red Guards there were given arms to help put down greatly increased criminal activity. It was apparently not Peking's intention, however, to allow "rebel" groups to use these weapons against their political opponents, even those organizations proscribed as "conservative" or "reactionary."

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The team in Peking also continued with the process of reorganizing unsatisfactory regional, provincial and local commands. Following Kuan Feng's trip to the Northeast, posters stated that the Northeast Bureau of the party had been "suspended" (its first secretary was already in Peking), and the first secretary in Anshan removed, and that the city was to be placed under a military control commission headed by two officers of the 39th Army. Changes may have been made in the Canton MR headquarters by the delegation of late August, although the Canton commander, Huang Yun-sheng, who remained in Peking, seemed in good favor. Mao's reported remarks on Sinkiang indicated that changes were soon to be made there (by force if necessary), and Red Guards were soon reported to be departing for Sinkiang again. Finally, there was some reason to believe that changes had been made in the leadership of the Kansu MD.

There was still, however, widespread disorder at the end of August, and the various measures taken by Peking did not add up to a sufficient response. There were fewer provinces than in mid-July in which serious disorder was reported (about eight), but in most of these the fighting was of a more serious sort--using heavier weapons (rifles and machine-guns by the "revolutionaries" and reportedly even artillery and tanks by PLA forces involved in the action), and resulting in much heavier casualties. To break it down by military regions, again: in the Peking MR, Peking itself, the rest of Hopei, and Shansi continued quiet, as did the neighboring Inner Mongolian MR; in the Mukden MR, the situation in Kirin had improved, but heavy fighting continued in Liaoning and had appeared in Heilungkiang (a supposedly stable area with a recognized revolutionary committee); the Tsinan MR continued to be quiet; in the Nanking MR, Anhwei was quiet, but there was still much violence in both Kiangsu (especially Nanking and Shanghai) and Chekiang (especially Wenchow); in the Foochow MR, the situation in Kiangsi had apparently improved considerably after the reorganization of the Kiangsi MD, but violence continued in Fukien, although perhaps reduced; in the Canton MR, there was now heavy fighting in Kwangtung (especially in Canton itself) and in Hunan (still especially in Changsha), and disorders

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

continued in Kwangsi; in the Wuhan MR, following the re-organization of that command and Peking's intervention in Hupei and Honan, there was a considerable improvement in both Hupei and Honan; in the Kunming MR, Kweichow continued quiet, but in Yunnan the cease-fire agreement of early July had apparently been broken and heavy fighting was reported. In the Chengtu MR, which had been visited by two delegations from Peking, the heaviest fighting anywhere in China was reported, and lesser disorders continued in Tibet (also under Chang Kuo-hua's command); in the Lanchow MR, Shensi, Tsinghai and Ninghsia continued to be pretty quiet, but disorder had reportedly increased in Kansu; finally, in Sinkiang, fewer clashes were reported, but in this area Peking might have welcomed more. Denunciations of local military leaders by "rebel" groups continued, and in some cases there was reason to believe "rebel" accusations that some military units were giving arms to their favorite "rebel" groups. There were many more reports of attacks by "rebel" groups on local PLA units, attacks aimed at getting weapons or gaining vengeance or both. There were a few reports of successful PLA intervention between "rebel" groups, and some evidence that a few individual PLA commanders had been authorized to use and had in fact used armed force in such intervention (in this connection, there was no good evidence that PLA units were fighting one another), but there were also reports from other areas that PLA units were standing clear if armed force was required because they lacked authorization to use it, and that the PLA would intervene only if Peking's orders were not complied with in a reasonable time (e.g. the order to turn in weapons).

It was not possible to get a clear picture of all this, in particular of the PLA's role in the areas of greatest disorder. Moreover, it was not at all clear how much of the disorder was precipitated by recent Peking decisions favorable to militant "rebel" groups and adverse to other powerful groups, how much by Madame Mao's exhortations and Army Day pronouncements which in effect had encouraged fresh "rebel" attacks on the military, and how much by the fears of individual military leaders that they had been marked for a purge. About all that was clear

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

was that there was still heavy fighting in at least eight provinces--Liaoning and Heilungkiang in the Northeast, Kiangsu and Chekiang in East China, Kwangtung and Hunan in the South, and Yunnan and Chengtu in the Southwest, and that Peking's various initiatives to that point did not promise to control the disorder. Even where local PLA commanders had no stake in the disorder and wished to end it, the PLA as a whole continued to lack an order--a general directive--which would permit it to use whatever degree of armed force was necessary to enforce Peking's decisions or even to protect itself against physical attack.

Effective Efforts Against Disorder, September 1967

September opened with indications that Mao's team in Peking would continue, reinforce and augment the measures taken in July and August to restore order.

On 1 September Chou En-lai and other leaders again told "revolutionary rebels" to return to their schools and units, and within a day or two Chou was reported to be in Canton again at the head of another mediation mission. Leaflets signed by Chou were soon circulating in Canton, praising the decision of mass organizations to halt their battles with one another, and provincial radios announced the conclusion of additional agreements on "discontinuation of the struggle by force." Emphasizing a feature believed to be common to all such agreements (on the Yunnan model), provincial radios reiterated that it was forbidden to attack or invade military installations or to steal weapons and ammunition from them, and --following up the reported directive of late August--that mass organizations must turn in all the weapons they already had, except (said the radio in Kiangsi, one of the places where reliable groups had been given arms) "those revolutionary masses who have been armed in a planned and step-by-step way with the approval of the central committee" through the local governing bodies.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

At the same time, the press and radio reaffirmed that it was possible to be too revolutionary, "ultra-left," and a Red Guard group of this kind in Peking was denounced twice in the first days of September as objectively "counter-revolutionary." It was specified that this group had tried to bring down Chou En-lai, who throughout 1967 had had the largest role in managing Peking's daily affairs and who seemed in good favor with both Mao and Lin (and, for that matter, with at least one--Madame Mao--of the other members of Mao's team besides Mao and Lin who seemed to qualify best for the label of "ultra-left," although Chou's relations with Chen Po-ta and Kang Sheng may have been less friendly). Similarly, the press again, as in late August, denounced those who advocated "getting hold of a handful in the army"--that is, those who wanted to carry on with the purge of the PLA, those whom Peking's line had been encouraging in late July and early August. In this connection, there was an unsourced and unconfirmed report by a correspondent on 1 September that the PLA's Cultural Revolution Group had changed its composition, adding two officers who had been temporary victims of free-swinging Red Guard attacks in early 1967 and giving professional military officers greater representation than officers with a primarily political background.*

*This is a tricky report, however. It will be recalled that the PLA/CRG, probably originally headed by Liu Chih-chien (purged in late 1966), was reorganized in January 1967 under Hsu Hsiang-chien, a military professional, with his deputies reported to be Hsiao Hua, Yang Cheng-wu, Wang Hsin-ting, Hsu Li-ching, Kuan Feng, Hsieh Tang-chung, and Li Man-tsun, all but one of whom (Yang) was a political officer. Hsu presided over the PLA/CRG (although Madame Mao was the de facto chief) in a period in which Peking was encouraging the PLA to be tough on the militant "rebels," and was set aside when that line changed at the end of March; from mid-April, the PLA/CRG was said (by the Madame) to be under the direction of Hsiao and Yang, the two ranking deputies, and Hsieh Fu-chih, not previously identified with the group. Hsiao himself was finally brought down (footnote continued on page 141)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

On 5 September, Mao's team finally gave the PLA a serious weapon with which to bring disorders under control--the express authority to open fire on mass organizations. Originally reported as permitting the PLA to open fire on mass organizations which offered "resistance" of any kind, the 5 September directive was later reported as pegged more narrowly to the use of military force against attempts to seize weapons and other materiel from the PLA. Nevertheless, the directive seemed pretty clearly to be one which could be used in support of the late August directive, that is in support of the PLA's effort to recover weapons from mass organizations, and also as a justification for repelling physical attacks of any kind on PLA personnel and installations (as the attacks could plausibly be said to be designed to capture weapons), and--if a liberal interpretation were authorized by Peking--as a

(footnote continued from page 140)

in July or August, also for "rightist" errors, but Yang and Hsieh continued in high favor. The 1 September report--possibly from posters--said that three other of the deputies as of January and April (Hsu Li-ching, Hsieh Tang-chung, and Li Man-tsun) had been under criticism since April and were now inactive, and that the PLA/CRG was now under the "control" of Wu Fa-hsien, commander of the CCAF, Chiu Hui-tso, director of the Rear Services Department who had survived Red Guard denunciations in early 1967, Chang Hsiu-chuan, director of the Navy's political department who had also survived such attacks, and Yeh Chun, Lin Piao's wife (and a previous member of the PLA/CRG). It was not explained what roles Yang Cheng-wu and Hsieh Fu-chih were now to play. Neither was it evident on the face of it, even if the reported new officers were accepted, that the reorganized PLA/CRG would necessarily be sympathetic to the problems of the military professionals, as previous leaders of the PLA/CRG (including Hsiao) had been brought down for showing sympathies of just this sort, and Madame Mao probably continued as the de facto chief. However, some clarification was soon provided by Madame Mao herself.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

justification for the use of armed force to enforce cease-fire agreements, agreements on the cessation of armed struggle and the amalgamation of "rebel" groups, and Peking's decisions in favor of individual "rebel" groups over others. (It could also be used, of course, by a defiant PLA leader as an excuse to disarm the groups opposing his "own" mass organizations, but a commander in open defiance of Peking would already be beyond legalisms.) The first reporting and later reporting agreed that the directive--endorsed by Mao personally--called upon PLA units to try first to dissuade the revolutionaries, then to fire warning shots, then to attempt arrests, and only then to shoot to kill.

On the same day that the directive was issued, Madame Mao, speaking for Mao in his continued absence, made it official that Mao's team was now serious about putting an end to disorder, encouraged the view that the members of the team were united on this (and confirmed that Chou En-lai specifically--almost certainly a leader in good favor with PLA leaders--was still a leader of the team), and also encouraged the PLA to use the 5 September directive aggressively to restore order.* Speaking to revolutionary groups from Anhwei (summoned to Peking to conclude a "unity" agreement), the Madame reportedly began by associating herself with Mao's own assessment of the overall situation ("very good"), and with Mao's methodical approach ("the center is solving the problems of one province at a time"). She went on to condemn "struggle by force," expressly withdrawing (without acknowledging) her own exhortation to rebel groups in late July to arm themselves for "defense" (and later in her speech told the "rebels" to stop travelling around China and appealed to

*Moreover, it was later reported that on or about this date--the poster source gives 4 September--Mao originated yet another directive calling for punishment of "bad elements" instigating disorder and committing specific crimes; Mao's directive reportedly assigned the responsibility for finding and punishing such people to the central CRG.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

"rebel" groups to take various measures to reconcile themselves with one another). She then spoke of the threats to Mao's leadership from both the "right" and the "extreme 'left,'" and specifically denounced the proscribed '16 May' group which (she said) had concentrated its attack on Chou En-lai but had "collected black material on all of us" (perhaps meaning all of the leaders of the CRG).*

The Madame devoted the largest part of her 5 September speech as reported to a defense of the PLA and a warning to those attacking it. She added her own voice to those denouncing the slogan of "getting hold of a handful in the army," criticized those who had attacked the PLA (apparently referring to the intensified attacks in recent weeks which her own earlier line had encouraged), praised the forebearance of the PLA in the face of insults, beatings, and seizure of their weapons, emphasized the absolute inadmissibility of attacking armies in the field, and endorsed the 5 September directive as a "deadly order"

*The Madame also denounced the unspecified "behind-the-scenes" sponsors of this group, implying that Mao's team would soon purge some of its own "ultra-left" members. As the Madame, Chen Po-ta and Kang Sheng all appeared to be still in high favor, Peking would presumably have to produce some lesser figures as the scapegoats. There was, however, a sensational poster reporting a directive from Lin Piao which minimized the failings of this group, and there was at the same time a "rumor" that Lin's wife (Yeh Chun) was in charge of a group within the MAC designed to attack Chou. Some observers conjectured that Lin Piao himself may have been the principal "ultra-leftist," although there seemed no good reason, even on the assumption that Lin wished to rid himself of Chou as a presumptive rival, why Lin should choose this unreliable and dangerous means of doing it; it may be that the poster, if accurate at all, reflected an earlier period when this group was not in official disfavor.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

authorizing the PLA to "strike back" at those who attempted to seize their weapons. The Madame reportedly concluded with an admission that all of the established "revolutionary committees" were also under attack by some elements, and a reaffirmation that Peking intended to set up these committees methodically.

Madame Mao's speech had practical implications both for the PLA's role in the "cultural revolution" and for the progress of the "revolution" (in particular, the purge) in the PLA itself. The PLA was pretty clearly being told, by an unquestioned spokesman for Mao, that it could interpret the 5 September directive liberally and thus could use it aggressively, and was also being told, by the dominant figure of the body (the PLA/CRG) charged with conducting the purge of the PLA, that there was not to be another substantial purge of PLA leaders at this time. PLA leaders would of course remember that they had been given reassurances in the same terms in January 1967--when Mao's team was about to enter a similar period of dependence on the PLA's good will--and that these reassurances had not deterred Mao's team from bringing down additional military leaders later, but it was true that the purge had slowed down after January 1967, and Madame Mao's speech seemed a good sign that Peking would not now add to the limited purge which had followed the Wuhan Incident, meaning inter alia that Peking would leave in place for the time being other regional and provincial military leaders who had also been guilty of supporting "reactionary" organizations if those leaders would now cooperate fully. (Such military leaders might have recognized that there was a good chance that they would be brought down eventually, but many or most may have judged too that full cooperation nevertheless represented their best chance of survival, in the absence of any organized body of PLA resistance which would have a reasonable hope of surviving until Mao's demise.)

Four days later, on 9 September, the administrative office of the CCP central committee issued a notice calling on revolutionaries throughout China to "seriously study" Madame Mao's 5 September speech, asserting that

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

it made a "correct analysis" and presented a "clear-cut task."* Provincial broadcasts indicated that the speech was being treated almost as if it had come from Mao himself, and that it was being interpreted as a call to guide the revolution on a course between the right and the "extreme" left and in particular as an order to call off attacks on the PLA and on PLA leaders.

As an additional important step to restore order, People's Daily on 16 September called a virtual halt to the "revolution" in the countryside: it told the peasants to concentrate on production and to "make revolution" only during "spare time" or the "evening," told them as well to stay out of the cities (this had been reported as a big problem in several cities), and went on to tell the Red Guards and factory workers in the cities to stay out of rural areas in order not to impede production there. Provincial broadcasts soon indicated that this order--perhaps embodied in a party directive--was being attended to, and suggested that a similar order had gone out to urban workers, with a threat to stop their wages for non-compliance.

On 17 September, Liberation Army Daily took another step to clarify the PLA's role by telling the army to conduct its own affairs in a spirit of avoiding "struggle among groups," that with respect to supporting the "left" it should decline to support words and deeds which would "create splits and stir up struggles among groups," and specifically with respect to "revolutionary mass organizations" the PLA should "assist them to unite." In other

*This directive was addressed to "all revolutionary committees, military control committees, and mass organizations"--that is, to existing provisional governing bodies and their components. It was not addressed to any party organizations, suggesting that none remained outside the central apparatus in Peking. All of the forms of military control were apparently to be regarded as military control committees.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

words, the emphasis had shifted back to the emphasis of late June and early July, when the PLA was being told not to support or attack either faction in a dispute but rather to help them to find a common ground.

Then on 18 September, People's Daily in a front-page editorial celebrated the "Brilliant Victory of Chairman Mao's Latest Instruction"--the "latest instruction" being Mao's pronouncement that "there is no fundamental clash of interests among the working class" and therefore no need for it to "split into two great irreconcilable organizations," and the "brilliant victory" being the conclusion of new "alliances" among workers' organizations in Shanghai. The new line would of course permit members of "conservative" mass organizations to be represented in the emerging revolutionary committees, although it was not clear whether Peking intended to alter any of the arrangements made in July and August which had given preference to Peking's favorites.* The purport of the two editorials was to tell local military authorities--at least in those places where arrangements had not already been

*Early comment from Honan, for instance, reflecting the position of Peking's designated favorites among the revolutionary rebel groups there, suggested that these favorites were not at all interested in taking a step backward by re-establishing "conservative" organizations and then concluding an "alliance" with them, but much preferred to admit "misled" individuals to their own organizations; this comment also made the points that not everybody could be admitted to the "alliance," that the alliance must be "based on principle," that there was still a "right and wrong," and that there could be "no compromise" on matters of principle. This did not mean that the favored groups would resist to the death any compromise with their opponents, but it probably did mean that Peking and the local revolutionary committees and military authorities would have a lot of trouble effecting these compromises.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

made to install Peking's favorite "revolutionary" organizations--that fine political discriminations were less important at this time than the restoration of order by the formation of "alliances" and the conclusion of "unity" agreements, after which the discriminatory process could move ahead as practicable.

The party press soon reported the conclusion of many such "alliances" throughout China, and there were in fact some practical expressions of this. For example, railroad service was reportedly restored in some of the areas in which it had been interrupted by fighting between "rebel" groups among the railway workers and perhaps by fighting among other "rebel" groups.

Within two weeks of the issuance of the 5 September directive and Madame Mao's speech, reporting indicated a dramatic improvement in several of the areas in which there had been serious fighting as late as the first week of September. Many specific acts of effective PLA intervention in Red Guard disputes had been reported, including PLA action to get "unity" agreements. It was not clear, however, whether there had been any appreciable improvement in the Northeast, or in Szechuan, or in Hunan, or in Kiangsu, from all of which there were reports of continued large-scale clashes. There was speculation that in some cases--although this could not be confirmed in any--elements of the PLA itself (e.g. in Szechuan) were actively resisting the efforts of the bulk of PLA forces in the area to restore order.

At about the same time, there were indications--now that the policy toward the PLA had changed--that the leaders of Mao's team were about to produce scapegoats for the period of April through August in which the PLA had been harshly treated. Wang Li and Mu Hsin, members of the central Cultural Revolution Group, and Lin Chieh, an editor of Red Flag, were reported to be under poster attack, and Kuan Feng, another member of the CRG, was rumored to be in trouble. (Wang and Kuan had both dropped out of the news after the first week of August, but had been credibly reported in Szechuan on 25 August on another "mediation" mission.) Wang, who had been the second-

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

ranking member of Hsieh Fu-chih's mission which had visited several troublesome areas in July and had obtained or tried to obtain agreements among warring Red Guard groups and between those groups and local military authorities, was conjectured to be in trouble for having legitimized --and imposed on the local commanders--Red Guard groups now regarded as "ultra-leftist." Mu and Lin were in fact said to be officers of the very group--the '16 May Corps'--denounced since early September as the epitome of "ultra-left" organizations, and Lin was further alleged responsible (with Wang Li) for some of the Army Day material now regarded as hostile to the PLA (e.g. the incendiary line of the 30 July Red Flag). Kuan had also visited parts of China on trouble-shooting missions in the summer, and might also have been vulnerable to charges of having supported "ultra-left" organizations against local military authorities. At the same time, Nieh Jung-chen, who had reportedly lost authority over the scientific and technological work subordinated to the MAC during the spring of 1967 after persistent Red Guard attacks on him (which retaining chairmanship of the regime's Scientific & Technological Commission), gave the main speech at a big rally of scientific and technological elements in Peking, suggesting that Nieh may have been restored to his dual chairmanship. (This was not a dramatic "return" to favor, as he had been defended by party leaders and had never seemed out of favor, but since May he had not been treated as one of the top leaders, and this September appearance seemed to indicate a return to that status.)

There was the question of whether Mao would go beyond minor figures like Mu and Lin, or second-level leaders like Wang and Kuan, to fix the responsibility for the overly-leftist period on someone really at the policy-making level.* Apart from Mao himself and Lin Piao, the

*It is only fair to acknowledge that some observers do not see these second-level leaders as scapegoats chosen by Mao, but as sacrifices imposed on Mao by other leaders, who will go after first-level "leftists" as opportunity permits.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

candidates were Madame Mao, Chen Po-ta, and Kang Sheng. The Madame had already dissociated herself from the extremist line, however, and Chen and Kang apparently remained in favor. There was some speculation that Lin Piao himself might be the next-stage target of those now attacking Wang and the others, but it seemed most unlikely that Mao was now preparing to bring down his first lieutenant.

Whatever Mao's intentions toward party leaders at the center, provincial broadcasts made clear that there was to be a "settling of accounts" in some respects in the provinces. Possibly reflecting an unpublicized directive from the CRG or from the CRG and the MAC jointly, revolutionary committees and mass organizations were told to investigate organizations and individuals and to identify and punish those who had been responsible for inciting and conducting "struggle by force" and had committed such specific offenses as murder, looting, destruction of property, kidnapping, and so on.*

On 24 September, Peking announced that Chairman Mao had "now" returned to Peking from a "recent" trip in which he had "inspected parts of North China, Central-South China and East China"--specifically, the provinces

*At about the same time (it was later reported) a poster attributed to Wang Li (who was reported to be out of favor by this time) spoke of a 4 September "directive" by Mao Tse-tung, declaring that within a month or two "we shall settle up with all the bad elements" and that the CRG would be responsible for handling this, but the only "crime" specified in this poster as reported was that of interrupting production, transport and communications; the provincial broadcasts were probably a better indicator of what the directive of Mao or the central committee organs had said. Assuming this to be true, the next violent stage of the "revolution" will begin in or about November, when action will be taken against those responsible for unauthorized violence in earlier stages.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

of Honan, Hupei, Hunan, Kiangsi and Chekiang, and the city of Shanghai (in Kiangsu).* (Some observers noted that the six points lie in a lopsided circle around Hangchow, to which Mao often withdraws and where he may have been for much of the time after mid-July.) The announcement had the effect of associating Mao personally with the change in Peking's line since early September and specifically with the reorganizations of the military commands which had taken place (in three of them) or may have taken place (in two) since early August. There seems little reason to doubt that Mao did in fact approve the change of line, and it is presumed that he talked to the new leaders in all of the reorganized provinces.**

*Another broadcast added other unspecified "municipalities."

**The difference of opinion on the significance of purges of second-level leaders extends to the larger matter of the nature of Mao's approval of the change of line. On one reading (that of this writer and others), Mao examined the situation, both with his own eyes and through the eyes of valuable counsellors like Chou and Lin Piao and other military leaders, changed course accordingly, and will move forward again when the situation has improved (i.e. when the military have restored order and the harvest is in)--continuing the purge of party and (some) military leaders, arranging the preferment of some "rebel" groups over others (but not necessarily restoring the "rebels" to their former importance), setting up revolutionary committees, and punishing those who "failed the test" in earlier stages. On the reading of some other observers, the change of line was imposed on Mao against his will, in particular by military leaders who were otherwise unwilling to obey him, and the current moderate policies will be fixed features of the China scene.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

As of late September, Peking's propaganda was treating ten or twelve military leaders, all in Peking, as the ranking military figures of Mao's team. They were: Lin Piao, de facto chairman of the Military Affairs Committee and Minister of Defense (as well as the party's only vice-chairman); Yang Cheng-wu, a member of the MAC standing committee and Acting Chief-of-Staff; Su Yu, also a member of the standing committee of MAC and a Deputy Minister of Defense; Hsieh Fu-chih, also a member of the MAC standing committee, Minister of Public Security, and probably political officer of the Peking Military Region; Nieh Jung-chen, also a member of the MAC standing committee and chairman of one or both of the principal S & T bodies; Wang Hsin-ting, deputy chairman of the PLA's Cultural Revolution Group and a deputy Chief-of-Staff; Wang Shu-sheng, a deputy Minister of Defense; Yuan Tzu-chin, deputy director of the General Political Department; Li Tien-yu, another deputy chief-of-staff and concurrently another deputy director of the Political Department; Chiu Hui-tso, director of the Rear Services Department; Wu Fa-hsien, Commander of the Air Force; and Li Tso-peng, 1st Political Officer of the Navy. The two somewhat questionable cases appeared to be those of Nieh and Yuan, as it was not certain that Nieh was really acting as a military leader, and it was not certain that Yuan was really free of the opprobrium that covered the department as a whole. Of these 12, Lin Piao was of course the foremost by a great distance. Of the other 11, all had had some association with Lin in recent years--as would be expected of all ranking officers in Peking--but only four (Yang, Nieh, Li, Chiu) had had a long-standing close association with Lin, and in general the military leadership did not give an appearance of simple patron-protege relationships.*

*Such relationships appear not in the military leadership but in the PLA/CRG, the group charged with conducting the purge of the military leadership. The de facto leader of this group is still believed to be Chiang Ching, Mao's wife, and one of the four or five next in importance (perhaps even the second-ranking) is Yeh Chun, Lin's wife. The role of these two women is surely one of the most obnoxious features of the "cultural revolution" to Chinese military men--as Chinese, as military, and as men.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

By National Day, 1 October, large-scale disorders were no longer being reported from any part of China. Although this may well have reflected a lag in reporting from some places, and small-scale clashes and violent incidents continued to be reported from several points, it seemed clear that the situation had continued to improve in a striking way--including those situations in Northeast, Southwest, Central and East China which had been very agitated as late as mid-September. In other words, both the PLA and the "rebels" had, in general, proved to be responsive to the new directives issued since late August.*

On 1 October, Mao and Lin Piao presided over a great rally marking the 18th anniversary of the proclamation of the Peking regime. Giving the main speech, Lin made clear that the short-term aims of Mao's team remained those of controlling disorder and moving at a deliberate

*In the view of this writer, this was clearly a triumph for Mao and Lin, as it was their declared objective to bring disorder under control, and it was not certain that either the PLA or the "rebels" would be responsive. Some observers have contrived to view even this accomplishment as "another" setback for Mao, arguing that his "revolution" envisaged ceaseless disorder of this kind and that the suppression of this disorder was forced on him by others, or arguing that he had to make too many compromises to achieve his end, or pointing to the failure of some "rebel" groups to meet deadlines for turning in weapons and halting attacks or to the continued reports of violent incidents (thus failing to recognize the main fact, that the "rebels" in general and the PLA in general were responsive), or presenting events as a defeat for the "Maoists" without distinguishing between (a) Mao, who wanted to control disorder, (b) some of the extremists on his first team who may have had a stake in continued disorder and thus wanted it to continue, and (c) the most militant of the "rebels," who clearly did have a stake in continued disorder and clearly did want it to continue. Mao's "defeat" was the defeat of his hopes for rebel self-discipline, and the 5 September directive was a strong practical expression of this disappointment.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

pace toward the formation of a new governing apparatus. Asserting that the "great cultural revolution" had achieved its aims of educating and inspiring the people and "tempering" the party and the PLA, Lin declared that it had already won a "decisive victory," and went on to state the "most important" current tasks as those of criticizing and repudiating the party leaders already brought down (Liu Shao-chi et al.), concluding and developing "alliances" among revolutionary rebel organizations, and developing the "three-way alliance" (meaning the cooperation of the PLA, party cadres, and young revolutionaries in forming and operating revolutionary committees to govern China). Lin did not incite his audience directly or indirectly to "drag out" any further members of the bad "handful," and took a moderate tone throughout. The joint editorial of People's Daily, Red Flag, and Liberation Army Daily followed this lead, but was a bit more candid about some of the problems along the road, e.g. the problem of how the revolutionary rebels were to realize their "alliance" on the basis of "revolutionary principles" when they interpreted those principles differently (the cause of much of the fighting in the first place), and the problem of repelling attacks from both the "right" and the "extreme 'left'" (particularly when the identification of these forces changes).

In addition to Mao and Lin (the only person described as Mao's "close comrade-in-arms"), the rally displayed as "leading comrades" most of those who had been taking the field since May Day as Mao's first team, but with at least three important changes. The abiding figures were: the core of the politburo, Mao, Lin, Chou En-lai, Chen Po-ta, Kang Sheng, and Li Fu-chun; the military leaders (in addition to Lin), Hsieh Fu-chih, Yang Cheng-wu, and Su Yu; and leaders of the central CRG and PLA/CRG (in addition to Chen), Madame Mao, Chi Pen-yu, and Madame Lin. Notably missing, however, were Hsiao Hua of the military and PLA/CRG leadership, and Wang Li and Kuan Feng of the CRG and PLA/CRG, thus tending to confirm reports of the fall of all three.

This bare dozen of leaders persisting since May Day was displayed among other members of the old politburos

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

of 1966 and 1967, making it difficult to tell whether Mao's team had added any members to the group displayed since May Day. Old politburo members long in clear disfavor were missing (Liu Shao-chi, Teng Hsiao-ping, Peng Chen, Tao Chu, Ho Lung, Li Ching-chuan, Tan Chen-lin, Ulanfu, Lu Ting-i and Po I-po), as was another not known to be in disfavor (Liu Po-cheng), but several others appeared whose status had been in question to some degree or who had clearly been in some degree of disfavor: Chu Te, Chen Yun, Tung Pi-wu, Chen Yi, Hsu Hsiang-chien, Nieh Jung-chen, Yeh Chien-ying, Li Hsueh-feng (all known to be politburo members), and Sung Jen-chiung (thought to be). One of these, Nieh, had begun only recently to be presented again as a top leader, while another, Li Hsien-nien, was still being treated as something short of that. All of the others had seemed to be in one or another degree of disfavor with the top leaders, and several had been removed from important posts.

In the absence of indications that members of this latter group--at least seven of the nine politburo members cited just above--have assumed or been restored to key positions, it seems likely that they were put on display, as sometimes before, as tokens of good faith in the current phase of moderation and "unity." The conclusion that, while relatively moderate policies are to be pursued for a time, moderate forces have not taken over the leadership from Mao and Lin, seems supported by the fact that not a single party official or military officer at any level known or believed to be in strong disfavor with Mao and Mao's team--that is, of the more than 100 people like the ten politburo members who did not show up--was rehabilitated for the occasion.

Of special interest was the fact that many regional military leaders were in Peking for National Day. At least one of the two principal officers of nine of the 13 regional military headquarters attended, and there were lower-ranking representatives from the other four. These officers included two whose status has been and remains quite uncertain (the commanders of the Nanking and Kunming headquarters), and two whose status is in at least a little doubt (the commanders of the Canton and

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Foochow headquarters). It seems apparent that Mao and Lin could simply seize and purge any leader in disfavor whom they had got on the spot in Peking, but their failure to do that in the case of any of these four should not be taken as good evidence that all four remain in favor. As in the apparent case of the military commander and political officer in Sinkiang, Wang En-mao (who was reportedly in Peking early in the year), it may be that Peking regards some of these military leaders with disfavor but is not prepared to purge them or to move external military forces into their areas at this time, preferring in the interest of good order to work with such leaders for a while and to bring them down later if they continue to be unsatisfactory. This is not to say, as some observers have conjectured, that some of these regional leaders --e.g., the Canton and Foochow commanders, who appear to have been in Peking for several weeks--are in Peking as representatives of the regional military leaders as a group, "negotiating" with Peking and stating which demands the regional leaders will or will not accept. What seems likely is that the regional military leaders, now as always, are being given orders and that those who disobey orders will be swiftly purged, but it also seems possible that Peking is handling some of these leaders carefully, so that it is not obliged to move against them before it is ready to.

In sum, the chances are that the dozen leaders persisting since May Day--a group which does include some relatively moderate figures (Chou, Li, Su), but is not dominated by them--are still the core of Mao's team, with Nieh Jung-chen probably added and Li Hsien-nien possibly added.

It is not clear whether Mao and Lin mean to drop one or more--in addition to Wang Li and Kuan Feng--from this first team for what are now regarded as "leftist" errors in the April-September period. Nor is it clear whether others--including some of those who appeared on National Day, such as Hsu Hsiang-chien, Yeh Chien-ying, and Chen Yi--are now to be regarded as victims of that same "leftist" excess and restored to full favor. If all of these things are done, the character of Mao's team

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

would change, could even be dominated--below the very top level of Mao and Lin--by relatively moderate leaders. But at present Mao seems to be operating with much the same team that he used in the wild preceding stage of the "revolution," and he does not seem to repent any appreciable number of the adverse decisions on individual leaders that he and his team have made.

The Scale of the Purge of 1966-67

It is generally recognized that the purge of the Chinese Communist party has removed something like three-fourths of the party leadership--calculated from the level of provincial first secretary up--as it existed in November 1965 when the purge began, but the scale of the purge of the PLA leadership--from the level of provincial commander up--in the same period has been less well appreciated. In fact, a few observers have written as if no purge of the PLA had taken place, as if this were a development which Mao and Lin had been threatening to carry out but had not carried out or even had been prevented from carrying out. In fact a large-scale purge of the PLA leadership has been carried out concurrently with the purge of party leaders; and a survey of the PLA leadership, in terms of key military organs, seems in order for a concluding section.

As for the top-ranking military organ, the Military Affairs Committee of the central committee, the two principal officers, Chairman Mao and senior vice-chairman (de facto chairman) Lin Piao have of course remained in place. But of the other eight key figures identified or reported as members of the MAC standing committee between 1965 and early 1967, at least five have been purged or removed from their military posts, and two others may have been. The five are Ho Lung, Lo Jui-ching, Chen Yi, Hsu Hsiang-chien, and Hsiao Hua; the two are Yeh Chien-ying and Liu Po-cheng (out of sight). Nieh Jung-chen retains his post, although there is some question whether this is actually a military position. The three members of the standing

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

committee reportedly named only in April 1967--Hsieh Fu-chih, Yang Cheng-wu, and Su Yu--are still in place.

The PLA's Cultural Revolution Group, a special organ of MAC charged with carrying out the purge of the PLA, has been hit just as hard as has the MAC itself, even though it has been in existence only since October 1966. That is, all three of its three known or reported chairmen--Liu Chih-chien, Hsu Hsiang-chien and Hsiao Hua--have been purged or removed, and of its other seven officers as of late 1966 four appear to have been purged (although this is not certain) in 1967--Hsu Li-ching, Kuan Feng, Hsieh Tang-chung, and Li Man-tsun. The only survivors among the officers up to September 1967--when a new group reportedly took over--seem to have been Madame Mao (the group's "advisor" and de facto chief), Yang Cheng-wu, and Wang Hsin-ting (plus Hsieh Fu-chih if he was on it).

As for the Ministry of National Defense, Minister Lin Piao has survived and prospered, but of the other eight ranking officers (seven deputy ministers and the head of the general office) at least four have been purged --Lo Jui-ching, Hsu Kuang-ta, Liao Han-sheng, and Hsiao Hsiang-jung. The status of one--Hsu Shih-yu, back in the news after a long absence--is still in doubt. The other three--Su Yu, Wang Shu-sheng, and Hsiao Ching-kuang--seem in good favor.

Of the 11 principal officers of the General Staff as of late 1965, four are known to have been purged, and another apparently has been. The four are chief-of-staff Lo Jui-ching, deputy Yang Yung, and the director and deputy director of the important Operations Sub-department, Wang Shang-jung and Lei Ying-fu; the fifth is deputy Chang Ai-ping. The status of two other deputies--Peng Shao-hui and Chang Tsung-hsun--is in serious doubt, and the status of another, Han Hsien-chu, is in at least a little doubt. Only three officers of the General Staff --Yang Cheng-wu, the acting chief, and deputies Li Tien-yu and Wang Hsin-ting--seem clearly in favor.

The General Political Department has of course been hit very hard. Its director, Hsiao Hua, has recently been

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

brought down, following the fall of two of his deputies, Liang Pi-yeh and Liu Chih-chien, and concurrently with the apparent fall of two others, Hsu Li-ching and Fu Chung. Of the Political Department's officers as of early 1966, only one, Yuan Tzu-chun, appears to have survived; while another deputy reportedly added in 1967, Li Tien-yu, concurrently deputy chief-of-staff, is also in favor.

An assessment of the directors of the other key departments and sub-departments is more difficult, because both the organization of these departments and sub-departments and the identities of their directors have been uncertain for some time. If the key organizations are taken as those concerned with rear services, training, cadres, mobilization, intelligence, and security, the one known director, Chiu Hui-tso of the Rear Services Department, is apparently in high favor, while the probable head of the security apparatus, Li Tien-huan, seems to be in favor; some of the former chiefs of reorganized departments have appeared recently in unidentified posts, but others have not appeared and have probably fallen, reflecting changes in their superior bodies such as the General Staff and the General Political Department. It is impossible to give a meaningful figure for this group.

Of the 13 principal figures of the seven service headquarters as of late 1965--that is, the commanders and political officers, with one case of a leader holding both posts--only two are known to have been purged, but the status of three others is in serious doubt. The commander of the Air Force, Wu Fa-hsien, is in high favor, and its political officer, Yu Li-chin, seems to be--both having survived alleged intrigues. Commander Hsiao Ching-kuang of the Navy has survived similarly, but political officer Su Chen-hua, one of the alleged intriguers, has fallen. Commander Hsu Kuang-ta of the Armored Forces has been purged, while political officer Huang Chih-yung seems in favor. Of the Engineers, commander Chen Shih-chu and political officer Tan Fu-jen both appear to be in place. Commander Li Shou-hsuan of the Railway Corps has been out of sight for a year, and the political officer of this Corps, Tsui Tien-min, has recently been under attack. The commander of the Artillery Force, Wu Ko-hua, has also

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

been brought under attack recently, while the political officer, Chen Jen-chi, is in apparent favor. Finally, Hsieh Fu-chih, commander and political officer of the Public Security Forces, has taken advantage of the opportunities of the "cultural revolution" and, surviving strong poster attacks of late 1966, has prospered greatly.

Of the 24 key figures of the 13 military regions as of late 1965--the commanders and political officers, with two cases of a single leader holding both of these key posts in his command--at least 11 had been purged or replaced by early 1967, as noted in an earlier section. The total has risen to at least 14 in 1967 (a figure which does not include three replacements who have also fallen from favor), with six or seven others in doubt, and only three clearly in favor.

To recapitulate and update, by headquarters: (a) in the Peking MR, where the commander and political officer Yang Yung and Liao Han-sheng, were both purged by early 1967, their reported or presumed replacements, Cheng Wei-shan and Hsieh Fu-chih, are still in favor; (b) in the Inner Mongolian MR, where the single man in both posts, Ulanfu, was purged in 1966, his replacements, Teng Hai-ching and Wu Tao, are apparently in good favor; (c) in the Mukden (Shenyang) MR, where the status of both commander Chen Hsi-lien and political officer Sung Jen-chiung was in some doubt, Chen has emerged in apparent high favor while Sung was reportedly replaced by Pan Fu-sheng, whose own status is in some doubt; (d) in the Tsinan MR, commander Yang Te-chih remains in place, while the purged political officer was replaced by Wang Hsiao-yu, who is still in favor; (e) in the Nanking MR, the status of commander Hsu Shih-yu remains in doubt despite his recent reappearance in Peking, while the political officer (possibly Wang Ping, but no matter who it was) was replaced by Chang Chun-chiao, who remains in favor; (f) in the Foochow MR, the (accepted) commander, Han Hsien-chu, has remained in apparent favor but has also been in Peking for some time instead of Foochow and his status is now regarded as in some doubt, while the replacement for the purged political officer has not been identified (conceivably Liu Pei-shan); (g) in the Canton MR, commander Huang Yung-sheng still

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

appears to be in favor, but his status is in at least a little doubt, because he has long been under attack by "rebel" groups and has also been in Peking for some time, while the purged political officer was apparently replaced by either Liu Hsing-yuan, whose own current status is in doubt, or one of three others who seem to be in favor; (h) in the Wuhan MR, both commander Chen Tsai-tao (in apparent favor as of late 1966) and political officer Chung Han-hua (who himself had replaced the purged Wang Jen-chung) were purged swiftly following the Wuhan Incident of July 1967; (i) in the Kunming MR, commander Chin Chi-wei, in apparent favor as of late 1966, was identified in Peking on 1 October 1967 but was listed with military district commanders rather than with the military region leaders and therefore has perhaps been demoted, while the replacement for the purged political officer--whether Li Tsai-han or Li Cheng-fang, both having been reported in the post--seems in good favor; (j) in the Chengtu MR, where commander Huang Hsin-ting and political officer Li Ching-chuan were both purged in 1966, their reported replacements, Wei Chieh and Kan Wei-han, were demoted (at least) in May 1967 and replaced by Liang Hsing-chu as commander and Chang Kuo-hua as political officer, who both appear to be still in favor; (k) in the Lanchow MR, commander Chang Ta-chih, in apparent favor as of late 1966, has been identified in Lanchow broadcasts after an absence of several months but unlike the MR's political officer has not appeared in Peking and may be in disfavor, while political officer Hsien Heng-han has continued to be in high favor; (l) in Sinkiang, commander and political officer Wang En-mao has remained in place but has not appeared recently in Peking and has reportedly been marked by Mao himself for purging, so his status has continued to be, to say the least, in doubt; and finally (m), in the Tibet MR, commander Chang Kuo-hua was transferred to the much more important post in Chengtu in spring 1967 but has apparently retained the Tibet command concurrently, with Chen Ming-i (in apparent favor) probably acting as his deputy on the spot in Tibet and any one of several new men in apparent favor acting as the new political officer.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

There are many other officers of the military regions, in addition to the commanders and political officers of the regional headquarters, who should be considered in any attempt to calculate the scale of the purge. There may be as many as 200, if the leading officers of the armies in the field--armies operating within these military regions--are included. However, this category is very tricky to work with. In the first place, officers of a military region below the level of commander and political officer of the headquarters are not given anything like the coverage given those two, the leading officers of armies in the field are rarely known, they may or may not be included in the lists of MR officers given by Chinese sources, and the status of subordinate officers of an MR may depend heavily on the status of the commander and political officer, which may be uncertain or deceptive; that is, if a given commander seems in good favor but really is not, he and a half dozen subordinate officers may suddenly be transferred from the 'in favor' category to the category of 'in doubt' or even 'purged.'

Nevertheless, with all the caveats, a calculation will be offered with respect to the 100 senior officers of military regions accepted as in place when the "cultural revolution" began, including the commanders and political officers considered separately above. Of seven accepted in the Peking MR, two have been purged, four seem in favor, three are in doubt. Of nine in the Inner Mongolian MR, two have been purged, one is in favor, six are in doubt. Of five in the Mukden MR, one has been removed, three seem in favor, one is in doubt. Of seven in the Tsinan MR, one has been purged, five seem in favor (an unusual proportion), one is in doubt. Of 11 in the Nanking MR, two have been purged or removed, five seem in favor, four are in doubt; but this is one of the special cases, owing to the uncertain status of the commander himself, Hsu Shih-yu. Of five in the Foochow MR, one has been purged, one seems in favor, three are in doubt; this may be another special case. Of 10 in the Canton MR, one has been purged, seven seem in favor, two are in doubt; perhaps another special case, owing to commander Huang Yung-sheng. Of nine in the Wuhan MR, three have been purged, one (in addition to the new commander and political

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

officer) is in apparent favor, and five are in doubt; this is a recently-reorganized MR, and may have been swept almost clean. Of five in the Kunming MR, one has been purged, two seem in favor, two are in doubt; but Chin Chi-wei makes this another special case. Of 12 in the Chengtu MR, five have been purged or replaced, three (in addition to the relatively new commander and political officer) seem in favor, and four are in doubt.* Of seven in the Lanchow MR, none is known to have been purged, two are in apparent favor, and five are in doubt; one of the five is the commander, making this another special case. Of seven in the Sinkiang MR, none is known to have been purged, six are in apparent favor, and one is in doubt; but, again, because this one is the commander and political officer, this is another special case. Finally, of four in the Tibet MR, one has been removed and three are in apparent favor, with a marginal doubt on one of these three. Thus, of 100 officers considered, 20 have been purged or removed (mostly purged), 43 seem in favor, and 37 are in doubt. (If one deducts from these figures the figures for the 24 military commanders and political officers considered separately--14 purged or removed and six in doubt--it means that of the 76 other officers of military regions considered, six have been found purged and 31 are in doubt.) This is a much lower percentage of purges than was found when considering the central military leaders in Peking, of whom fully half have been purged, perhaps many more than half. The figure for the 100 considered will surely rise substantially when the cases of those 'in doubt' are clarified, and--depending on the true status of the commanders who make their military regions special cases--may even equal the percentage among the central leaders. However, the percentage for this category as a whole if it is taken as including the leaders of the armies in the field almost certainly is

*One of those replaced, Kan Wei-han, did not appear publicly in Chengtu until sometime in 1966, but may have been sent from Peking earlier, and is included here where he fell rather than among the central military leaders.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

much lower than that for the central leaders, because Mao and his team have indicated again and again that they have not wanted to purge the line organizations on a large scale so long as they were dependent on them, and they have been dependent on them from the start. Of the roughly 100 senior officers of the armies--a pretty arbitrary figure--the chances are that not more than a dozen have been purged.

Finally, with respect to the 44 key figures of the 22 provincial military districts as of autumn 1965, when the "revolution" began, at least 14 had been purged or removed by early 1967, as noted in an earlier section. The total seems to have risen in 1967 to a figure of at least 20 (a figure which does not include replacements who have fallen), with ten of the original 44 in apparent favor, and others (up to 14) in doubt.* To recapitulate and update:

(a) Of the two MDs subordinate to the Peking MR; in Hopei, where the military commander was in place in early 1967 while the political officer had been purged in autumn 1966, commander Ma Hui (a fulsome Maoist) remains in favor and the new political officer, Tseng Mei, is also in apparent favor; and in Shansi, where the commander was out of sight and the political officer and his successor were both purged before the end of 1966, commander Chen Chin-yu, has finally appeared, in apparent favor, and the new political officer, Liu Ko-ping, seems in high favor;

(b) As for the three MDs subordinate to the Mukden MR: in Heilungkiang, where the commander was left in place but the political officer purged by fall 1966,

*The figure of 20 for the fallen reflects presumptive purges and removals; if one does not share these presumptions and prefers a smaller number, then a larger number for those in doubt should be used, to total 44 on either reading.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

commander Wang Chia-tao remains in favor while the status of the new political officer, Pan Fu-sheng, has come into some question, owing to large-scale and probably unanticipated disorder in the Northeast in July and August; in Kirin, where the fate of the commander was obscure while the political officer was transferred in mid-1966, commander Lo Kun-shan is still missing and has probably been purged, and the new political officer has not been identified; and in Liaoning, where the status of the commander was obscure while the political officer was purged early in the game, commander Ho Ching-chi is still missing and is presumed purged, while the new political officer has not been identified (it may be Yang Chi).

(c) In the single MD (Shantung) subordinate to the Tsinan MR, where the status of both the military commander and the political officer was obscure in early 1967, a probable commander, Tung Kuo-kuei, appeared soon thereafter (it is not known whether this was a new appointment), and so did a new political officer, Wang Hsiao-yu, both of whom appear to be still in good favor.

(d) Of the three MDs subordinate to the Nanking MR: in Kiangsu, where the status of both the military commander and the political officer was unclear as of early 1967, the commander (whether Chao Chun or Tuan Huan-ching) dropped out of sight later in the year, and so did the officer tentatively identified as the new political officer (Chen Mao-hui), and there was some reason to believe that this military district was being reorganized in September (e.g., only officers of the military region were identified on National Day); in Chekiang, where the commander had dropped out of sight by early 1967 and the political officer had been replaced, commander Chien Chun has still not reappeared and the new political officer, Lung Chien, has now dropped out of sight, and it seems likely that both were victims of the apparent reorganization of this MD in August; and in Anhwei, where the commander had been replaced by early 1966 and the political officer purged by late 1966, the succeeding commander, Yen Huang, appears to have been himself replaced by the former commander, Liao Jung-piao, while the new political officer has not been identified (it may be Tu Wen or Peng Sheng-piao).

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(e) As for the two MDs subordinate to the Foochow MR: in Fukien, where the military commander and the political officer both appeared to be in favor in late 1966, the commander, Chu Yao-hua, and the political officer, Lu Sheng, are both missing, and Chu may have been replaced by Ho Ching-yu; and in Kiangsi, where the military commander was in favor in early 1967 while the political officer had been purged by early 1966, commander Wu Jui-shan was removed and replaced by Yang Tung-liang when the Kiangsi MD was reorganized in August, while the new political officer, Cheng Shih-ching, remains in favor.

(f) As for the three MDs subordinate to the Canton MR:: in Kwangtung, where both the presumed military commander and the political officer were in place as of early 1967, two others--Huang Jung-hai and Yang Mei-sheng--have been reported in the commander's post during 1967, and both are in apparent favor, while political officer Chen Te has remained in apparent favor; in Kwangsi, where the military commander and political officer were both in apparent favor as of early 1967, commander Ou Chih-fu and political officer Wei Kuo-ching have both appeared to retain favor; and in Hunan, where the military commander had dropped out of sight as of early 1967 and the political officer had been purged, commander Lung Shu-chin has recently appeared in apparent favor but his status remains uncertain following Peking's intervention in Hunan, while the identity of the new political officer is uncertain (it may be Hua Kuo-feng or Tan Wen-pang).

(g) As for the two MDs subordinate to the Wuhan MR:: in Honan, where the military commander was in place but the political officer may have been replaced as of early 1967, commander Chang Shu-chih had recently appeared in apparent favor but may actually be in disfavor as a result of developments leading to Peking's intervention in Honan, while political officer Liu Chien-hsun (who may or may not have been named since early 1967) seems in favor; and in Hupei, where the military commander was in place while the political officer had been purged as of early 1967, commander Wu Shih-an seems to have been a casualty of the reorganization of the Hupei MD in August, while the probable new political officer, Chu Yeh-kuei, apparently remains in favor.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

(h) Of the two MDs subordinate to the Kunming MR: in Kweichow, where the military commander had been replaced but the political officer was apparently in place as of early 1967, the new commander, Ho Kuang-yu, remains in favor, while political officer Shih-Hsin-an has apparently been subordinated to Li Tsai-han as first political officer; and in Yunnan, where the identity of the military commander was uncertain and the status of the political officer in doubt as of early 1967, the commander identified later in 1967, Li Hsi-fu, is now missing and may have been replaced by Chen Kang, while political officer Chou Hsing has been missing all year and has probably been replaced by Li Cheng-fang.

(i) Finally, of the four MDs subordinate to the Lanchow MR: in Kansu, where neither the military commander nor the political officer was known as of early 1967, the possible commander, Kang Chien-min, is in apparent favor, while the possible political officer has now dropped out of sight; in Ninghsia, where the probable commander was out of sight while the probable political officer had been purged as of early 1967, commander Chu Sheng-ta is still missing, presumed purged, and may have been replaced by Chao Ping-lun, while no new political officer has been identified; in Shensi, where the military commander and the probable political officer were both out of sight as of early 1967, commander Hu Ping-yun reappeared but is now missing again and may have been replaced by Kuan Sheng-chih, while political officer Yuan Ko-fu was apparently replaced by Kao Wei-sung, who is himself now missing; and in Tsinghai, where the military commander was in place while the political officer had been purged at least once and perhaps twice as of early 1967, commander Liu Hsien-chuan is still in apparent favor while the identity of the latest political officer is not known (it may be Chang Chiang-lin).

In sum, the scale of the purge of the PLA--of those positions as of autumn 1965 which can be checked--is more than 50 percent for the top levels (the central military leaders and principal officers of military regions), and appears to be 35 to 40 percent for military headquarters outside Peking (all leading officers of military regions

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

and the principal officers of military districts). To recapitulate:

(a) In the central military organs, of the 61 positions (all of the most important ones) which can be checked, the occupants of 28 are known or believed on good evidence to have been purged, while 10 are in doubt, and on the assumption that at least one-third of those in doubt have in fact fallen, the right figure would be at least 31.

(b) In the military regions, if the ranking military commanders and political officers alone are considered, of the 24 original officers (autumn 1965) at least 14 have fallen, with six or seven in doubt, and on the same assumption about those in doubt the true figure would be at least 16, an astonishing purge rate of two in three; but if all of the leading officers of the military regions are considered, of the 100 officers who can be checked some 20 have been purged or removed, with 37 in doubt, so that the true figure is probably at least 32, or a purge rate of something over 30 percent.

(c) In the military districts, of the 44 original officers (autumn 1965), at least 20 have been purged, and if the same assumption is made about those in doubt, at least 24, for a purge rate of more than 50 percent.

(d) If the figures for the military regions and military districts are combined, to get a single figure for headquarters outside Peking, the probable figure would be at least 56 out of 144, for a purge rate of something close to 40 percent.

(e) If the armies in the field are included, however, to get a figure for the PLA as a whole outside the top central leadership, whatever purge-rate is derived will be substantially smaller than 40 percent. On the arbitrary assumption that perhaps a dozen of the 100 senior officers of the armies in the field have been purged, and combining this figure (perhaps grossly mistaken) with the previous figure for military headquarters outside Peking, the purge-rate for the PLA leadership as a whole (outside the central leadership) would be somewhere between 25 and 30 percent.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Even this modest estimate of 25 to 30 percent requires a breakdown, however, as it includes political officers. It is fair to include them, because political officers were and remain integral to the organization of the PLA, and when they are purged then a part of the PLA has been purged. However, a number of these political officers (e.g. in the military regions and districts) were purged not primarily as political officers but primarily as party secretaries (so their inclusion in the PLA purge list is to a degree misleading), and, moreover, the entire political apparatus in the PLA is a mechanism of external control responsive to the party leaders and is presumably so regarded (with some hostility) by many or most military commanders; so that a figure should be derived for the purge of military commanders alone--not as the only meaningful figure, but as the most meaningful one for calculations as to the extent of the purge among those on whom Mao and Lin most directly depend and who would be the key figures in organized resistance to Mao and Lin or in support of a coup against them.

In the top, central military leadership, the 20 officers in the 28 purged positions--i.e. the occupants of which are known or believed to have been purged or removed--are evenly divided between military professionals in the conventional sense and political officers (although some of the military men were trying to do primarily political jobs when they were purged, and some of the political men had also had military commands). The ten military are Lo Juieching, Ho Lung, Chen Yi, Hsu Hsiang-chien, Hsu Kuang-ta, Chang Ai-ping, Hsiao Hsiang-jung, Yang Yung, Wang Shang-jung, and Lei Ying-fu. The ten politicals are Hsiao Hua, Liu Chih-chien, Hsu Li-ching, Kuan Feng (not a conventional political officer, but serving as an officer of a political body in the military establishment when he fell), Hsieh Tang-chung, Li Man-tsun, Liao Han-sheng, Fu Chung, Liang Pi-yeh, and Su Chen-hua.

In the military regions, considering only senior officers in place when the "revolution" began, of the 20 known or believed to have been purged (the great majority) or removed, only five are military commanders--Yang Yung (listed above also), Chen Tsai-tao, Huang Hsin-ting, Wei

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Chieh, and Kung Fei. Fourteen are political officers, most of whom had important posts in the party apparatus concurrently, the latter being the primary consideration in their fall; and one (Ulanfu) was both a military commander and a political officer, but perhaps only nominally the former.

In the military districts, considering only the two ranking officers in each district and only those in place when the "revolution" began, twelve of the first 14 to fall were political officers, most of them concurrently provincial secretaries, the latter again being the primary consideration. Of the 11 known or conjectured to have fallen since early 1967, however, eight are military commanders.*

Summarizing these various categories of the purged and removed, military professionals account for about 25 of the known or presumed victims among PLA leaders, and political officers account for about 40. If only those positions are considered which can be checked, about one in four of the military professionals has fallen, or one in three if allowance is made for those whose status is in doubt, while more than half of the political officers have fallen, or two out of three if doubtful cases are allowed for. If the armies in the field are considered, however, and on the assumption that the rate of the purge of both military commanders and political officers in these armies has been very low, the right figure for all of the military professionals in the PLA leadership would be something like one in four, and for the political officers one in two.

*It was previously noted that there were "at least six" in this category; the maximum figure is 11.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Prospects

The purge of the PLA has not been completed. This is evident on the face of it, because Mao and his team are still speaking of the need to carry the revolution through "to the end," and the "end" is defined in large part in terms of Mao's being satisfied that he has in place everywhere reliable "revolutionary successors." One can only conjecture, however, as to which military leaders now in place he plans to purge when he can get around to it, or which of them will turn into real or fancied opponents as the "revolution" proceeds.*

As is evident from the fact that fully half of the top military leaders at the center have fallen, almost all of the central military leadership organs have already been purged or reorganized. (The term "purge" as used here means the disgrace and/or removal of at least one of the two principal officers and some lesser officers; while a "reorganization," more thorough-going, means the disgrace and/or removal of both of the principal officers or of the principal officer when there is only one, plus some lesser officers.) The top two officers of the Military Affairs Committee remain in place, but the MAC has been reorganized below the top level; the PLA/CRG has been reorganized twice; the Ministry of National Defense has been purged; the General Staff has been reorganized; the General Political Department has been reorganized; the other departments have been purged; and almost all of the service headquarters have been purged. The chances are that there are few if any among the survivors in this group whom Mao has his eye on at the moment; whereas in the early stages of the purge Mao went through an elaborate process before purging those party leaders whom he had marked for purging some time earlier, in later stages those

*Liberation Army Daily joined People's Daily and Red Flag in a National Day (1 October) editorial prophesying a "very acute and complicated...class struggle" in the next year, with challenges to be expected from both "the right" and the "extreme 'left.'"

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

party and military leaders who have fallen into disfavor --those, at least, in Peking--have been brought down quickly, so that the fact of continued occupancy of an important post--in Peking--probably means in almost all cases that the man is still in favor. It seems a sure thing, however, that some of these will fall into disfavor as the "revolution" proceeds.

The picture is less clear with respect to military leaders outside Peking. Of the 13 military regions, at least 11 have been purged, and of those 11 at least five have been reorganized (Peking, Inner Mongolia, Wuhan, Chengtu, and Tibet). At least one more is likely to be reorganized (Sinkiang), and at least four more may be if they have not already been (Nanking, Foochow, Canton, and Kunming). Of the 22 provincial military districts and the two principal garrison commands (Peking and Shanghai), at least 15 of the military districts and both of the garrison commands have been purged, and of the 15 at least three (Anhwei, Kiangsi, Hupei), perhaps as many as 14, have been reorganized. There may be as many as a dozen military districts yet to be reorganized (depending on how many have already been), the leading candidates perhaps being Kiangsu, Chekiang, Hunan, Honan, and Yunnan, in most of which large-scale violence lasted for an unusually long time.

In addition to destroying the party apparatus (done) and reorganizing the military structure as necessary (done in large part), one thing that Mao wants to do in carrying revolution "to the end" is to set up "revolutionary committees"--replacing the party apparatus--in all or almost all of the provinces and principal municipalities of China, committees in which PLA officers participate as one of those components (the others being acceptable party cadres and representatives of "rebel" organizations). He has not been in a hurry about this; this belongs to the "constructive" stage of the revolution, and can be, should be, done slowly and methodically, so that the structure will be firm. There are only five provincial revolutionary committees (Shansi, Heilungkiang, Shantung, Kweichow, Tsinghai), in addition to the two in the two principal cities (Peking and Shanghai). And there are

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

only five known preparatory groups, for the formation of revolutionary committees (Kiangsi, Hunan, Szechuan, Kansu, Inner Mongolia). The 16 other provinces (including three of the four "autonomous" regions) are under military control commissions or the equivalent, at any rate under military rule and control. The military seem to be the principal, dominant authorities everywhere else too--that is, in the provinces and municipalities with revolutionary committees or preparatory groups for them. Additional military leaders are sure to get into trouble prior to the formation, in the formation, and in the operation of these revolutionary committees: "rebel" groups will continue to fight with one another; "rebels" dissatisfied with their representation are sure to make trouble for the local military authorities and some of these "rebels" will be supported by Peking; both of the other components in the formed committees (party cadres and "rebels") are sure to make trouble for the PLA component; and Peking is sure to disapprove of some of the things the committees do.

The purge of the PLA could, of course, be either greatly enlarged or greatly diminished if leaders of the PLA were to turn on Mao and try to depose him. It would be greatly enlarged if the coup failed--as Mao would follow the course that he followed with the party apparatus, and purge almost all of the leaders for their professional and personal relations with the "handful" at the top. And it might be greatly diminished if the coup succeeded --that is, many of those (primarily military professionals, not political officers) now purged but not killed might be rehabilitated and restored to office.

The question arises as to whether Mao will give the leaders of the PLA sufficient cause for a coup. One could argue that he already has, at least for some PLA leaders remaining in favor: good comrades have been brought down, morale in some parts of the PLA has suffered, training has been weakened, combat-readiness has been reduced, no leader is really secure, and so on. Nevertheless it is apparent that Mao has not provoked coordinated resistance among military leaders, the kind of resistance which *inter alia* could be expressed in a coup. One important

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

reason for this is surely that in the same period in which Mao has done these disagreeable things to the PLA he also greatly elevated it in prestige, power and influence in Chinese society, so that the position of the survivors of the purge of the PLA is in one way better than it was before the purge began--there are more attractive positions than there were, and fewer competitors for them. The combination of fear and ambition on the part of PLA leaders, plus the good discipline expected of military leaders, has worked well for Mao.

The question comes down, then, to Mao's plans with regard to the survivors. Does Mao mean them to survive? Mao's present plans, with respect to the further purge and reorganization of the PLA, appear to be modest; that is, he seems pretty well pleased with the PLA as presently constituted, and apparently does not plan a purge of it on the scale of the party apparatus--which would purge most of its remaining leaders. The possibility must be recognized, however, that Mao will become displeased with the PLA's performance in its political role, will decide that most of the remaining PLA leaders have also "failed the test," and will in fact conduct or try to conduct another large-scale purge of the PLA. It is at least arguable that Mao would not be able to get away with this, that this time neither fear nor ambition nor discipline would serve him well enough, that this time he would provoke the kind of coordinated resistance which has been missing in the past two years, and that a group of military leaders in Peking would execute a plan for his overthrow designed by a coalition of military and non-military leaders. (Some observers believe that a bloodless coup has already occurred, that Mao and Lin have already been dislodged by such a coalition; the evidence seems overwhelmingly to the contrary, but such a development must continue to be regarded as being among the possibilities for the future.) On balance, none of these seems a strong possibility for the short term, say the next six months: that is, Mao will probably not attempt another large-scale purge, the military will probably not rise against him, he will probably not be dislodged. The probability, rather, is for Mao to remain in command and to proceed with a modest further reorganization of the PLA as inclination and opportunity permit.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

This judgment assumes that Mao's health holds, that he does not die or deteriorate to such a degree that he has to be set aside. The chances of either his early death or his early deterioration are impossible to evaluate. On one hand, some observers report him healthy and in command of his faculties; on the other, some observers (including some medical observers) point to his medical history (they believe him to have had a number of strokes) and question whether the others are right. In any case, he could die or become disabled at any time, and Lin Piao, the head of the PLA, who has been clearly and emphatically designated as the successor, would probably in fact succeed. Lin and Chou En-lai might well surprise everybody by working amicably together (they would tend to need each other). Even if this were to prove untrue and there were to be a "struggle for power" (as there has not yet been), either of these men as contender, and either as winner, would continue to need the support of the PLA, and this would be true of other possible contenders too. In sum, the fortunes of most of the present leaders of the PLA look pretty good even under Mao, and seem likely to improve under Mao's successor.

~~SECRET~~