

THE THIRD FORCE IN THE MARSHALL MISSION

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION FOR SOURCES

- FRUS Foreign Relations of the United States
- CWP China White Paper
- USDS United States Department of State
- RIAC Records of the US Department of States Relating to the Internal Affairs of China, 1945-1949
- CPR China Press Review
- RMM Complete Records of the Mission of General George C. Marshall to China, December 1945-January 1947

ABBREVIATION FOR TEXT

- CCP Chinese Communist Party
- CDCP Chinese Democratic Constitutional Party
- CEC Central Executive Committee
- CYP Chinese Youth Party
- DL Democratic League
- DSP Democratic Socialist Party
- FDP Federation of Chinese Democratic Parties
- KMT Kuomintang
- NDAC National Defense Advisory Council
- NSA National Salvation Association

NSP	National Socialist Party
PCC	People's Consultative Conference
PPC	People's Political Council
PSG	Political Science Group
RREG	Rural Reconstruction Education Group
UNCL	United National Construction League
VES	Vocational Education Society

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

From late December 1945 to early January 1947, newly retired Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall undertook the task of preventing the renewal of a Chinese civil war and democratizing the National Government. On January 7, 1947, the day he left China, he made a personal statement about his mission to China. In this statement, he declared the failure to achieve the American objective of bringing “peace, unity, and democracy” to China. He considered “the great obstacle to peace,” the “complete, almost overwhelming suspicion with which the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang (also known as the Nationalists) regard each other.” He contended that the extreme right faction in the Kuomintang (KMT) opposed “almost every effort” he made to bring “a genuine coalition government,” and that radicals in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) were determined to overthrow the National Government at any cost. He suggested, “The salvation of the situation would be the assumption of leadership by the liberals in the government and in the minority parties, a splendid group of men, but who as yet lack the political power to exercise a controlling influence.”¹

The liberals on whom Marshall rested so much hope were those who possessed a moderate ideology, that is, were between the extreme right in the KMT and the extreme

¹The United States Department of State (USDS), *The China White Paper (CWP): United States Relations With China With Special Reference to the Period 1944-1949* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1967), 686-688. Words in the parentheses are added by the author.

left, the Communists. They were largely exponents of the British-American political system. They opposed one-party dictatorship and advocated democracy. Many of them were educated in the United States or possessed an American-style education.

To the Americans, the KMT liberals were advocates of Anglo-American tradition in China. They often criticized the leadership of Chiang and the Nationalist Party; therefore, many members in the KMT regarded them as radical. Nevertheless, they actually did not sympathize with the CCP, nor did they ever identify themselves with any anti-government movement. For many years, they had supported the National Government.²

The liberal faction in the KMT was represented by Sun Fo and the Political Science Group (PSG). Sun was Chairman of the Legislative Yuan, son of the “founding father” of modern China, Sun Yat-sen. He did not join any clique within the KMT.³ Due partly to the fame of his father and partly to his continuous harsh criticism of the government, some liberals, among them Dr. Quo Tai-chi, formerly Ambassador to Great Britain and Minister of Foreign Affairs, considered him a potential leader for a liberal coalition.⁴ However, some liberals opposed this view. In an interview with J. K. Penfield, Secondary Secretary of the US State Department, reputed liberal General Yang

² USDS, *FRUS, China* 1944, Vol. VI, (Washington: Government Printing Office), 493-494.

³ Tang Tsou, *American's Failure in China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 376-378. There were various factions within the KMT. The Whompoa clique, who controlled the national army, and the “CC” clique, led by Cheng Kuo-fu and Cheng Li-fu, who controlled the party, were to the right of the KMT. They were faithful to Chiang Kai-shek and opposed any changes in the government. The Guangxi Clique led by Li Tsung-jen and Pai Tsong-xi and the Yunnan Clique, led by Lung Yun, controlled Guangxi and Yunnan provinces respectively. They were subordinated to the central government but were not faithful to Chiang Kai-shek. The PSG consisted of KMT liberals who advocated reforms along the lines of western political systems. Also, see Guo Xixiao, “The Climax of Sino-American Relations 1944-1947” (Ph.D. diss., University of Georgia, 1997), 169.

⁴ For Sun Fo’s criticism of the government, see USDS, *FRUS, China* 1944, Vol. VI, 393, 485-486, 57, 447-448, 410, 435-437; for Guo Tai-chi’s opinion of Sun Fo, see *ibid.*, 242.

Chieh argued that “real liberals” thought Sun did not really understand the democratic principles and the critical issues of the time.⁵ The Americans also thought that Sun lacked the characteristics of a leader, but that his father’s reputation might make him a titular leader for the liberals.⁶

The PSG was founded by Li Ken-yuan, formerly Minister of Finance of the old Beijing Government. The main qualification for membership of this group was a high reputation for technical or scientific achievements. Those who possessed extraordinary potential for achieving such standing were also qualified for membership. Usually, a foreign education was a must for joining the PSG. Its leading members were Chang Chun, Chairman of Sichuan Province, Wu Ting-chang, Chief of Civil Officials, Hsiung Shih-hui, Commander-in-chief of the Northeastern Field Headquarters, Wang Shih-chien, Minister of Foreign Affairs and a political moderate close to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, Wong Wen-hao, Minister of Economics of the Central Government, and Chang Chia-ao (Chang Kia-ngau), who controlled China’s transportation and was Chairman of the Northeast Economic Committee and concurrently Managing Director of the Changchun Railway Company.⁷

Traditionally, the PSG had limited influence on the political and military affairs within the KMT because the right wing controlled both the army and the party.⁸ In June 1945, however, Wang Wen-hao was appointed to the Executive Yuan, the most powerful apparatus in the National Government; Chiang Mo-lin, another prominent member of the

⁵ Ibid., 578-580. Yang was former Chief of Staff to Chiang and Ambassador to Russia, see *ibid.*, 692.

⁶ Ibid., 241-242.

⁷ USDS, “Records of the US Department of States Relating to the Internal Affairs of China, 1945-1949” (henceforth referred to as “RIAC”), Microfilm Edition, Roll 3 (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1988), frame 946.

PSG, was even designated as Secretary General of the same Yuan. Chiang was also elected a member of the Central Supervisory Committee of the KMT. Chiang was the President of Beijing University and the Chinese Red Cross. Educated in America, he had a thorough understanding of democracy and was famous for advocating its transplantation to China. Both the Chinese and the Americans regarded his appointment to the Executive Yuan, together with that of Wong Wen-hao, as the rise of a liberal force in the KMT and a sign of the coming of liberalization to the KMT Government.⁹ The PSG had been openly advocating KMT-CCP rapprochement since May 1944.¹⁰ Therefore, in later negotiations with the CCP, Chiang Kai-shek always nominated members of this group as the representatives of the National Government.

The independent individuals, minority parties, and various groups or organizations, which had the same ideals as described above yet did not affiliate with the KMT, were called “the third force.” In the words of Carsun Chang (1867-1969), founder of the National Socialist Party (Democratic Socialist Party),

The third force is . . . something which grows out of the needs and context of Chinese politics and society...it is sympathetic towards the study of Western political and social ideals so that a proper evaluation and a judicial selection can be made for the progressive development of Chinese society . . . Its program was the peaceful solution of the civil war in China, the establishment of a democratic regime, the adoption of a constitution accepted by all the people, and a coalition government consisting of all parties. This program was proposed before the arrival of General Marshall in China for his work of mediation, and agreed substantially with the Truman statement of 1945.¹¹

The third force mainly consisted of three minority parties, three organizations, and some prominent independent political figures. The three parties were the Democratic

⁸ Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 376.

⁹ USDS, “RIAC,,” Roll 1, frame 293. Also see USDS, *FRUS, China*, 1944 Vol. VI, 692 for Chiang’s title.

¹⁰ USDS, *FRUS, China*, 1944, Vol. VI, 428. During their sojourn in America on their return home from England in May 1944, three prominent members of the PSG conducted a survey of US public opinion, which showed great dissatisfaction of the Americans toward the KMT-CCP conflicts. After that, the clique supported any program aiming at a KMT-CCP understanding.

¹¹ Carsun Chang, *The Third Force in China* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1952), 14.

Socialist Party (DSP), the Chinese Youth Party (CYP), and the Third Party (TP). The three organizations were the National Salvation Association (NSA), the Vocational Educational Society (VES), and the Rural Reconstruction Association (RRA).¹² In the fall of 1937, at the National Defense Advisory Council (NDAC), an organ established by the government to gather advice on resisting the Japanese, these various parties, organizations, and independent political individuals for the first time gained some experience of collectively negotiating with the government and thus realized the strength of acting in concert for a common goal.¹³

The spring and summer of 1939 saw both the loss of morale in fighting the Japanese and the escalating clashes between the Nationalist and the Communist troops. Worrying over this situation, leaders of the third force formed the United National Construction League (UNCL) in the fall to help bring about national unity, especially to urge the formation of a united national army.¹⁴ The failure of their effort to reconcile the government and the Communists in March of 1940 and early 1941 after the “New Fourth Army Incident” brought them to the realization that they must form an independent third force to compensate for their weakness.¹⁵ In March 1941, they reshuffled the UNCL into a more formal organization, the Federation of the Chinese Democratic Party (FDP).¹⁶ To keep strict neutrality, with the exception of some very prominent non-partisans, the FDP

¹² Ibid., 113.

¹³ Anthony Joseph Shaheen, “The China Democratic League and Chinese Politics, 1939-1947” (Ph.D. Diss., University of Michigan, 1977), 8, 14.

¹⁴ Ibid., 13.

¹⁵ Ibid., 31. For the third force mediation efforts in 1940 and 1941, see *ibid.*, 19-31.

¹⁶ Ibid., 40-41.

only accepted those affiliated with minority parties in case the CCP members infiltrated as individuals.¹⁷

The Federation did not relax its admission restrictions to recruit non-partisans until October 10, 1944, when it was further reorganized into the Chinese Democratic League (DL) in an anti-Central Government coalition movement. By amalgamating the various groups and important individuals into one organization, third party leaders had hoped to form an independent third party that could balance the two major contending parties in the new government, which the movement aimed to establish.¹⁸

The League proposed a comprehensive program covering political, economic, military, and social aspects. Politically, it advocated, as Anthony Shaheen has written, “democracy, liberty, constitutionalism, the rule of law, local autonomy, a separation of powers between the Central Government and the provinces and between the provinces and the hsien, a two house parliament with a president and vice president elected directly by the people, an independent judiciary, a sound civil service system, and universal suffrage.” Economically, the League proposed state ownership but with the recognition of private property. Militarily, the League demanded that the army belong to the state instead of to a political party and that military men should not interfere with political affairs. Its social program advocated equality for all citizens and responsibility for providing the Chinese people with enough daily necessities.¹⁹

The League’s social program seemed to appeal to the masses, yet it failed to recruit beyond the middle class. Though the DL liberalized its admission policy as early

¹⁷ Ibid., 43-44.

¹⁸ Ibid., 193.

¹⁹ Ibid., 295-297.

as October 1944, it stressed party affiliation until 1947. It never became a united, coherent party as desired. Just as it publicly depicted itself, the League was at most a loose association that was unable to reconcile the inter-party disagreements.²⁰

This thesis examines the interaction of the third force, mainly the DL, with the United States in the Marshall mission. I will divide the paper into four parts. The first part will briefly trace the development of the third force in China, their mediation efforts between the KMT and the CCP during the Sino-Japanese War, and the interaction of the third force and the United States in World War Two. The second part will address US policy toward China, the Chinese reaction to that policy, and the early success of the mission in the form of a series of agreements as of late February 1946. The third part will examine the interaction of the third force and Marshall in the Manchuria crisis ending with the truce in late June. The last part will look at the effort of the third force as a direct mediator with the American intermediaries in the background. The period from July to late September when Marshall gradually withdrew from formal mediation will be addressed as part of the general background of the October mediation.

Throughout the narrative, I will address the following questions: What was the role of the third force in the mission? How did its members view themselves and how did they view the role the Americans played in trying to bring the Nationalists and Communists together? Finally, how did the Americans view the role of the liberal forces in the mission and in future Chinese political development?

²⁰ Ibid., 235.

CHAPTER II

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THIRD FORCE, ITS MEDIATION
EFFORTS, AND INTERACTION WITH THE UNITED STATES DURING
WORLD WAR TWO**

On July 7, 1937, the Japanese Guandong Army launched a full-scale war against China. Shortly after that, the National Government established the National Defense Advisory Council, and invited leaders of the CCP, CYP, NSP, and a few non-partisans to participate.

Two reasons lay behind the move. First, the government was urgently seeking the unity and support of the Chinese people. The NDAC could help to achieve that goal as a symbol of national unity and as a way to win such support.²¹ Second, the establishment of the NDAC met the long-time demand of the third force that an anti-Japanese coalition be created, which would absorb non-KMT elements. The NDAC did give non-KMT elements certain recognition. Nevertheless, because it had no constitutional basis, the government could outlaw it whenever it wanted to. Therefore, the minor parties soon demanded that the government define the NDAC's responsibilities and powers clearly. After bargaining, the

²¹ Lawrence N. Shyu, "China's Minority Parties in the People's Political Council, 1937-1945," in *Roads Not Taken: The Struggle of Opposition Parties in Twentieth-Century China*, ed. Roger B. Jeans (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 153.

government finally agreed to set up a new organ with explicitly defined powers, the People's Political Council(PPC).²²

According to the Organic Law of 1938 as cited by Shaheen, the PPC had three powers: "to approve all the important policies of the government, to make proposals, and to hear government reports and question government officials." These powers, however, were held in check by many factors. For example, although the PPC was authorized to approve the important policies of the government, it had no rights to decide what policies were important. In addition, all resolutions passed by the PPC were subjected to the final approval of the Supreme National Defense Council in which non-KMT members had no say. Even if these resolutions were approved, there was no guarantee of their enforcement. Therefore, only through the power to make proposals could the third force exert potential influence.²³ For the first three years of the PPC's existence, the third force and the CCP possessed 100 out of its 200 seats. After 1941, with the cessation of Japan's large-scale attack and the deterioration of the KMT-CCP relations, membership of the KMT delegates increased to 164 while that of the non-KMT delegates decreased to 60.²⁴

In this chapter, I will examine the activities of the third force in the PPC, their early mediation efforts to bring unity to China, and their interactions with the Americans during World War Two. First, let us briefly look at the development of the minor parties and organizations in the third force: the DSP, CYP, TP, NSA, RRA, and VES.

²² Shaheen, "Democratic League," 8-9.

²³ Ibid., 95-96.

²⁴ Shyru, "China's Minority Parties," in *Roads Not Taken*, ed. Jeans, 154.

Parties and Organizations in the Third Force

The Democratic Socialist Party had Liang Chi-chao, the famous reformer of the late Manchu dynasty, as its spiritual leader. It took form in 1931 after the Manchurian Crisis under the name of the National Renaissance Society (*Zaisheng She*), which was established to sponsor the magazine *Renaissance (Zaisheng)*. Three years later, this society was renamed “the National Socialist Party” (NSP) and began to absorb patriotic students.²⁵ Throughout the war, the party had a membership of only a few hundred. After the war, it expanded. In 1946 the NSP joined the Chinese Democratic Constitutionalist Party (CDCP) to become the Democratic Socialist Party. The CDCP grew out of the Emperor Preservation Association founded by Kang Youwei, the collaborator with Liang Chi-chao in the tragic One-Hundred-Days-Reform of 1898. However, the newly formed DSP split at the end of the year as a result of its founder Carsun Chang’s decision to join the government.²⁶

The leaders of the DSP were mostly foreign-trained. For example, Carsun Chang studied political science in Japan and Germany. Lo Lung-chi gained his Ph.D in political science from Columbia University. The party had little influence among the peasants and workers, but was quite influential among intellectuals.²⁷ It was poorly organized under the titular leadership of Carsun Chang, who, according to Chien Tuan-sheng, “was neither

²⁵ Roger B. Jeans, *Democracy and Socialism in Republic China: The Politics of Zhang Junmei (Carsun Chang), 1906-1941* (Lanham: Rowan and Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 1997), 203.

²⁶ Chien Tuan-sheng, *The Government and Politics of China* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1950), 354.

²⁷ Lyman P. Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends in Chinese Communist History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), 172-173.

an organizer himself nor a man able to pick capable men to organize the party for him.” Therefore, it was Chang rather than the DSP who was known at that time.²⁸

The DSP platform, as Roger B. Jeans has written, contained three elements: “nationalism, democracy, and socialism.” It emphasized nationalism as the fundamental point. Politically, it opposed the KMT’s one-party rule and its suppression of civil liberty and advocated “Anglo-American democracy.” Economically, it recognized private property but emphasized state planning. In general, the DSP was more liberal than the CYP.²⁹

The China Youth Party developed from a non-political student organization that was established in 1918 in Beijing University. This organization, known as the Youth China Study Association, gradually became involved in politics and split into two factions. Most in the leftist faction were attracted to the early CCP.³⁰ The more right-wing faction, led by Tseng Chi (1892-1951), Li Huang, and Tsou Shun-sheng formed the Youth China Party in Paris in 1923 (later renamed the Chinese Youth Party) to counter the European Branch of the Chinese Communist Youth Corps recently established by the Communists.³¹ The essential goals of the party were to cleanse national internal factionalism and to protect China against invasion. Its platform was to advocate national unity, to revitalize the economy, and to restore Chinese culture.³² Nevertheless, it overemphasized Chinese nationalism to the point where the economic improvement of

²⁸ Chien, *Government and Politics*, 353.

²⁹ Jeans, *Politics of Zhang Junmei*, 203.

³⁰ Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends*, 172; Chien, *Government and Politics*, 351.

³¹ Marilyn A. Levine, “Zeng Qi and Frozen Revolution,” in *Roads Not Taken*, ed. Jeans, 229-231; Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends*, 172.

³² Levine, “Zeng Qi and Frozen Revolution,” in *Roads Not Taken*, ed. Jeans, 231.

the masses was ignored.³³ Though it supported “an advanced social program,” Lyman P. Van Slyke observes, “The CYP was far to the right.” The base of the CYP was in Sichuan, where it received support from local landlords and military men.³⁴ By the end of World War Two, however, the party had expanded into various provinces, but the leadership of most of these branches did not come from local people. Most members of the party were Sichuanese: landowners, educators, and students; after 1946 some bureaucrats and businessmen joined the CYP in the hope of getting seats in various central and local assemblies.³⁵ The CYP was active in the UNCL, the FDP, and the DL. During the early stage of the Anti-Japanese War, the CYP came closer to the KMT as the latter became less revolutionary. In October 1945, the CYP dropped its affiliation with the DL and joined the government in late 1946.³⁶

The Third Party consisted of the left-wing KMT members who broke away from the main body of the KMT in 1927. Under the name of the Provisional Action Committee of the KMT, this group was led by Teng Yen-ta until 1931.³⁷ In 1935, it changed its name to the Liberation Action Committee of the Chinese People, but it was more famous as “the Third Party.” The TP was illegal until 1938 when it was invited into the NDAC. During the war years, it was led by Chang Po-chun and Peng Tse-min. The TP was a small party with neither a central organization nor local branches. Although its program called for meeting the needs of peasants and workers, as advocated by the KMT

³³ Chien, *Government and Politics*, 351.

³⁴ Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends*, 172.

³⁵ Chien, *Government and Politics*, 352-353.

³⁶ Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends*, 172.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 173.

before its split in 1927, the TP had little influence among the masses, except for Chang Po-chun who was quite influential among some labor unions.³⁸

The NSA originated from the All-China National Salvation Association founded in 1936 in Shanghai by some dissidents who demanded an early war of resistance to the Japanese. The NSA was very good at arousing the students to strike and demonstrate.³⁹ The arrest of the NSA's seven most prominent leaders in November 1936 expanded its influence so greatly that by 1937 the NSA had spread out all over the country with the third largest membership of China's political organizations. Although the contacts between various groups within the NSA were rare, these groups shared similar programs, specifically, in the words of Van Slyke, "armed resistance to Japan, an end of civil war, constitutional rule, and civil rights." However, they never formed a solid party because they could not concur on a detailed program. The NSA was more radical than any other party except the CCP.⁴⁰ Thus, in the eyes of the KMT, the NSA was the CCP's front organization rather than an independent force.⁴¹ Therefore, when the minority parties organized the FDP, to show their impartiality and to gain approval from the central government, they excluded the NSA.⁴²

The Rural Reconstruction Association and Vocational Education Society were small, non-political organizations consisting of members with little interest in political careers.⁴³ The RRA emerged from the movement for rural reconstruction. This movement began in 1931, and Liang Shuming was the acknowledged leader. Liang

³⁸ Chien, *Government and Politics*, 356-357.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 356.

⁴⁰ Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends*, 174.

⁴¹ Parks M. Coble, "The National Salvation Association," in *Roads Not Taken*, ed. Jeans, 143.

⁴² Shaheen, "Democratic League," 43.

believed, as Shaheen writes that, “the educational, administrative, and productive reconstruction of the village was the starting point for national reform.” Thus, he attempted to solve the social problems and class conflicts through the establishment of the RRA.⁴⁴ In his earlier years, Liang had worked in lower level government and thus gained some experience in governmental administration.⁴⁵ He believed that both an open-minded leadership and a functional institution were indispensable for a good local government. For the former, he tried to create a leadership that would include both the intellectuals and peasants; for the latter, he attempted to introduce local self-government on the one hand, and to work out economical cooperation among these institutions on the other. These practices of Liang in rural construction brought him into close touch with the Communists who, during the Anti-Japanese War, established administrations in rural areas in North China.⁴⁶ His attempts to find a solution to China’s political and social problems also gradually involved him in politics.⁴⁷ Of all the leaders of the third force, Liang made the greatest individual contribution towards the idea of building an independent third force in China.⁴⁸

The Vocational Education Society came into being in Jiangsu in 1917. It aimed to train men in modern industrial technology, which, its founder Huang Yen-pei (1878-1965) believed, was the most effective way to rejuvenate China. The society built some schools after the American model and engaged itself in teaching industrial knowledge. The Japanese invasion, however, gradually drew this group into politics. Like the NSA,

⁴³ Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends*, 173; Chien, *Government and Politics*, 358.

⁴⁴ Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 52.

⁴⁵ Chien, *Government and Politics*, 358.

⁴⁶ Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 52.

⁴⁷ Chien, *Government and Politics*, 358.

the VES also demanded an early war of resistance, which brought itself popularity and an invitation to join the NDAC. The VES supported the government at first. As the latter's suppression of civil liberties increased during the later years of the war, the society's criticism of the government increased.⁴⁹ In December 1945, it organized the Democratic National Construction Association (NCA) with demands for peace, unity, democracy, civil liberty, and the formation of a national army. The NCA did not admit political officials or incumbent military personnel. As to the CCP-KMT split, it maintained strict neutrality.⁵⁰

Huang had a good relationship with the government because the existence of his vocational schools was contingent on its good will.⁵¹ Huang had a peace-loving personality with little interest in politics. His educational reform activities, however, inevitably brought him into China's political life. The Sino-Japanese War involved him further in political affairs, as he spent more and more time in Japanese-resisting activities. He soon became a leading figure in the third force. He was a major force behind the UNCL, the FDP, and the DL, and for years, he had devoted himself to the mediation of the KMT-CCP conflict.⁵² By 1940, he had already become widely known as a peacemaker.⁵³ The government's failure to institute genuine reforms and its white-terror policy disappointed him so much that his original support for the KMT faded. Yet the CCP's advocacy of class struggle did not appeal to him either. Nevertheless, he made no

⁴⁸ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 52.

⁴⁹ Van Slyke, *Enemies and Friends*, 173; Chien, *Government and Politics*, 357.

⁵⁰ Thomas D. Curran, "From Educator To Politician: Huang Yen-pei And The Third Force," in *Roads Not Taken*, ed. Jeans, 99-100.

⁵¹ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 77.

⁵² Curran, "Huang Yenpei," in *Roads Not Taken*, ed. Jeans, 85-86.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 90.

efforts to build an independent force to compete with the two. Instead, he chose to be a mediator, laboring to bring about reconciliation.⁵⁴

The role the third force played was quite similar to that of Huang as an individual.⁵⁵ Like Huang, most intellectuals of the third force were educated in the Chinese classical tradition in which the ideal was to live in seclusion without becoming involved in politics.⁵⁶ For Huang and many other third force leaders, it was not appropriate for an intellectual and educator to become a politician. Though they were extensively engaged in political activities, they lacked the necessary imagination to unite their forces into a viable opposition.⁵⁷

Mediation Efforts in World War Two

As we know, the various parties and groups that formed the third force emerged in the 1920s and 1930s. Though they had similar demands for peace and democracy, they seldom got in touch with one another. World War Two not only drew them together in their common cause of fighting the Japanese, but also brought them to the attention of the American diplomatic officials in China. In their efforts to maintain national unity and the war effort, third force groups not only tried very hard to reconcile the KMT and the CCP, but also actively reached out to the American diplomats for sympathy and help. I will first examine the mediation efforts of the third force during World War Two and then look at its interactions with American diplomatic officials during the war.

The cooperation between the Nationalists and the Communists, which commenced shortly after the war began, did not last long. As the Japanese attacks

⁵⁴ Ibid., 85-86.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 86.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 104.

gradually subsided into a protracted occupation by 1939, the two rivals resumed their competition. The Communists grasped every opportunity to expand its bases in the Northwest and the North China plain; the government countered that expansion by blockading the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region. Military clashes between the two sides broke out in several places in the spring and summer of 1939.⁵⁸ Seeing these tensions and hostilities as he toured the unoccupied areas in North China in his practice of rural reconstruction,⁵⁹ Liang Shuming felt it urgent to unite the third force into a more coherent organization that would play a more active role in bringing national unity. Largely through Liang's effort, the UNCL came into being in October as a discussion group.⁶⁰

The spring of 1940 witnessed the first efforts at mediation by the newly formed UNCL. The fifth session of the first PPC then in convocation received a report on the fresh clash between the Nationalist and the Communist troops.⁶¹ Following Liang's proposal, the PPC set up an eleven-man committee, on which Huang Yen-pei and Carsun Chang represented the minority parties. This committee aimed to study relations between parties and it finally came up with a four-point proposal for settling the disputes between the KMT and the CCP.⁶² However, the Japanese bombing of Chongqing in the late spring abruptly ended all these efforts. Conveniently, the government gave no response

⁵⁷ Ibid., 105.

⁵⁸ Shyu, "China's Minority Parties," in *Roads not Taken*, ed. Jeans, 157.

⁵⁹ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 13.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 16-17.

⁶¹ Ibid., 19.

⁶² Ibid., 20. These four points were for the government to (1) recognize the Communist local government as a regional government; (2) stop suppressing the political parties; (3) increase the supplies to the Communist army as had promised; and (4) cash in the bank notes issued by the CCP local government .

to the PPC's proposal. Given the nature of the proposal, which favored the CCP, it is unlikely that Chiang Kai-shek would have accepted it.⁶³

The rapidly deteriorating situation after the New Fourth Army Incident in early January 1941 soon required further mediation efforts.⁶⁴ The CCP presented the PPC with twelve demands and threatened to absent itself from the PPC unless the government accepted them. The Communists were weak militarily, but they had a trump card, their participation in the PPC. Without their presence, the PPC would no longer serve as a symbol of national unity, a symbol that was very important in furthering war efforts and maintaining morale. Therefore, by putting the PPC's existence at risk, the Communists might extract some concessions from the government. The CCP's demands left the PPC in a dilemma because it was obvious that the government would not accept these demands. Finally, the PPC rested its hope of breaking the deadlock on Huang Yen-peí.⁶⁵

Instead of trying to persuade the two sides to make concessions on their respective stands, Huang proposed an alternative, the establishment of a PPC standing committee to handle the current crisis. This committee, he and twelve other members of the UNCL recommended, would be chaired by Chiang and composed of PPC members and government officials. Its decisions would not need approval by any other body.⁶⁶

Chiang approved the formation of this committee. The Communists, for their part, first accepted the proposal, but later demanded that every party and every political group have a representative on this committee. Thus, by emphasizing party and group,

⁶³ Ibid.; also see Shyu, "China's Minority Parties," in *Roads Not Taken*, ed. Jeans, 157.

⁶⁴ For the details of the New Fourth Incident, see Shaheen, "Democratic League," 21-23.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 23-25. CCP's demands included an end to the blockade in the Northwest, the abolition of one-party rule, and the release of all political prisoners.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 25-26.

the CCP was actually asking for legal recognition of itself and all other parties. This was intolerable to the government, which accepted only the NSP and the CYP as legal parties. Even the PPC was recognized as a group of individuals rather than parties or groups.⁶⁷

In retrospect, even if both sides had accepted Huang's suggestion, it is doubtful that such a committee would have had much influence in reconciling the two parties. Some key questions about the committee remained unanswered. For example, how much power would the chairman have? How would the seats be allotted? Most importantly, there was no assurance of the government's readiness to implement the decisions that would be made.⁶⁸

Once again, the proposal of the mediators proved unsuccessful. This failure showed the powerlessness and helplessness of both the third force and the PPC. Their words carried no weight in face of the two armed parties. How could they win, when they were acting from a weak position? As Shaheen puts it, "a discussion group, even one based on and operating through the PPC, was no match for the two armed adversaries." With the PPC unable to reconcile the two contending sides, and with the proposal for creating a standing committee to maintain national unity rejected, the UNCL realized the importance of creating an independent force to stand between the KMT and CCP.⁶⁹

On March 25, 1941, the third force secretly set up the Federation of Chinese Democratic Parties.⁷⁰ Unlike the UNCL before it, the FDP was a formal organization with the objective of ending the KMT's one-party rule.⁷¹ It also reached out to build

⁶⁷ Ibid., 29.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 27.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 30-31.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 41.

⁷¹ Ibid., 42, 56.

connections with and seek financial support from some provincial military leaders, among whom were Lung Yun, military governor of Yunnan, and Li Chi-shen, former governor of Guangdong and head of the Generalissimo's headquarters in Guilin.⁷²

The talks between the KMT and CCP, which continued without the participation of the third force, made no progress in the two years following the New Fourth Army Incident. Clashes intensified again in 1943. The third force, now united in the FDP, once again plunged into the tumultuous world of mediation. The FDP made every effort to bring about a peaceful settlement to the KMT-CCP conflict.⁷³ At the KMT's Central Executive Committee meeting in September 1943, Chiang declared that, "I am of the opinion that first of all we should clearly recognize that the Chinese Communist problem is a purely political problem and should be solved by political means."⁷⁴ Chiang made such an announcement two months before the Cairo Conference largely to please the United States and to gain more aid from that country, but the effort of the third force also contributed to the move.

The Americans actually had encouraged unity in China since 1941 when President Franklin Roosevelt brought the Lend-Lease legislation before Congress.⁷⁵ This legislation would give China needed financial and material aid although its major objective was to help Britain out of its financial predicament.⁷⁶ To ensure an effective use of American Lend-Lease materials, Washington grew increasingly concerned over China's political situation, especially the KMT-CCP split. In February 1941, Roosevelt

⁷² Ibid., 57.

⁷³ Shyu, "China's Minority Parties," in *Roads Not Taken*, ed. Jeans, 158-159.

⁷⁴ USDS, *CWP*, 54.

⁷⁵ Michael Schaller, *The U.S. Crusade in China, 1938-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 46.

sent Dr. Lauchlin Currie to China as his personal envoy to investigate China's situation. He especially desired Currie to confer with Chiang about the issue of the CCP, which Currie did. In his meeting with Chiang, Currie tried to impress him with Roosevelt's concern and suggested that Chiang institute reforms to bring about a compromise between the demands of both the left and the right.⁷⁷ In March when the KMT-CCP talks over New Fourth Army Incident were facing a total breakdown, the Department of State sent Chiang a message to warn him against such a trend. This move of the State Department was also due to the rumor that Chiang was waiting for the Americans to participate in the war against Japan so that he could devote more resources to exterminating the Communists.⁷⁸

The issue of unity in China drew more attention from Roosevelt after Japan's bombardment of Pearl Harbor.⁷⁹ Shortly after the United States entered the war, Roosevelt began to raise China to the status of a great power, one of the "Big Four," as Currie had suggested in his report.⁸⁰ He hoped to prevent a further deterioration of the situation in China and, in most cases through his officials in China, repeatedly urged Chiang to work out a political settlement with the CCP. In the spring of 1944, Roosevelt sent Vice President Henry Wallace to China to promote more serious KMT-CCP negotiations. In the fall, Roosevelt further dispatched his special envoy Patrick J. Hurley on a mission to mediate directly between the KMT and the CCP.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Ibid., 47.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 47, 48.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 46.

⁷⁹ Russel D. Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley and American Foreign Policy* (London, Britain: Cornell University Press Ltd., 1973), 139.

⁸⁰ Schaller, *US Crusade*, 90.

⁸¹ Buhite, *Hurley*, 164.

Chiang of course knew very well Roosevelt's hope for China; he knew Roosevelt's expectation for him to maintain unity and institute reform. He catered to Roosevelt's hope by claiming to desire to solve the Communist issue by peaceful methods, but he was not so sincere as he claimed. Renewed negotiations between the two sides following Japan's ICHIGO offensive in April 1944 soon reached an impasse. Both sides brought their cases to the PPC, which showed their recognition of the PPC as a suitable place to debate. The PPC appreciated this change and enjoyed its work as a mediator. However, the Hurley mission beginning in September 1944 soon made the PPC's efforts less important or even unnecessary. Not until the following spring when Hurley met with a setback and the KMT-CCP talks came to another stalemate did the third force leaders in the PPC again shoulder the responsibility of mediation.⁸² On June 6, seven members of the PPC urged the CCP to resume talks with the government.⁸³ On June 18, Mao and Chou expressed their willingness to do so, and invited the seven to visit Yen-an. This invitation caught the seven members by surprise, as their original intentions were just to help smooth the talks. Under the government's urging and with the help of Hurley, who provided a plane, this group (with the absence of Wang Yun-wu, who suddenly fell ill) flew to Yen-an on July 1. After four day's talk, they got a new proposal from the CCP, thus clearing the way for top-level talks in Chongqing between the two parties shortly after the end of the war.⁸⁴

⁸² Ibid., 159.

⁸³ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 284-285. These seven members are Chu Fu-cheng (KMT), Huang Yen-pei, Leng Yun (VES), Wang Yun-wu, the director of the Commercial Press, China's largest publishing house, Tsou Shun-sheng, Chang Po-chun, and Fu Su-nian, the director of the Institution of Philosophy and History of the Academia Sincia.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 285-286.

A more significant result of this trip to Yen-an was its influence on Huang Yenpei, through whom the DL formed a better opinion of the CCP. Of all the third force leaders, only Liang Shu-min had been to Yen-an before this trip. Liang had favorable impressions about the Communists, which was not surprising because he was on the left wing within the DL. Huang, however, was moderate to conservative in his political sympathies. Unlike other members of the League, who had been charged with being “tails of the Communists,” Huang had never expressed any pro-Communist opinions before. For this reason, his words carried more weight. Because he repeatedly praised the achievements of the Communists after his return from Yen-an, it could be expected that the League’s impression of the Communists as a whole would be more positive.⁸⁵

Nevertheless, the Mao-Chiang talks in August and September 1945 excluded the DL despite the latter’s demand for direct participation. The DL made every effort to influence the negotiations through informal discussions with representatives of both sides. For example, on the first day of the formal negotiations, Chang Lan, President of the DL, talked with Mao. Several days later, the Standing Committee of the DL invited CCP representatives to lunch. The DL also managed to hold a conference in which both the CCP and the KMT took part. After Mao’s departure, the DL became more directly involved in the talks.⁸⁶

The talks proved more fruitful than any previous ones, with an agreement reached on October 10. The CCP made military concessions by agreeing to reduce its army and give up its bases in Central China. In return, the government conceded politically to allow the convocation of an inter-party conference. This conference, known as the

⁸⁵ Ibid., 286-287.

People's Consultative Conference, was to deliberate over such important issues as convening the National Assembly and rebuilding China's economy.⁸⁷ However, both sides could not concur on the procedure of the convocation of the National Assembly. Under the mediation of the seven members of the PPC, they agreed to let the PCC decide the date and other issues concerning the Assembly.⁸⁸

Interaction with the United States

The interaction between the United States and third force elements in China began mainly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. To keep China in the war, the United States provided limited supplies to the National Government on the one hand and pushed it to adopt political reforms on the other. Because third force members advocated the same political principles as the United States, it was natural for the Americans to take an interest in them. The third force, for its part, naturally, looked to the United States, the symbol of western democracy, for support in its struggle for civil liberties. As early as 1941 when the FDP took form, Liang Shumin notified Robert S. Ward, American Consul in Hong Kong, of its essential objective.⁸⁹ Liang's intention was obvious: to attract the attention of the Americans so that they would give a hand to China's democratic cause.

The interaction between the Americans and the third force could be seen from the latter's response to the former's criticism of the National Government. The Americans at first thought highly of the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang for their heroic resistance against the Japanese. When word of the corruption and high-handedness of the government

⁸⁶ Ibid., 293-294.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 294.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 316. But on political control in the liberated areas, particularly those in Hopei, Shangtung and Chahar, the Communists stood firm without conceding any of their interests.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 42.

kept coming out of China's wartime capital in 1944, however, American criticism of the National Government intensified. Even extreme conservative American publications that favored Chiang and his government expressed criticism of China; they could see little democracy in a country that practiced strict censorship.⁹⁰

Third force groups reacted favorably to American criticism, which, it believed, provided encouragement and assistance to the democratic cause in China. To them, the KMT's announcement in September 1943 that it would establish a constitutional government a year after the war was a reaction to American pressure. Chiang proved this perception to be true when he said before the Cairo Conference that he "could not face President Roosevelt unless he could give a satisfactory answer to any question the President might ask regarding constitutional government in China."⁹¹ The third force also believed that American press criticism would make it easier for President Roosevelt to urge Chiang to carry out reforms in his government.⁹² The liberals especially welcomed American criticism in 1944, when KMT susceptibility was at a height because of Japan's almost unopposed offensive into the interior of China. They believed that the Americans could take this opportunity to press Chiang for democratic reform, and, as one American field reporter noted, unreservedly told the Americans they met about their views.⁹³ Tso Shun-sheng and Shen Chun-ju, for example, highly praised recent American criticism of the National Government in April 1944 in their interviews with the American Second Secretary John S. Service. They told Service that "foreign influence, especially that from the United

⁹⁰ USDS, *FRUS, China*, 1944, Vol. VI, 38, 51, 56-57, 107-108.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 57, 477.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 477.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 476.

States,” was “a strong force in bringing about needed reforms in China and in directing China toward democracy.”⁹⁴

The third force not only welcomed American criticism of China, but also sought direct involvement by foreign nations and governments, especially the United States, in its effort to promote democracy. In May 1944, the NSA and other groups in the third force launched a movement to press the Central Government for the establishment of a united front government, which, they hoped, would incorporate non-KMT political elements. To enlist foreign sympathy and assistance for their movement, they conveyed their plans to the American and British embassies and sent a representative (name unknown) to directly contact American diplomatic officials. Through her foreign friend who had connections with a local educational institution, this representative managed to meet the Second Secretary of the American Embassy, J. K. Penfield. She suggested some ways that foreigners could help bring about the reforms in the Chinese Government. For example, Americans could inspire Chinese students to demonstrate by explaining to them the serious situation in China. Amazed by her remarks, Penfield termed the initiative as “at best the rather far fetched scheming of an idealistic dreamer.” He refrained from expressing any opinion, but told her that, “although the United States Government and American people generally are very anxious to see a united and democratic China, American policy had been strongly and consistently opposed to unwarranted interference in the internal political problems of other countries.”⁹⁵

Chang Lan talked with Penfield along similar lines. He asked indirectly for American political support. He denounced the KMT party rule as “based on fascist

⁹⁴ Ibid., 397-398.

principles,” which had lost popularity with the people, and pointed out the serious consequences of this situation. If it continued, he contended, it would be very hard to conclude the war successfully. Therefore, he hoped the United States could also give some political support to China’s democratic elements when it provided military aid to the Chinese Government.⁹⁶

The CYP also approached Penfield for American assistance to China’s democratic movement. The CYP’s leader Li Huang wanted to establish contacts with foreigners. It happened that the editor (name unknown) of *Hsin Chung Kuo Erh Pao (New China Daily News)*, the organ of the CYP, met Penfield in a reception in May. Shortly after that, he visited Penfield twice, trying to arrange a meeting between Li and Penfield. In the same month, the same newspaper voiced its expectation for the visit of Vice President Henry Wallace: “(He would) gain some understanding of and make some contribution to China’s democratic movement.”⁹⁷

Although the Americans sought to avoid involvement in China’s internal affairs, the third force kept watching American attitudes toward them and their movement. From May to December 1944, some military leaders in South and West China, liberal KMT elements, and minority parties launched an anti-Central Government Coalition Movement. Inaugurated by Marshall Li Chi-sheng, this movement initially planned to gain self-government for Guangxi, Li’s base. With the participation of the third force, it eventually aimed to create a Government of National Defense that would incorporate liberal elements, the Communists, and progressive Nationalists. Participants of the

⁹⁵ Ibid., 441-442.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 442-443.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 442-443.

movement hoped that this new government would de-centralize its power and have the FDP as a middle party buffer between the KMT and the CCP.⁹⁸

The FDP functioned actively in this movement. To ascertain the American attitudes toward the movement, Lo Lung-chi contacted Consul Philip D. Sprouse in July. Lo told Sprouse its objective, which, in Lo's words, was "the formation of a representative government" that would grant "freedom of speech, press, assembly, and organization." He expressed the hope for the continuation of US press criticism of the Chinese Government.⁹⁹ In reply, Sprouse expressed sympathy with the current movement, but reiterated the US Government's recognition of the National Government. He especially pointed out that the United States would discourage any activity that would undermine the fighting against the Japanese, let alone a possible civil war by this coalition movement. Lo did not rule out the possibility of a war, and indicated his hope for US mediation in that case.¹⁰⁰ In September 1944, Lo Lung-chi met with Sprouse again. This time, he presented Sprouse with a draft version of political principles of the DL. Sprouse thought that it represented a middle ground between the western and the Soviet political systems. Although he appreciated the FDP's intentions to put right all the wrongs of the current government, he believed that even in the eyes of all groups in the FDP, many of these principles were too idealistic to be put into practice in China.¹⁰¹

Nevertheless, the DL kept American diplomatic officials informed about the development of the anti-Central Government coalition movement. On January 22, 1945,

⁹⁸ USDS, *FRUS, China*, 1944, Vol. VI, 414-415, 490. For a brief biography of Li, see Shaheen, "Democratic League," 161-163.

⁹⁹ USDS, *FRUS, China*, 1944, Vol. VI, 513.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 491-493.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 584.

Chu Yunshan, who was in charge of organizing the DL and now writing the final draft of the DL's program for the new government, interviewed Richard M. Service, the American Vice Consul at Chengdu. Service warned Chu against the motives of the provincial warlords who were involved in this movement. He suspected that they were simply using the DL to overthrow Chiang. Chu replied that the DL knew the selfishness of these military men, but believed that they would prefer a democratic form of government to the *status quo*. Chu reiterated the DL's deep interest in knowing how the US Government viewed the movement. He tried to find out what the DL should do to win American support or sympathy for this movement. Service suggested that the DL at Chengdu refer to the Embassy for information.¹⁰²

Although the United States recognized the National Government and refused to assist the DL in opposition to the government, it did deem it useful if an anti-government movement could persuade Chiang to absorb other political elements to broaden the base of the KMT government. This would have the advantage of strengthening the war effort and would benefit the future Sino-American relations.¹⁰³

The third force also tried to enlist American cooperation during its mediation in the summer of 1945, when Hurley's mediation efforts failed. On July 28th, 1945, the Seven Men Committee called on Hurley to seek his assistance and advice. Hurley expressed his willingness to help, but considered it the right time for the Chinese themselves to decide their policies. He refused to make suggestions to a particular group but said that he would be willing to do so upon invitation from all parties. The committee asked Hurley to give his opinion of the proposals and counter-proposals of the KMT and

¹⁰² Ibid., *Far East, China*, 1945, Vol. VII, 182-184.

the CCP, but he refrained from doing so. Hurley at last provided a plane by which the committee flew to Yen-an. He also designated an officer to keep in touch with the committee. The committee promised to inform Hurley of the developments of their mediation efforts.¹⁰⁴

The third force continued to put its hope in the United States to help bring peace and democracy to China. This hope can be seen from Chang Lan's discussion with reporters in early August 1945 about the means to stop the civil war:

As for how we can achieve our aim of opposing the civil war ...we also hope that our allies will understand China's internal situation and can help China to overcome this unfortunate situation.¹⁰⁵

Conclusion

In conclusion, the third force was a loose coalition of intellectuals, educators, businessmen, industrialists, and professional politicians, who were drawn together in 1937 in the interest of fighting the Japanese. The third force members were dedicated to the introduction of democratic reforms and the nationalization of China's armies. Instead of attempting to compete with the other two parties militarily or politically, the third force chose the middle road, acting as a mediator. Throughout the Anti-Japanese War, the third force tried to maintain national unity through its vigorous efforts to bring the two armed rivals to a compromise. Nevertheless, it could not overcome its inner conflict, which ultimately weakened its strength as a bloc in its struggle for peace and democracy.

The repeated failure of their mediation efforts demonstrated to the members of the third force that, without a strong power to back them, their words carried no weight. The

¹⁰³ Ibid. *China*, 1944, Vol. VI, 524.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. *Far East, China*, 1945, Vol. VII, 424. The seven members are Hu Fu-cheng (KMT), Fu Ssu-nien (Independent), Wang Yun-wu (Indep.), Leng Yu-chin (Indep.), Tso Shun-sheng (DL), Chang Po-chun (DL), Huang Yen-pei (DL).

third force then pleaded with the Americans for sympathy and assistance in its struggle for political power in China. The Americans refused to give support to any anti-government movement on the ground that their government recognized the National Government and that it was US policy not to interfere in China's internal affairs. Nevertheless, they were critical of the dictatorship and corruption of the KMT Government and sympathetic with China's democratic cause. They hoped that dissident movements in China might force the Chinese Government to institute some genuine reform, which would broaden the base of the government and unify China around the cause of fighting the Japanese. This was in accordance with the American objectives in China during and after World War Two.

The United States had several objectives in China during and after the war. First was to build air bases in South China, which made the Japanese shipping more susceptible to US air bombing. Second was to improve Chinese fighting ability against the Japanese. Third was to at least use the war in China as a means of keeping large numbers of Japanese troops in Mainland China. Fourth was to help China become a stabilizing force in post-war Asia.¹⁰⁶ In the word of Michael Schaller, Roosevelt aimed to “create an effective wartime and postwar ally.”¹⁰⁷ To Roosevelt, China's postwar role was of the greatest importance among the four objectives. As he told Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten in 1943, because of its large population, China would be “(a) very useful (ally) twenty-five years or fifty years hence, even though China cannot contribute much military or naval support for the moment.”¹⁰⁸ Roosevelt hoped that China could promote democracy that would restrict the

¹⁰⁵ *Ho-ping min-chu tung-i Chien-kuo Lu (The Road to Peace, Democracy, Unity and National Reconstruction)* (Hongkong: Min hsien Yue-kan, 1945), 34, cited in Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 291.

¹⁰⁶ Buhite, *Hurley*, 139.

¹⁰⁷ Schaller, *US Crusade*, 91.

¹⁰⁸ Roosevelt to Lord Mountbatten, November 1943, PSF, Box 38, Roosevelt Papers, as cited in *ibid.*, 99.

influence of the Soviet Revolutionary doctrine in Asia.¹⁰⁹ Thus, through the war, the United States tried to persuade Chiang to institute genuine reforms, which was exactly the objective of the third force.

Although the interactions between the third force members and American diplomatic officials began as early as 1941, the US Government did not notice the third force until as late as 1945, when John Carter Vincent, Chief of the State Department's Division of Chinese Affairs, first raised the topic of the third force in a memo. This memo, dated April 3, 1945 and known as "Memorandum Concerning United States Post-War Military Policies With Respect to China," was the first US policy document that mentioned the concept of the third force.¹¹⁰ In this memo, Vincent devoted a lot of room to the KMT's political antagonists, including the DL, which he described as "a loose federation of minor parties and groups opposed to the continued control of the government by a single party." He suggested, "Our support for the KMT-controlled National Government should be realistically alert to these political factors which may conceivably result in the overthrow of the present government."¹¹¹

This memo drew the attention first of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and later of the members of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC), and in late May, it was further dispatched to the departments of State, War and Navy. Because Marshall held

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 91.

¹¹⁰ Wang Chen-main, "Marshall's Approach to the Mediation Effort," in *George C. Marshall's Mediation Mission to China, December 1945-January 1947*, ed. Larry I Bland (Lexington, Virginia: Georgia C. Marshall Foundation, 1988), 24.

¹¹¹ USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1945, Vol. VII, 76.

an important position among the Joint Chiefs of Staff at that time, he might have seen the memo and at least learned something of the third force.¹¹²

Vincent's view proved to have great effect on postwar US China policy. His depiction of the political opponents in China was cited by the SWNCC subcommittee for the Far East in its report on US China policy. The SWNCC approved this report, and on November 7, 1945, the Secretary of State forwarded policy document to the US Charge d'Affaires in China.¹¹³ Subsequently, Truman's instructions to Marshall's mission also mentioned the third force. In his policy statement of December 15, 1945, Truman especially pointed out, "The U.S. strongly advocates that the national conference of representatives of major political elements in the country agree upon arrangements which would give those elements a fair and effective representation in the Chinese National Government."¹¹⁴ In the next several chapters, we will see how the Americans and the third force tried to work together for that purpose in General Marshall's peace mission.

¹¹² Ibid., 24.

¹¹³ Ibid., 24-25.

¹¹⁴ USDS, *CWP*, 608.

CHAPTER III
US POLICY, CHINESE REACTION, AND EARLY SUCCESS OF THE
MARSHALL MISSION

On November 25, 1945, Patrick Hurley resigned as the United States Ambassador to China. The next day Truman accepted Hurley's resignation and announced the appointment of Army General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the Allied Army in World War Two, as his Special Representative in China with the personal rank of Ambassador.¹¹⁵

US Policy and Chinese Reaction

This appointment represented the continuation of US China policy in World War Two. As mentioned in the last chapter, after Pearl Harbor, the United States began to urge the Chinese to effectively resist the Japanese, hoping that through fighting the Japanese, China would become strong and unified and thereby able to maintain peace in post-war East Asia. This hope, however, did not become a reality at the end of the war because of China's low priority in the Allied general war strategy and the armed conflict between China's two biggest political parties. Because of the secondary status of the China-Burma-India theatre, American aid to China was very limited, which made it ever

¹¹⁵ USDS, *CWP*, 132.

harder for China's weak economy to recover.¹¹⁶ Meanwhile, the strife between the Chinese Communists and the Nationalists, which was held back by the war at first but reemerged after the first two years of resistance, kept China from being united. By the end of the war, embattled China was on the brink of another bloody conflict. World War Two changed the old world order. With the fall of Japan and Germany, the USA and the USSR became the two superpowers in the world. The USSR, with an ideology of revolutionary internationalism and worldwide loyal followers, now constituted the biggest threat to the United States and a great menace to the postwar balance of power in Asia.¹¹⁷ Truman and the majority of policymakers in Washington viewed Communism as monolithic, and consequently considered the CCP merely a pawn of the Soviet Union. They believed the continued rule of the Nationalists necessary to contain Soviet expansion, and the US support of the KMT an effective measure to achieve that containment.¹¹⁸ Shortly after Roosevelt died in April, they began to adopt a policy of confrontation with the Soviet Union in East Asia. Subsequently, in addition to providing political support for the National Government, they further made a military commitment.¹¹⁹ Though there were already sixty thousand US soldiers in China by the end of World War Two, they sent another fifty thousand marines to North China in early

¹¹⁶ Kenneth S. Chern, *Dilemma In China: America's Policy Debate, 1945* (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1980), 40-41.

¹¹⁷ Steven I. Levine, "On the Brink of Disaster: China and the United States in 1945," in *Sino-American Relations, 1945-1955: A Joint Reassessment of a Critical Decade*, ed. Harry Harding and Yuan Ming (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1989), 11.

¹¹⁸ "Guide to the Scholarly Resources Microfilm Edition of the Complete Records of the Mission of General Georgia George C. Marshall to China, December 15, 1945 -January 1947" (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1989), introduction; Odd Arne Westad, *Cold War and Revolution: Soviet-American Rivalry and the Origins of the Chinese Civil War, 1944-1946* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 175-176.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

October to occupy major cities, strategic ports, and nearby mines and railroads for the KMT.¹²⁰

For many Americans, however, experiences in China in World War Two had led to disillusionment with Chiang Kai-shek and his party (KMT). In his report to Washington on November 20, 1945, Lieutenant General Albert C. Wedemeyer, who had been Commanding General in the China Theater since Joseph Stillwell's recall in October 1944, concluded that Chiang could not "stabilize the situation in North China" or control Manchuria unless he could reach a "satisfactory settlement" with the Communists and the Soviet Union.¹²¹ US policymakers believed that Chiang Kai-shek could not defeat the Communists and feared that a protracted civil war would drag in the USA and the USSR and probably lead to a confrontation between the two over China, a result Truman did not want to see.¹²²

Europe had always topped the list of American global interests. At the end of the war, the Americans were engaging themselves in struggles with the Soviets in Germany and Eastern Europe. To most Americans, the national strife in China was, in Kenneth Chern's words, a "faintly heard plea of thunder from a distant and traditionally stormy land."¹²³ American leaders were unwilling to take the risk of a military confrontation with the Soviets in China by entrenching their troops there. One major thought guiding US policies, scholar Tang Tsou has observed, was that "American ground forces should

¹²⁰ Chern, *Dilemma in China*, 118; John F. Melby, *The Mandate of Heaven: Record of a Civil War, China 1945-49* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 54; Westad, *Origin of Chinese Civil War*, 102.

¹²¹ USDS, *CWP*, 131-132.

¹²² Levine, "Brink of Disaster," in *Sino-American Relations, 1945-1955*, ed. Harding and Yuan, 11.

¹²³ Chern, *Dilemma in China*, 39.

never be used for combat duties on the mainland of China."¹²⁴ The United States would not intervene in China militarily unless the USSR did so first, or provided substantial aid to the CCP. Since the Soviets did not interfere with Chinese affairs militarily, American leaders feared that if the USA intervened, the Soviets would win over world opinion, or even worse, would respond with a military confrontation with the Americans in China.¹²⁵



Cited from Melby, *Mandate of Heaven*, 54. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher.

Actually, even if the policymakers had desired to support Chiang militarily, diminishing American military strength in China would not have allowed them to do so. The large-scale demobilization as a result of the American people's demand that their soldier be sent home made it impossible to dispatch more troops to China.¹²⁶ The total strength of the US army had been cut from 8,290,000 to 4,228,936 by the end of 1945, to 1,889,690 by June 30, 1946, and to 1,319,483 six months later. Although the United States had 113,000 soldiers in China, including sailors and marines, by late November

¹²⁴ Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 362.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 367-368.

¹²⁶ Chern, *Dilemma in China*, 195; also see Melby, *The Mandate of Heaven*, 48-49.

1945, the War Department predicted that these would be reduced to 6000 by July 1, 1946 and that the entire Pacific region would only have about 400,000 US soldiers by that time.¹²⁷ Even at their peak in November 1945, the 113,000 American troops in China were far from enough if the United States was to support Chiang in his efforts to unify China and Manchuria.¹²⁸ Thus, the United States should either send more troops to China or withdraw quickly to avoid deeper involvement in China's conflict. In late November, Wedemeyer suggested immediately pulling out US troops from China.¹²⁹

Guided by the above considerations, the US leaders concluded that a strong and united China, acting as a buffer between the USA and the USSR and remaining friendly to America and open to its products, would serve American interests the best. They sent Marshall to China, in the hope that Marshall would settle the conflict peacefully by creating a coalition government incorporating Nationalists, Communists, and third force elements.¹³⁰

The appointment of Marshall as a mediator to China and Truman's statement about American policy toward China on December 15, 1945 received a warm welcome from the Central Government, the CCP, and the third force. However, the real motivation behind their enthusiasm and their interpretation of the US China policy needs further investigating.

¹²⁷ Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 365-366. The actual number of American soldiers in China at the end of 1946 doubled that of estimation. Tso argued that this change was mainly due to the need for the use of American marines and soldiers to supervise the truce and to keep open the lines of communication.

¹²⁸ 600,000-1,000,000 Soviet troops entered Manchuria. Reduction had been going on, but even before their actual withdrawal, they still had 200,000 –300,000 there. See USDS, "The Complete Mission of General George C. Marshall to China, December 1945 – January 1947" (henceforth referred to as "RMM"), Microfilm Edition (Wilmington: Scholarly Recourse Inc., 1988), Roll 1, frame 359.

¹²⁹ Chern, *Dilemma in China*, 118-119.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 195. For US domestic protest against military involvement in China and popular demand for repatriation of US troops, see *ibid.*, 121, 130-150.

Chiang actually never believed that the Communists would put down their arms and sincerely work with the Nationalists in a coalition government, but he had several reasons not to fight the Communists immediately after the war. First, it would be very difficult for Chiang to obtain US aid if he refused to try a peaceful solution. His international position had already been downgraded during the last two years of the war because, instead of fighting the Japanese vigorously, he had devoted most of his energy and his best troops to the blockade of the Communists. Second, Chiang wanted to recover the formerly Japanese-controlled areas and keep them under his firm control. He needed time to do so because most of his armies were then in remote Southwest China. Third, fighting the CCP before he could control regional military men might give the latter more independence than he wished them to have.¹³¹ Fourth, he considered compromise with the CCP to be inevitable, as in early 1945 a tendency existed toward continuous cooperation between the Soviets and the Americans. As Chiang observed in his diary in mid-February 1945, these tendencies “are now gaining supremacy over domestic (aspects)” and, therefore, “it would be difficult to avoid certain settlement with the CCP.”¹³² A report from the Chinese Ambassador to Washington shortly after Roosevelt’s death further provided Chiang with a direction for his policies toward the Americans and the CCP. In this report, Ambassador Wei Daoming expected Truman to treat the Soviets more harshly, and suggested that Chiang adjust his policy to that of the United States. “This should be done,” Wei believed, “by accepting US opinion on general matters, but strongly promoting our own demands on important

¹³¹ Westad, *Origins of Chinese Civil War*, 93.

¹³² “Jiang Jieshi Diary, February 18, 1945,” in *Zhongtong Jiang*, Vol. 5, book 2, 678-679, cited in *ibid.*, 33.

questions.”¹³³ Because of this report, Chiang became less willing to make any concessions to the Communists, but at the same time cooperated with US policy.¹³⁴

Chiang at first looked at the Marshall Mission with optimism. He expected this mission to draw the United States further into China’s internal strife. This further involvement might give him the upper hand in his struggle with the Communists.¹³⁵ He could not agree more with Truman on the latter’s point that “the existence of autonomous armies, such as that of the CCP army, was inconsistent with and actually made impossible political unity in China.”¹³⁶ Thus, Chiang welcomed US help in incorporating the Communist army, yet he did not want to rebuild his government and military forces after the American model.¹³⁷ Reluctant to settle the Communist problem by peaceful methods, yet in need of US financial and material support, Chiang made a gesture of cooperating,¹³⁸ because Truman made it clear in his policy statement that the prerequisite for continuous American assistance was that China move toward peace and unity.¹³⁹

The CCP welcomed American China policy enthusiastically because of the following considerations. First, the CCP was inferior to the KMT in several aspects and it needed time to make good its deficiencies. For example, although Communist forces had expanded greatly during World War Two, Nationalist forces still outnumbered them at the rate of five to one.¹⁴⁰ In addition, Nationalist armies were trained and equipped by the

¹³³ Wei Daoming to Jiang Jieshi, April 16, 1945, in *Zhongyao Shiliao*, Vol. 3, book 1, 207, cited in *ibid.*

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹³⁵ But the “CC” clique did not agree with Chiang in this respect; see *ibid.*, 137.

¹³⁶ George C. Marshall, *Marshall’s Mission to China, December 1945-January 1947: The Report and Appended Documents*, Vol. I (Arlington, Virginia: University Publications of Americans, Inc., 1976), 6.

¹³⁷ Ramon H. Myers, “Frustration, Fortitudes, and Friendship: Chiang Kai-shek’s Reaction to Marshall’s Mission,” in *Marshall’s Mission*, ed. Bland, 152.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 166.

¹³⁹ USDS, *CWP*, 133.

¹⁴⁰ Tsou, *America’s Failure in China*, 401.

United States, while the Communists' were not. What is more, the Nationalist Government was recognized internationally as the legal government of China, while the CCP was still regarded as illegal.¹⁴¹ The Communists wanted a legal position, but they did not want to gain it through a war at that time. They needed to preserve their limited strength for future development. Negotiation provided the best way to achieve both goals. In addition, it would also help the CCP win popularity with the public, as the latter had become tired of war. The Communists were confident that, if they could win legal status and consequently an entry into the National Government, they would ultimately dominate it.¹⁴²

Second, the Communists saw the dispatch of Marshall to China as indicating that democratic forces within the US government were gaining the upper hand. They viewed the US Government as composed of both democratic and reactionary elements, of which Hurley represented the latter.¹⁴³ He supported Chiang Kai-shek one-sidedly in his negotiation efforts during the war and opposed American aid to the Chinese Communists. Marshall's attitude toward the CCP was much more friendly than Hurley's. During the war, in his capacity as Chief of Staff of Allied Armies, Marshall had supported General Stillwell in advocating the allocation of American lend-lease materials to CCP troops and using them to fight Japan.¹⁴⁴

The third reason behind the CCP's enthusiasm to negotiate was the policy of the Soviet Union. Joseph Stalin had long desired to reestablish Russia's sphere of influence in East Asia. Japan's defeat provided him with a good opportunity. In February 1945 at Yalta, Steven Levine observes, the USSR got "territorial and political adjustments" in the Far

¹⁴¹ Marshall, *Marshall's Mission, Report*, Vol. 1, xxix.

¹⁴² He Di, "Mao Zedong and the Marshall Mission," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 180, 181.

¹⁴³ He Di, "Mao and the Marshall Mission," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 175-176.

East.¹⁴⁵ The only promise Stalin made at Yalta was to enter the war against Japan. The returns he gained were tremendous. He made Roosevelt and Churchill accept the *de facto* independence of Outer Mongolia. He gained agreement on the internationalization of Dalian and won for the USSR the "preeminent interest" in this commercial port of Manchuria. He also managed to lease Port Arthur as a naval base of the USSR. In addition, he obtained the right to jointly operate the major Manchurian railroad with China, though China had full sovereignty in the Northeast.¹⁴⁶ By mid-August 1945, Stalin further made the Chinese Government confirm these "adjustments" in the Sino-Soviet Treaty.

Stalin viewed China as tangential in his confrontation with the capitalist world. He considered the Chinese Communists peasant reformers rather than real Communists; therefore, he doubted that the CCP would be revolutionary enough and never expected that the CCP would drive the Nationalists out of Mainland China. On the contrary, he believed that the KMT would continue to rule post-war China with the support of the United States. He considered it very likely that the United States would exert great influence on postwar China.¹⁴⁷ Stalin tried to prevent that outcome by maximizing Soviet influence in China via a two-fold policy. On the one hand, he sent the Red Army to Manchuria in the war against Japan, through which the Soviets could exert direct influence on China, or at least on Manchuria. On the other hand, he instructed the Soviet army in Manchuria not to prevent

¹⁴⁴ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 696-699.

¹⁴⁵ Levine, "On the Brink of Disaster," in *Sino-American relations*, ed. Harding and Yuan, 11-12.

¹⁴⁶ Chern, *Dilemma in China*, 45.

¹⁴⁷ Levine, "On the Brink of Disaster," in *Sino-American Relations*, ed. Harding and Yuan, 12.

the Communists from securing bases in rural areas of Manchuria; in October and November, the Soviets even covertly assisted the CCP in doing so.¹⁴⁸

Stalin's encouragement of the CCP's maneuvers in the Northeast was also due to the following two reasons: (1) he could use his relations with the CCP to extract more concessions from the Nationalists in the Sino-Soviet negotiations about economic cooperation in Manchuria;¹⁴⁹ and (2) the presence of the Chinese Communists in Manchuria could prove advantageous if Soviet relations with the KMT deteriorated or if the region became an agenda item in Soviet-American negotiations.¹⁵⁰

However, Stalin's long-term objective of building a buffer on the Soviet frontier weighed more heavily in his China policy. Because of this long-range goal and because of his suspicion about the nature and strength of the CCP, Stalin wanted a stable China and a good relationship with its government.¹⁵¹ Consequently, the Soviets pushed the CCP to negotiate with the KMT and to restrict its activities in the Northeast, especially after mid-November, when Chiang could no longer tolerate the cooperation between the Soviets and the CCP in Manchuria, and threatened to halt Sino-Soviet talks and to request the United States to assist him in assaulting the CCP in South Manchuria. Like the Americans, Stalin was also unwilling to confront another super power militarily in China at that time.¹⁵²

The CCP, for its part, had consistently sought support from the Soviet Union. For this reason, it coordinated its policy with that of the Soviet Union, even when the latter was

¹⁴⁸ Niu Jun, "The Origins of Sino-Soviet Alliance," in *Brothers In Arms*, ed. Westad, 55. For the reasons and the actions of the Soviets action in October and November, see Chapter III, "Manchuria Crisis."

¹⁴⁹ Levine, "On the Brink of Disaster," in *Sino-American Relations*, ed. Harding and Yuan, 12.

¹⁵⁰ Westad, *Origins of Chinese Civil War*, 85.

¹⁵¹ Niu Jun, "The Origins of Sino-Soviet Alliance," in *Brothers In Arms*, ed. Westad, 50.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 57.

against the CCP's interest.¹⁵³ For example, in August 1945, Stalin asked the CCP to stop fighting and to negotiate with the KMT. Although Mao was afraid that the CCP might face another devastating defeat like that in 1927-1928, he ultimately accepted Stalin's suggestion and flew to Chongqing in September, reaching an agreement with Chiang on army reorganization and on an inter-party conference (PCC).¹⁵⁴ On the issue of Manchuria, although the Soviet Union changed its policy several times to limit the CCP's maneuvers, the CCP cooperated completely to gain as much Soviet assistance as possible. However, at the same time, the party grasped every opportunity to expand and penetrate in the area.¹⁵⁵

The CCP's welcome to the Marshall Mission was also due to Mao Tse-tung's belief that the two superpowers did not want another world war and thus would compromise in their competition, and that this compromise would bring about a reconciliation between the CCP and the KMT.¹⁵⁶ From this point of view, the CCP's agreement to negotiate was a tactical move.

Only the third force sincerely welcomed the coming of the American mediator. Without an army to back them up and with only limited influence among intellectuals and students, third force groups could only fight for their political status through consistently appealing for peaceful methods. What is more, the American call for the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of a coalition government in which the third force had a say completely matched the objectives of the third force. They actively participated in the negotiations and cooperated with the American mediators to achieve their common goal.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 54.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 53-54; He Di, "Mao and Marshall's Mission," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 180, 181.

However, with the two more powerful sides less sincere in the negotiations, it was hard to reach genuine agreement.

Despite the complicated nature of the problem and the limited means at his disposal, Marshall achieved notable initial success. On January 10, an agreement on the cessation of hostilities was reached; on January 31, the PCC unanimously passed five resolutions regarding the establishment of constitutional government and the convocation of the National Assembly. On February 25, the CCP and the KMT signed the Basis for Military Reorganization and for the Integration of the Communist Forces into the National Army.¹⁵⁷

This early success was due largely to the US-Soviet compromise in East Asia set up in the Yalta Agreement. As Richard Thornton put it, the CCP-KMT compromise was “a part of the larger postwar settlement between the Soviet Union and the United States.”¹⁵⁸ Against this international background, both the KMT and the CCP learned to coordinate their policies with new developments in Soviet-American relations, even when these policies restricted their activities. In addition, the CCP also tried to avoid, or at least postpone, a full-scale war with the Nationalists through peaceful talks.¹⁵⁹

This progress in KMT-CCP talks was also partly due to the endeavor of the American mediators and the liberals in the third force and the KMT. Most of the KMT representatives in the PCC were liberals, like Sun Fo, Chang Chun, Wang Shih-chieh, Shao Lih-tse, and Tu Tien-cheng.¹⁶⁰ They longed to see the end of political tutelage and the

¹⁵⁷ Chang, *Third Force*, 145.

¹⁵⁸ Richard C. Thornton, *China: A Political History, 1917-1980* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), 188.

¹⁵⁹ Niu, “The Origins of Sino-Soviet Alliance,” in *Brothers in Arms*, ed. Westad, 59.

¹⁶⁰ Shao Li-tse was Secretary General of the PPC and supporter of rapprochement with the CCP; Tu Tien-cheng was the Secretary General of the KMT who was close to the Political Science Group.

emergence of the stage of constitutionalism, because this was the last part of the revolutionary work of the KMT.

These early achievements deserve in-depth examination.

Cessation of Hostilities

Marshall's first victory was to help bring about the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. The Communists, who had been advocating a cessation of hostilities since the fall of 1945, first presented a proposal on December 27, the day the KMT-CCP talks resumed. They advocated a cease-fire, the freezing of troops in their present positions, and the setting up of an impartial committee to look into trouble spots.¹⁶¹ The National Government appointed Chang Chun, Wang Shih-chien, and Shao Li-Tze to discuss with representatives of the Communists the CCP's proposal and decide on the date to open the PCC.¹⁶² The government also suggested creating a Committee of Three to discuss a cease-fire. Chaired by General Marshall, this committee would recruit other two members from the government and the CCP. The Communist Party agreed. On January 7, 1946, the committee held its first meeting, with General Chang Chun and General Chou En-lai as representatives of the government and the CCP respectively.¹⁶³

The negotiations proceeded with great difficulty as both sides distrusted each other. The government believed that the CCP was a Soviet puppet and that the USSR had been obstructing the government's efforts to recover Manchuria and helping the CCP to establish bases in the area.¹⁶⁴ The CCP, on the other hand, was suspicious of the KMT and believed

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 390, 893.00/12-2345 and Roll 4, 893.00/7-146.

¹⁶² Ibid. Roll 3, 390.

¹⁶³ USDS, *CWP*, 136.

¹⁶⁴ See Marshall, *Marshall's Mission, Report*, Vol. I, 7.

that its aim was the destruction of the CCP. This suspicion was reasonable, as KMT troops in Manchuria had been quite aggressive.¹⁶⁵

Marshall noticed this basic distrust between the two, and made every effort to bring the two to an agreement on the cease-fire. In two weeks, he managed to settle the two major differences hindering an agreement—the dispute over Manchuria and the dispute over Jehol. In the first, he supported the Nationalist position, in the second, the CCP.¹⁶⁶

That China would restore its sovereignty over Manchuria after the war had been stipulated in various agreements reached by the three Great Powers. Using these agreements as a basis, Marshall proposed a formula to unify Manchuria with China. On January 4, he suggested to Chou En-lai that the government should be allowed to move its troops into and within Manchuria after both sides agreed to a cease-fire. He also told Chou that the United States would facilitate such a movement by transporting more government troops to the Northeast. Chou replied that such a move was consistent with American policy and the Sino-Soviet Treaty of August 1945, and accepted Marshall's suggestion.¹⁶⁷ Chou's concession largely resulted from the continuous reduction of Soviet aid, without which the CCP could not hold strategic cities and railways in the Northeast. The CCP's own resources were inadequate to prevent a Nationalist capture. That being the case, why not be generous and give them to the government? By the end of 1945, the CCP had decided to give up big cities and railways and to establish a firm base in rural areas of Manchuria.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ USDS, *CWP*, 147-148.

¹⁶⁶ Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 405.

¹⁶⁷ USDS, *CWP*, 137.

¹⁶⁸ Niu, "The Origins of Sino-Soviet Alliance," in *Brothers in Arms*, ed. Westad, 59.

Another major disagreement in the negotiations was the question of who had the right to occupy Chifeng and Tulun. Chifeng is located in north Jehol, and Tulun on the Chahar-Jehol border. Because Jehol was a part of “Manchukuo” during the Japanese occupation, and because Soviet troops had garrisoned the two towns for some time, the government claimed its right to them in light of the Sino-Soviet August Treaty, and made its takeover a prerequisite for stopping the fighting. The Communists rejected this claim, arguing that the Communist Eighth Route Army had occupied and held these two towns since V-J Day.¹⁶⁹ On the evening of January 9, Marshall persuaded Chiang to put aside the dispute and go ahead to issue the Cessation of Hostilities Order.¹⁷⁰

On January 10, the Committee of Three reached an agreement on the cessation of hostilities, which came into effect on the 13th. This agreement required both sides to do as follows: (1) issue orders to cease hostilities and to freeze troops in their positions; (2) stop all activities that obstructed communications; (3) establish an Executive Headquarters (EH) in Peiping to oversee the cease-fire through field teams, which would execute the cease-fire order and other instructions from the EH.¹⁷¹ The EH consisted of Walter S. Robertson, Cheng Kai-min, and Yeh Chien-Ying, representing the United States, the KMT, and the CCP, respectively.¹⁷² The American role in the headquarters was mainly to make sure that the cease-fire orders were followed.¹⁷³

Nevertheless, the cessation of hostilities order was actually applied only to North China. In the areas south of the Yangtze River, the government troops had to relocate

¹⁶⁹ Marshall, *Marshall's Mission, Reports*, Vol. I, 16; Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 405.

¹⁷⁰ Marshall, *Marshall's Mission, Reports*, Vol. I, 17.

¹⁷¹ USDS, *CWP*, 137.

¹⁷² USDS, “RIAC,” Roll 3, frame 478.

¹⁷³ USDS, *CWP*, 138.

according to their reorganization plan. In Manchuria, they needed to move around to recover Chinese sovereignty. Since the southern-Yangtze area was totally under government control, there would be no conflict between the two rivals. In Manchuria, however, the Nationalist troops came into repeated clashes with the Communist forces.¹⁷⁴

PCC Resolutions

On the same day the cease-fire was signed, the PCC convened, and lasted for three weeks. There were thirty-nine delegates at the conference, with a seat distribution of nine, eight, seven, five, and nine among the DL, KMT, CCP, CYP, and independents, respectively.¹⁷⁵

It is strange at first sight that the DL, with its weak position, gained the largest number of seats in the PCC. When looking more deeply into the nature of the PCC, however, we can see this was understandable. First, the PCC had no legal authority to carry out its resolutions because it was only a consultative organization. Like the PPC before it, the PCC decisions were not binding on the KMT, because they could not take effect until ratified by the central committees of the parties and groups represented.¹⁷⁶ This meant that all resolutions passed by the PCC would have to be sanctioned by the KMT CEC, which was always controlled by the rightist faction of the KMT. Although Chiang promised to carry out the PCC resolutions, the later resolution of the KMT CEC actually nullified the resolutions regarding formation of a government and a review of the 1936 constitution.¹⁷⁷ Secondly, the government granted the DL the largest number of seats in the PCC largely to

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., annex 63.

¹⁷⁵ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 318. The nine representatives from the DL are Chang Lan, Lo Lung-chi, Chang Chun-mei (Carson Chang), Chang Tung-sun, Shen Chun-ju, Chang Shen-fu, Huang Yen-pei, Liang Shu-min, and Chang Po-chu.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 327.

please the United States. At the Cairo Conference in 1943, Roosevelt had made his commitment to train Nationalist troops and provide other US aid contingent on Chiang's obligation to broaden the government and reach a political settlement with the Communists.¹⁷⁸ US policy under Truman also urged Chiang to act along the same lines. In his policy statement of December 15, Truman especially urged "the convening in China of a national conference of the major Chinese political elements to develop a solution" to China's problems.¹⁷⁹ Thirdly, members of the DL were prominent in culture, education, industry, and commerce. They had long been famous for their demand for Anglo-American style democracy. To show its "sincerity" and "determination" in pursuing democracy in order to impress the Americans, the National Government gave the DL the most seats.

In the conference, the CCP and the DL soon lined up on one side while the KMT and the CYP held to the other side.¹⁸⁰ It was plausible that the KMT and the CYP came together because they were both anti-Communist. However, how the DL was associated with the CCP in the conference needs further examination. As described in Chapter II, the DL had been derived from the FDP, which had already established a contact with the CCP. Therefore, when the DL was formed in October 1944, it developed an even closer relationship with the CCP.¹⁸¹ For example, in 1945 the League and the Communists shared the same opinions in many aspects, including, as Shaheen writes, "the need for democracy and coalition government, protection of civil liberties, the legalization of the political parties, the release of political prisoners, and the reorganization of the National

¹⁷⁷ USDS, "RIAC," Roll 3, frame 705, 962-4, 972, 988.

¹⁷⁸ Thornton, *China: A Political History*, 141.

¹⁷⁹ USDS, *CWP*, 133.

¹⁸⁰ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 318-319.

¹⁸¹ For the coming closer of the CCP and the FDP, see *ibid.*, 191-193.

Assembly.”¹⁸² All of these were major issues for the PCC. Of course, the DL believed in these as a matter of principle, while the CCP adopted them for tactical reasons. Nevertheless, as both were political opponents of the KMT, it was plausible for them to form a coalition against the government.¹⁸³ In fact, the League and the CCP had agreed in November 1945 to closely coordinate with each other in their bargaining with the government.¹⁸⁴ The Americans also noticed the similarity between the positions held by the League and the Communists. As an American Military Attaché predicted, the two would often act in unity during the coming PCC.¹⁸⁵

The discussions centered on five subjects, as participant Carsun Chang recalls: “(a) government organization, (b) development of an administrative program, or a program for peaceful national reconstruction, (c) military affairs, (d) preparing a draft constitution, and (e) establishing a National Assembly.”¹⁸⁶ After heated debate, the PCC passed five resolutions that were more favorable to the CCP and the DL than to the KMT. These resolutions, if carried out, would bring peace, unity, and democracy to China. However, either because they were not carried out, or because they left some problems unresolved, these resolutions caused great controversy in later KMT-CCP negotiations.

These five resolutions can be classified as measures for reorganizing the government and enforcing constitutionalism. The government reorganization centered on the State Council and the Executive Yuan, in which non-KMT members would gain some seats. According to the “Resolution on Government Reorganization,” the State Council,

¹⁸² Ibid., 319.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.; For the united trend of the CCP and the DL, see *ibid.*, 319-322.

¹⁸⁵ Intelligence Report from the Military Attache, China, January 9, 1946, contained in Office of Strategic Service files, Record Group 226, no. XL 37383, as cited in *ibid.*, 321-322.

which was powerless, would become the top body of the government after reorganization.¹⁸⁷ It could decide on principles for legislation, administrative, military, financial and budgetary measures, and ministerial appointment.¹⁸⁸ The council was to have forty members, twenty from the KMT. Only Chiang Kai-shek, the President of the Chinese Government, had the authority to appoint council members. However, the non-KMT elements could nominate their representatives.¹⁸⁹ Subsequently, exactly how many seats each non-KMT party or group should hold became the major point of dispute. No agreement had been reached on this matter when the PCC adjourned.¹⁹⁰

The exact distribution of non-KMT members in the State Council was of utmost importance because it had a lot to do with the veto power. Any change in administrative policy must be approved by two-thirds of the council members. A two-thirds majority out of forty was twenty-seven. The CCP and the DL thus demanded fourteen seats in the State Council so that they could veto any policy of the government that was detrimental to their interest.¹⁹¹ Did the government agree to such demand? According to the memoirs of John R. Beal, a journalist of *Time* and an independent advisor to the Chinese Government during the Marshall mission, he was told in October 1946 by Li Wei-kuo, Vice-Minister of Information for the government, that the government did give a vocal offer of fourteen seats to the CCP and the DL in an informal meeting shortly after the PCC. Li told Beal that at the KMT CEC in March, at which Li was present, Sun Fo and Shao Li-tze refrained from giving any clear answer when questioned about such an oral agreement. Wu Tieh-cheng,

¹⁸⁶ Chang, *Third Force*, 147.

¹⁸⁷ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 323.

¹⁸⁸ Chang, *Third Force*, 148.

¹⁸⁹ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 323.

¹⁹⁰ Chang, *Third Force*, 148-149.

the Secretary-General of the KMT, lost patience with the government's evasiveness on this oral agreement. He questioned, "Since we did agree to this, why shouldn't we admit it?" From Li's recount, Beal concluded, "So Chou (En-lai) was right, but he did not have it (the agreement on granting the CCP-DL bloc fourteen seats) in writing."¹⁹² The government later refused to acknowledge such an oral agreement, arguing that the related parties themselves were responsible for the allocation of their seats.¹⁹³ The distribution of seats among the non-KMT councilors and the question of the veto power subsequently became a big controversy in KMT-CCP negotiations and a major reason for the failure of the Marshall mission.

"The Resolution on Governmental Reorganization" also granted non-KMT members seven or eight positions of ministry in the Executive Yuan. Nevertheless, the resolution did not stipulate the ministries that would be assigned to the non-KMT elements, and it was unlikely that the government would give them important positions. Therefore, even though they won seats in the Executive Yuan, the non-KMT members were still in a weak position.¹⁹⁴

As for the realization of constitutionalism, all participants debated heatedly about the distribution of seats among various parties or groups. There were already 1,200 delegates "elected" for the 1937 Assembly. The CCP and the DL argued that, because these delegates were appointed by the KMT instead of being elected, they could only be counted as representatives of the Nationalist Party. Therefore, the Communists and the DL demanded the creation of new seats for other parties. The KMT of course insisted that the

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² John, R. Beal, *Marshall in China* (New York: Doubleday & Co.), 230-231.

¹⁹³ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 328.

1,200 delegates should be regarded as truly representing the Chinese people, but agreed to add delegates to the assembly. The debate then centered on the creation of new seats for each party or group. At last, the participants agreed to create 700 new seats, of which the KMT, CCP, and independents would gain 220, 190, and 70 seats, respectively. They also agreed on a three-fourths majority vote for adopting the constitution and on giving the non-KMT delegates more than one-fourth of the total number of seats.¹⁹⁵ All these were stipulated in the “Resolution on the Draft Constitution.”

One thing needing mention here is the number of seats allotted to Manchuria, which, with a population of 36,569,252, should have had 180 seats but actually was granted 75. Chiang clearly feared that the CCP might become quite influential in the Northeast. Cutting the seats for Manchuria might limit the CCP’s influence in the National Assembly.¹⁹⁶

The “Resolution on the Draft Constitution” established some principles in direct contradiction to the KMT’s perception of constitutionalism. (1) The Executive Yuan should be responsible to the Legislative Yuan. (2) The National Assembly should be the body with power to elect, independent of rather than a part of the government. (3) Powers should be fairly distributed between the central government and the provinces, and the provinces should have the right to draw up their own constitutions.¹⁹⁷ The last provision was very favorable to the Communists. Limiting the power of the central government would not only help them become more entrenched in the places under their control, but also give them more freedom to expand their influence into other regions. Given their

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 324.

¹⁹⁵ Chang, *Third Force*, 155.

¹⁹⁶ Thornton, *China: A Political History*, 190. The ratio of delegates to population was roughly 1:220,000.

popularity with the peasants, their influence would expand quickly in China where peasants accounted for three-fourths of the whole population.¹⁹⁸

Carsun Chang contributed most to the introduction of these principles. It was Chang who proposed them and obtained acceptance from the CCP and the KMT through several meetings with the two.¹⁹⁹

Closely related to the “Resolution for the Draft Constitution” was the “Resolution on the Program for Peaceful National Reconstruction.” These two resolutions represented the essence of the liberal ideas and principles in China, as *Min-chu pao (Democratic Daily)* declared.²⁰⁰

“The Resolution on the Program for Peaceful National Reconstruction” also covered the issue of local government, which had been a point of disagreement during the talks between Chiang and Mao the previous autumn. The PCC resolved this issue by stipulating in the annex that “in those recovered areas, where the local government is under dispute, the status quo shall be maintained until a settlement is made according to articles 6, 7, and 8 of Chapter II on Political problems.”²⁰¹

Controlling local governments, especially those in North China, was very important in deciding which party would ultimately control the National Government. North China had seven provinces. With a population of about 200 million (44 percent of China’s entire population), these seven provinces should hold almost half of the 2050 seats in the National Assembly. Therefore, whoever controlled North China would have

¹⁹⁷ Chang, *Third Force*, 155.

¹⁹⁸ Tsou, *America’s Failure in China*, 409.

¹⁹⁹ Chang, *Third Force*, 154

²⁰⁰ Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 326-327.

²⁰¹ Chang, *Third Force*, 150.

a strong position in the assembly and the reorganized government.²⁰² Later, Chiang refused to carry out the stipulation about local government in North China, which subsequently constituted another obstacle that ultimately blocked agreement.

Besides discussing political issues, the PCC also tackled military problems. It advocated some sound principles in the building of a national army. For example, “The army belonged to the state;” “The army and the political parties should be separated from each other;” “Military and civil authority should be vested in different hands.” The council also passed a resolution on integrating Chinese armies, and charged a three-man military commission with the task of formulating a plan for such integration. However, final agreement on the army reorganization was not achieved until February 25 through the tireless efforts of General Marshall and the Military Subcommittee.²⁰³

Basis for Military Reorganization and Integration of Communist Forces into the National Army, February 25, 1946

The Military Subcommittee was formed on January 10, 1946 following the suggestion of Chiang Kai-shek. The KMT and the CCP had actually agreed to set up a commission to deal with army reorganization in their talks in the previous September. The Military Subcommittee consisted of Marshall, the advisor, General Chang Chih-chung, the KMT representative, and Chou En-lai, the CCP representative.²⁰⁴

After eleven days of heated discussion, the committee reached an agreement entitled “Basis for Military Reorganization and for the Integration of the Communist Forces into the National Army” on February 25. The agreement authorized the EH at Peiping to supervise

²⁰² Thornton, *China: A Political History*, 191. These provinces are Shaanxi, Hebei, Hubei, Henan, Shandong, Jiangsu, and Anhui.

²⁰³ Chang, *Third Force*, 150, 151.

the plan's execution. It required the KMT and CCP to reduce their armies in eighteen months to fifty and ten divisions respectively, each of which should have less than 14,000 men.²⁰⁵ In Manchuria, the Nationalists would gain superiority in military strength by a ratio of fourteen to one, in Central China, five to one, and in North China, 11 to 7.²⁰⁶ The agreement also stipulated that within twenty-one days after its enforcement, both sides should submit a detailed report on their respective military units and prepare an order to demobilize their armies.²⁰⁷

This agreement was based on the principle of “separating the army from politics,” which Marshall had tried very hard to promote in China, where military men always controlled politics. If China was to realize democracy, it must have a national, non-political army. General Marshall emphasized this repeatedly, both to the KMT and the CCP representatives. On the day the agreement was signed, General Marshall made a short statement: “This agreement, I think, represents the great hope of China. I can only trust that its pages will not be soiled by a small group of irreconcilables who for a selfish purpose would defeat the Chinese people in their overwhelming desire for peace and prosperity.”²⁰⁸

The military plan and the political agreements were to be implemented at the same time, which reconciled the position of the KMT, who preferred to carry out the military plan first, with that of the CCP, which demanded the opposite.²⁰⁹ However, both sides

²⁰⁴ USDS, *CWP*, 140.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 141.

²⁰⁶ Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 410.

²⁰⁷ Chang, *Third Force*, 152.

²⁰⁸ USDS, *CWP*, 142.

²⁰⁹ Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 410.

delayed the implementation of the agreements that were against their interests.²¹⁰ The KMT wanted to modify the “Resolution on the Draft Constitution” according to the KMT concept of constitutionalism, as shown from the decision of the sixth KMT CEC in March.²¹¹ Using this as a pretext, the CCP refused to hand in the detailed list of the allocation of its troops, as they should have done.²¹² To Carsun Chang, this suggested that the CCP never wanted to give up fighting, but that its participation in the PCC was only a method to win time to entrench itself in the Northeast.²¹³

The cease-fire agreement, the PCC resolutions, and the agreement for military reorganization represented three major successes in China’s democratic course. The cease-fire agreement created a peaceful atmosphere for the discussions in the PCC and the Military Subcommittee. The PCC resolutions laid down basic principles for settling further KMT-CCP conflict by political rather than military means. The Basis for Military Reorganization further provided an agreement to create a national army and prevented its leader from intervening in politics. By the end of February, at least on paper, great progress had been made in bringing about peace, unity and democracy in China by the reorganization of the army and by broadening the base of the government.

From Marshall’s perspective, these agreements and resolutions laid down the foundation for building a politically and militarily united China. However, this was not enough. To achieve the American goal of building a strong and united China, the United States should also invigorate the Chinese economy. Therefore, Marshall decided to return home to solicit loans and other aid for China, after which he would return to China

²¹⁰ Ibid., 415.

²¹¹ Ibid., 417.

²¹² Ibid., 418. The KMT submitted its list on March 26, see Melby, *The Mandate of Heaven*, 92.

to continue his mission. Following the signing of the military reorganization agreement, Marshall recommended a recall and departed for Washington on March 11, 1946.²¹⁴

From all aspects, the agreements reached represented great success for the American mediation effort and China's democratic course. How important was the role the third force and Marshall played in this early success? How did they interact with each other?

Conclusion: Role of the Third Force and Marshall and Their Interaction

As we can see from the above, in achieving the cease-fire and the army reorganization plan, Marshall's contribution was tremendous, while the third force was not involved at all. This is understandable. The third force had no army; it was only a loose union of intellectuals and industrialists who had little military knowledge. In China, where "power comes out of the barrel of a gun," the third force had no say in military affairs. Marshall paid no attention to the third force in these negotiations either.

Nevertheless, the DL did discuss with General Marshall some general principles regarding army reorganization as later stipulated in one of the PCC resolutions. The League also proposed a way to reduce both the Nationalist and Communist armies. In Marshall's first conference with a representative from the DL on December 26, 1945, the representative emphasized the necessity of reducing and modernizing the Chinese army, including demobilization and army reorganization. He proposed a "best approach" to reduce the size of the army, which was to have a small committee with a small number of military experts, Americans, if possible, who would provide not only "military knowledge" but also "moral support." Marshall disagreed with this "best approach." To him, the problem was "not so much" views of the military experts as it was a political question of "the control of the

²¹³ Chang, *Third Force*, 152.

army.” Marshall further asked the DL representative for a “practical proposition” for unifying the army and making it the servant of the state: “So my interest, at the present time, is to see what the proposals are as to a practical proposition for making a fair beginning....Under the present circumstances it is of imperative importance that an interim solution be found immediately. Now what’s the practical method?”²¹⁵ The DL could not provide the practical method that Marshall wanted, which largely contributed to Marshall’s ignoring it in the early phase of mediation.

In the PCC, however, the third force played a decisive role. The political program the third force proposed set a foundation for the democratization of China. Third force groups did this all on their own without direct help from the Americans. As Carsun Chang pointed out in his memoir published in 1952, it was the Chinese who completed most of the resolutions of the PCC, and for years the third force had been advocating “the democratization of politics” and “the nationalization of the army,” which provided the basis for the PCC.²¹⁶

Marshall’s role in the PCC, at first glance, was minimal; he did not participate in any of the discussions of the PCC, or personally recommend the KMT establishing a coalition government.²¹⁷ However, this does not mean that he and the United States behind him had no influence on the convocation of the PCC and the passing of the five resolutions.

First, Marshall’s mission helped bring about an early convocation of the PCC. As shown in Chapter II, the KMT and the CCP agreed to convene the PCC in September 1945, but their disagreement on the date of opening indefinitely postponed the convocation. Since

²¹⁴ USDS, *CWP*, 145.

²¹⁵ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 16, frame 535-536.

²¹⁶ Chang, *Third Force*, 156.

mid December when Truman announced US China policy and the mission of Marshall, however, the PCC became the hottest topic in all Chinese newspapers, and on December 31, Chiang pinned the date of convocation down to January 10, 1946.²¹⁸

Second, the passage of five resolutions can be largely attributed to the influence of American policy. From the very beginning of his mission, Marshall had tried hard to talk Chiang into convening a conference along the lines laid out in Truman's policy statement.²¹⁹ He also provided Chiang with a draft program on January 23 as an answer to Chiang's request that Marshall persuade the CCP to comply with the KMT's demand. This draft, in President Truman's words, "would convert the Central Government from an agency of the KMT to a coalition, basing its existence on the national sovereignty of all China."²²⁰

In addition, Marshall gave the third force moral support by receiving the representative of the DL shortly after his arrival and discussing with him settlements of various problems.²²¹ Marshall showed great interest in the PCC and believed the PCC deliberations "a very important step at the present moment." He was very interested in knowing what importance the DL attached to the PCC. According to the representative, the DL believed that it could make the PCC a form of "machinery to solve the problem" on condition that the government was sincere. The DL representatives further emphasized that

²¹⁷ Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 409.

²¹⁸ Marshall, *Marshall's Mission to China, Records*, Vol. I, 10.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

²²⁰ Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 409. Truman's words were cited by Tsou from Harry S. Truman, *Memories: Years of Decisions*, Vol. 1 (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1956), 74. For the content of the draft, see USDS, *CWP*, 139.

²²¹ Marshall, *Marshall's Mission, Records*, Vol. I, 7.

one of the two forces on which the success of the PCC depended was outside opinion, especially that of the Americans.²²²

The success of the PCC did have a lot to do with American attitudes as represented by Marshall's personality. The accomplishment of the PCC could not be achieved without the cooperation of the KMT and the CCP. Most of the representatives of the Nationalists to the PCC, as has been discussed before, were liberals, and they wanted to democratize China. It was not hard to win their cooperation. The problem was how much the Communists would cooperate in the PCC, which depended on how much weight the Communists put on the conference. To the Communists, who distrusted the sincerity of the government's intention to end one-party rule and create a coalition government, the possibility for the KMT to implement the PCC resolutions was greater if the United States would really push Chiang to do so. Marshall's impartiality, as shown in his arbitration in the matter of Chifeng and Tulun and his action in transporting Nationalist troops to Manchuria,²²³ showed the sincerity of the United States in urging the cease-fire in China and broadening the base of the Chinese Government. Since the future execution of the PCC resolutions was assured to a degree, it was natural for the Communists to actively participate in the PCC and grab as much political power as possible. In this sense, Marshall's personality made a significant contribution toward the success of the PCC, as Carsun Chang pointed out in his memoir.

Finally, how frequently did the third force interact with the Americans during this first two months? Except for the first conference between Marshall and a representative of

²²² USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 537, 539.

the DL on December 26, no record in the fifty rolls of *The Complete Records of Marshall's Mission to China* shows other meetings between the DL and American diplomats in this initial phase. But this does not mean that Marshall overlooked the third force totally. Actually he gave the DL appropriate support. For example, he sent his respects to the DL at the beginning of 1946 when the League espoused the same idea in its "New Year's Talk" as Marshall.²²⁴ In his draft entitled "Charter for the Interim Government of the Republic of China," he also suggested giving the DL one seat, the CYP one seat, and non-partisans three seats in the State Council.²²⁵

However, as we can see from the above, Marshall did not pay much attention to the third force in the first two months of 1946. There are some explanations for this situation. First, as shown above, Marshall was a military expert and devoted most of his energy to the cease-fire and the army reorganization, where the third force had no part.²²⁶ In the political arena where the third force was active, the United States refrained from involving itself. It was the American policy that "the detailed steps necessary to achieve political unity in China must be worked out by the Chinese themselves" and that the United States would not intervene in these matters.²²⁷ There was no direct evidence showing why the United States refrained from involving itself in detailed steps to bring China political unity, but the reason might be the fear that the Chinese parties would manipulate the Americans instead of bargaining honestly among themselves.

²²³ Chang, *Third Force*, 156-157. When the Americans transported the government's five armies to Manchuria, Chang cited Chou En-lai as recalling, "General Marshall gave the exact number of divisions and troops in minute detail and not in merely general terms." This greatly impressed Chou.

²²⁴ Wang, "Marshall's Approaches to the Mediation Effort," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 30.

²²⁵ Ibid. Also see *FRUS, China*, 1946, Vol. IX, 139.

²²⁶ Wang, "Marshall's Approach to the Mediation Effort," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 29.

²²⁷ USDS, *CWP*, 133.

Second, Marshall was disappointed with the third force in that it could not present a deliberate plan as to how to carry out its “democratic principles.”²²⁸ The minutes of their first conference show that Marshall and Robertson were interested in the DL’s practical methods of building a democratic government and reorganizing an army that would belong to the nation instead of to a party. Thirty times during this interview, Marshall used the word “practical,” but the DL representative could only reiterate hollow principles instead of offering a feasible plan. The only “practical solution” the DL offered was a “coalition government,” to which Marshall agreed, but he still wanted to know some “concrete steps” to apply democracy to the provinces, cities, and towns.²²⁹

Third, Marshall and other Americans did not believe that the DL represented the Chinese people as it claimed to. Before Marshall departed for China, Dai-ming Lee, the Vice President of the CDCP, sent Marshall a “Manifesto of the Chinese Democratic Constitutional Party,” in which he offered support to Marshall’s mission and declared that the CDCP had a membership of six to eight million.²³⁰ Marshall soon found out Li’s overstatement. Shortly after his arrival in China, Marshall learned from Premier T.V. Soong that no minority party in China numbered over ten thousand.²³¹ In the interview between Marshall and the DL representative, Robertson also pointed out to the latter that there were millions of Chinese that were not represented by the KMT, the CCP, or the DL.²³²

²²⁸ Wang, “Marshall’s Approach to the Mediation Effort,” in *Marshall’s Mission*, ed. Bland, 29.

²²⁹ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 16, frame 538-539. Also see Wang, “Marshall’s Approach to the Mediation Effort,” in *Marshall’s Mission*, ed. Bland, 29.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, USDS, “RMM,” Roll 1, frame 492, 495, 501.

²³¹ USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1945, Vol. VII, 805.

²³² USDS, “RMM,” Roll 16, frame 538-539.

All these led to Marshall's downplaying the third force. Nevertheless, we will see in the following chapters that, as Marshall became more and more aware of the entanglement of military matters and political issues in China, he put more and more weight on the third force in his mediation.

CHAPTER IV

MANCHURIA CRISIS: SETBACK IN THE NEGOTIATIONS

Possessing abundant resources of coal, iron, timber, and minerals, Manchuria, the northeastern part of China, had long been a target of competition. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Tsarist Russia gained a prominent position in Manchuria through several treaties it imposed on the Qing dynasty, only to lose them to Japan after the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-1905. Since then, Japan kept on expanding its influence in this area. In 1931, it grabbed the entire region and ruled it until August 1945.

The National Government was determined to recover Manchuria, the lost territory. One important reason for that was the region's industrial potential. At the end of World War Two, Manchuria's comprehensive industrial strength ranked the fourth in the whole world, following the United States, the Soviet Union, and the Great Britain.²³³ However, after the Japanese were driven out, the Soviet Russians regained Tsarist interests in Manchuria through the Yalta Agreement and the Sino-Soviet Treaty of August 1945. Although Chinese sovereignty over Manchuria was assured, the disposition of the Soviet Red Army in this area and Soviet policy toward Manchuria greatly delayed the process of recovery and made Manchuria a major obstacle to the peace negotiation.

²³³ Donald G. Gillin and Ramon H. Myers, eds., *Last Chance in Manchuria: The Diary of Chang Kia-ngau* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1989), 21.

Soviet Policy and Its Influence on the Situation of Manchuria

The Red Army entered Manchuria on August 9, 1945, and soon thrust south as far as Jehol. Stalin originally promised to completely withdraw Soviet troops from Manchuria within three months of the Japanese defeat,²³⁴ but he later postponed the date three times, from November 30 to January 3, then to February 1, and again to April 6.²³⁵ The Soviets finally left Manchuria by the end of April, hoping to deflect the menace of the US-Britain coalition against the USSR over Iran.²³⁶

The three postponements had a lot to do with the Soviet “two-track” policy: (1) to ensure Soviet interests in Manchuria and exclude American influence from this area, and (2) to facilitate the establishment of a CCP base there. On track one, the USSR tried to enlarge its power in Manchuria while making the United States less influential in the whole of China. On track two, the Soviets delayed the KMT’s occupation of major cities until after the Communists had consolidated their base in the rural area.²³⁷

The diary of Chang Kia-gnau, the main negotiator with the Soviets about the entry of Nationalist troops into Manchuria and Sino-Soviet economic cooperation, shed much light on the Soviet intention of making Manchuria exclusively its sphere of influence. As Chang observed, at the meeting of October 29, Marshall Rodin Malinovsky, the commander

²³⁴ Keijii Furuyu, *Chiang Kai-shek, His life and Times* (New York: St. John’s University, 1981), prologue xx, xxxvii.

²³⁵ Gillin and Myers, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, 16. The Soviets argued that it postponed withdrawal until February at the request of the National Government. Chinese sources suggested that the Soviets offered such a postponement first, which the government accepted because it could not transport enough troops to Manchuria by January. See *FRUS, China*, Vol. VII, 1945, 799.

²³⁶ Gillin and Myers, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, 42; Westad, *Cold War and Revolution*, 120-121, 174. As Westad argued, the reason for the Soviet troops’ final withdrawal was Stalin’s realization that, even if Sino-Soviet cooperation was successful, Chiang would still ally with the United States. Therefore, the stationing of the Red Army in Manchuria “would only increase Chinese and American suspicion of Soviet motives and impede chances for better relations with the KMT.”

²³⁷ Gillin and Myers, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, 18, 41.

of the Soviet army in Manchuria, protested against the presence of a US warship in Dalian and the embarking of its captain there. Chang interpreted Malinovsky's "dissatisfaction with our reliance on American forces to send our troops into the Northeast" as "the reluctance of the Soviet Union to see American influence penetrate into the Northeast."²³⁸

On November 5, Chang again noticed:

The Soviets are unwilling to have us rely on the United States to transport our troops. In other words, they are unwilling to have the United States acquire a foothold in the Northeast ... On October 29 Vice-Chief of Staff Tung noticed the Soviets that we had decided to borrow American transports to send our troops to Hulan-tao and Ying-kou. This too, must have caused the Soviet dissatisfaction. Therefore, postwar antagonism between the United States and the Soviet Union and the fact that we must rely on the United States may be important factors obstructing the entry of our troops into the Northeast.²³⁹

On January 9, 1946, Chang further analyzed Soviet concern over US influence in Manchuria when Wedemeyer announced that the United States was committed to the transportation of additional government troops into Manchuria and that he soon intended to take a trip to the region.

These remarks will provoke the Soviets and make them apprehensive about American influence penetrating the Northeast. ... Marshall Malinovsky explicitly stated to me that he was unwilling to see American political influence infiltrate the Northeast by means of the American dollar. After today, when General Wedemeyer further expressed America's intention of fostering China's military strength in the Northeast, Soviet suspicion and jealousy are bound to increase further.²⁴⁰

Soviet fear of American influence penetrating into Manchuria was obvious. Actually, the delays in the withdrawal of Soviet army forces were due largely to the increasing doubts of Stalin about US intentions in Manchuria. According to Chinese scholar Niu Jun, three moves on the part of the United States contributed to Stalin's suspicion. First, shortly after the war, American ambassador to Moscow Averell Harriman made a suggestion to the Soviet Government that the latter declare its willingness to adhere to the "Open Door" principle in the Northeast. Second, at the London Foreign Ministers'

²³⁸ Ibid., 39, 97.

meeting in mid-September, the Americans quarreled bitterly with the Soviets over the control of Japan.²⁴¹ Third, 50,000 US marines landed in North China in early October, and openly assisted the KMT in the campaign against the CCP at Shanhaiguan, the land pass to Manchuria.²⁴²

Because of the same suspicions, the Soviets encouraged the CCP maneuvers in Manchuria from early October to mid November. Before the end of World War Two, there were few Chinese Communists in Manchuria. After the war, however, the CCP exploited the opportunity created by the stationing of Soviet troops in the Northeast and sent troops into rural Manchuria to establish a base close to the two Communist countries, the USSR and Mongolia.²⁴³ The Soviets did not prevent the CCP from doing so, though they did not encourage such maneuvers in August and September. Beginning in early October, as his suspicions of US intentions toward Manchuria increased, Stalin began to encourage the Chinese Communists to seek a base there. The Soviets proposed to supply the CCP troops with a large number of armaments if the CCP could dispatch 200,000 to 300,000 troops to the Northeast.²⁴⁴ Subsequently, by the end of October 1945, Mao adopted a strategy of “seizing the Northeast, consolidating North and Central China,” and making “all-out efforts to dominate the Northeast.”²⁴⁵ The Soviets further allowed the Communists to control some industrial centers and take over substantial amounts of

²³⁹ Ibid., 40, 105.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 40, 197.

²⁴¹ Niu, “Origins of Sino-Soviet Alliance,” in *Brothers in Arms*, ed. Westad, 55.

²⁴² Ibid. Also see Westad, *Origins of Chinese Civil War*, 111, 125.

²⁴³ Niu, “Origins of Sino-Soviet Alliance,” in *Brothers in Arms*, ed. Westad, 56.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 55.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 56.

Japanese weapons, and encouraged them to set up administrations in Soviet-occupied cities.²⁴⁶

In the meantime, Moscow blocked the Nationalists' entry into Manchuria. By early October, two Nationalist armies had been transported to Qinghuangdao, a port in Shandong just opposite Dalian, waiting to advance into the Northeast.²⁴⁷ Dalian, located in Southern Manchuria, was one of the most strategic ports in the Northeast and the best place to bring troops into the region. The Soviets refused the Chinese the use of Dalian as an entry to Manchuria on the pretext that Dalian was an international commercial port and thus not appropriate for landing troops.²⁴⁸ The Soviets further hindered the landing of KMT troops on Huludao and Yingkou, two strategic ports near Dalian, by withdrawing their forces on October 24 and permitting the Communists to take these ports.²⁴⁹ The negotiations over the Nationalist takeover of the Manchurian administration, which began in early October in Changchun, did not achieve much either. On November 17, 1945, Chiang Kai-shek protested the Soviet policy by recalling most of the Chinese Commission for the Recovery of Manchuria. Only then did Stalin concede and begin to restrict Communist activities in the Northeast.²⁵⁰

This move showed the Soviets' eagerness to resume economic negotiations with China. While trying to exclude American influence from the Northeast, the Soviets sought to establish a sphere of economic influence in Manchuria. On November 24, 1945, the Soviets proposed to cooperate with China in four-fifths of the heavy industry in

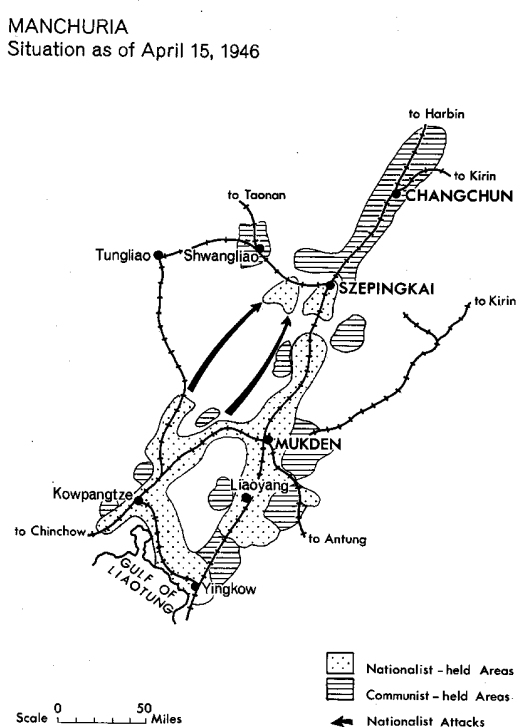
²⁴⁶ Ibid., 55.

²⁴⁷ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 356.

²⁴⁸ Gillin and Myer, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, 20, 93, 94.

²⁴⁹ USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, Vol. VII, 1945, 798.

the Northeast. From late November to late April, the Chinese and the Russians conferred many times on economic cooperation but did not come to any agreement.²⁵¹ According to Chang Kia-ngau, the USSR “made a genuine effort...to share Japanese assets in Manchuria with the Nationalists.”²⁵² Chang depicts the USSR as very flexible in handling Japanese assets, though it claimed title to these assets on the ground as “war booty.”²⁵³ The KMT, however, insisted on the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Manchuria as the prerequisite for Sino-Soviet economic cooperation.²⁵⁴



Cited from Melby, *Mandate of Heaven*, 107. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher.

²⁵⁰ Gillin and Myer, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, 21-22. The Commission arrived in Changchun on Oct. 12 to discuss the Soviet price for governing Manchuria for Chiang, *ibid.*, 9, 70.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 41.

²⁵³ For a detailed account of Soviet flexibility in disposing Japanese assets, see *ibid.*, 40.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

From late February of 1946, as the economic talks with Chiang continued to yield no result, Stalin gradually cooled down his relations with the KMT. The spring of 1946 also saw fast worsening relations between the USSR and the USA. To establish a pro-Soviet zone along its border, the Soviet Politburo decided to help the Communists seize North Manchuria. Upon leaving, the Soviets agreed to facilitate the CCP's takeover of Changchun, Harbin, and Qiqihar, and encouraged the CCP to fight freely.²⁵⁵ On April 18, several days after Soviet withdrawal from Changchun, the Communist troops took the city, glaringly violating the cease-fire agreement and escalating the already existing tension between Nationalist and Communist troops in Manchuria.²⁵⁶

The Dispatch of Field Teams into Manchuria

Fighting over Manchuria first broke out in late October 1945 at Shanhaiguan. On January 24, 1946, ten days after the effectuation of the cease-fire agreement, the two rival armies again clashed at Yingkou. A day later, one division of the Nationalist army entered Mukden (Shenyang) and headed north in March engaging Communist troops at Supingkai (Siping), the southernmost fort of the CCP and the gateway to Changchun.²⁵⁷ As the Nationalist troops moved further into South Manchuria, they came into frequent skirmishes with the Communists in the countryside.²⁵⁸ By late March, the situation in Manchuria had greatly deteriorated.

General Marshall actually realized the possibility of future clashes between the two opposing sides when the cessation of hostilities agreement was signed. He hoped the EH could exert its power as early as possible. Chiang Kai-shek, however, wanted to occupy

²⁵⁵ Niu, "The Origins of Sino-Soviet Alliance," in *Brothers In Arms*, ed. Westad, 59-60.

²⁵⁶ USDS, *CWP*, 149.

²⁵⁷ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 356.

Manchuria militarily and tried to avoid anything that might impede his action. Therefore, on January 24 when General Marshall suggested sending field teams to Manchuria immediately to prevent new fighting, Chiang opposed this plan. He rejected the same proposal for a second time when Marshall raised it again on February 20. Finally, on March 11, the day Marshall left China, Chiang agreed to send field teams to Manchuria, but delayed their entry as late as March 27 by imposing many qualifications on them.²⁵⁹ By then, the Communists, who had agreed to Marshall's proposal, had lost interest in the establishment of the field teams in Manchuria.²⁶⁰

The Soviets further complicated the situation in the Northeast by obstructing the movement of government troops within the area. After their withdrawal from Shenyang, the Soviets prevented the Nationalist troops from advancing north to Changchun by railway. At the same time, the Soviets allowed the CCP to occupy the Soviet-evacuating areas by leaving these areas ungarrisoned, despite the government demand that the Soviets leave a small number of soldiers there until the Nationalist troops' arrival.²⁶¹ Therefore, by the time the field teams finally arrived at areas of conflict, the situation was already very serious.

Mediation Efforts in the fighting over Changchun

The fighting over Changchun happened during Marshall's absence from China, which left the task of mediation with the third force. The third force, mainly the DL, had paid close attention to the situation in Manchuria. Like Marshall, it also demanded that field teams immediately be sent to the Northeast. When the Communist troops

²⁵⁸ USDS, *CWP*, 148.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 146

²⁶⁰ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 360.

surrounded Changchun on April 10, the DL tried to prevent the imminent fighting. It invited representatives from both sides to the negotiating table, where Chang Lan forwarded a three-point proposal. This proposal called for a Nationalist control of Changchun as follows: (1) the Communist troops should pull back from the Shenyang-Changchun Railway; (2) the government should halt its forces for five days to allow such a withdrawal; (3) peace talks should begin after the government troops entered Changchun.²⁶²

The government refused to freeze its troops as the DL had suggested, thus destroying the whole plan. However, this proposal provided some insights into the nature of the DL. It showed that, although the League had lined up with the CCP on many issues, it held on to its independence.²⁶³

Despite the rejection, the DL continued its endeavors as shown in Lo Lung-Chi's sad comment on April 15 to Robert Payne, a British intelligence officer in China from 1941 to 1946:

We're trying to work out the plan of mediation, and God knows it's difficult enough. We're getting somewhere I hope. As I see it, the role of the DL is to represent the moderate groups always, and to convince the extremists on both sides at this time. We were working all last night on plans. The KMT threatens to occupy a town in Manchuria by force. The Communists refuse to surrender it. I have begged them both to settle the issue in peace—and let there be no occupation in the ordinary sense...²⁶⁴

Nevertheless, the DL's efforts went nowhere. On April 18, the CCP took Changchun by force. This action gave an excuse to the militarists on both sides to solve

²⁶¹ USDS, *CWP*, 148-149.

²⁶² Shaheen, "Democratic League," 360-361.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 362.

²⁶⁴ Robert Payne, *Chinese Dairy, 1941-46* (New York: Weybright & Talley, 1970), 319, cited in *ibid.*, 362.

the Manchurian problem by military means, thus creating an impasse in the negotiations.²⁶⁵

On the same day that Changchun fell to the Communists, General Marshall came back to China after being away from China for five weeks. He immediately participated in the mediation attempts. Meanwhile, the DL members continued their efforts to settle the conflict by peaceful means. In the next two months, the DL worked closely with General Marshall in trying to bring peace to the Northeast.²⁶⁶

After capturing Changchun, the Communists advocated an immediate cessation of fighting after which they were willing to negotiate the problem of army disposition and local government. The government refused the Communist offer, arguing that the agreement of January 10 authorized its troops to move freely in the Northeast and that political negotiations could only be resumed after the establishment of sovereignty over Manchuria.²⁶⁷ It insisted on the CCP's withdrawal from Changchun as a precondition for negotiations.²⁶⁸

In the remaining days of April, the DL visited Marshall frequently, trying to find a solution to the impasse. On April 25, Marshall conferred with Carsun Chang and Lo Lung-Chi. He repeated his approval of Chou En-lai's demand for an immediate cease-fire. Marshall criticized the Communists for breaking the agreement of January 10 and thwarting the government's efforts to recover Manchuria, but pointed out that the government had also made many mistakes.²⁶⁹ On April 26, Marshall again met with

²⁶⁵ USDS, *CWP*, 149; Shaheen, "Democratic League," 362.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 363.

²⁶⁷ USDS, *CWP*, 149.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 150, 152.

²⁶⁹ Gillin and Myers, *Last Chance in Manchuria*, 29-30, 341-342.

representatives of the DL. One day later, Chang and Lo presented Marshall with the DL's proposal, with which Marshall thoroughly agreed and about which he promised to talk with Chiang.²⁷⁰

Generally speaking, this proposal called for "a cease fire" and "a coalition government" in Manchuria. It consisted of five points. (1) The two sides should immediately cease fighting. (2) Armies of each side should stay several kilometers away from each other; the government troops should not use the railway and the Communists should pull back thirty *li* (about ten miles) from the rails; a joint commission should be established to investigate the situation in Manchuria after a cease-fire order was issued. (3) Communications should be reestablished. (4) The government should restore political power in cities of Manchuria. (5) The Manchurian Political Council should undergo a reshuffle, which was chaired by the commander of the government forces in Manchuria. The current Chairman should be dismissed and replaced with three independents. To prevent further clashes, the newly organized council should send its delegates to places where conflict was most likely to occur: main transportation lines and important cities in Manchuria.²⁷¹

Marshall immediately conveyed this plan to Chou En-lai and Chiang Kai-shek. Chou liked the plan of a joint commission but considered the DL's suggestion about railroads "superficial." Chiang Kai-shek, for his part, rejected the whole proposal on April 28. On April 29, Marshall tried to talk Chiang into accepting it, but again failed.²⁷² Greatly discouraged, the DL immediately shelved its plan and withdrew from the

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 342.

²⁷¹ Ibid. USDS, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. IX, 798, 802; USDS, "RMM," Roll 50, frame 57.

²⁷² USDS, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. IX, 797, 799, 802-803; Shaheen, "Democratic League," 363-364.

mediation.²⁷³ On the same day Marshall also stopped acting as a formal mediator, telling Chou En-lai twice that “he had exhausted his means” but still could not bring a compromise between the two sides.²⁷⁴

Marshall’s withdrawal from formal mediation was aimed at pressing both sides to make some concessions. Nevertheless, he continued to meet with representatives of the two sides to prevent further worsening of the situation.²⁷⁵ In early May, in reply to Chiang’s request for his opinion, Marshall proposed “a compromise solution,” which he discussed with Chou En-lai on May 13. He suggested that the Communists evacuate Changchun, that the EH establish a branch there, and that the government take over the city in six months. At the same time, the government should not advance northward or eastward in Manchuria after it had entered the evacuated city of Changchun.²⁷⁶ The Communists agreed to Marshall’s proposal and abandoned Changchun on May 23 after they lost Siping on May 19. Shortly after, government troops marched in, but instead of stopping there as proposed by Marshall, they continued advancing north to Harbin and northeast to the city of Jilin.²⁷⁷ This move on the part of the Nationalists seriously hurt the perception of Marshall as impartial because it was Marshall who had proposed the Communist evacuation of Changchun. His role as a mediator was greatly weakened in the following talks. Later on when the negotiations reached an impasse and military

²⁷³ Ibid., 364.

²⁷⁴ Ibid. USDS, *CWP*, 152; USDS, *FRUS, China*, 1946, Vol. 9, 802-805.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.; USDS, “RMM,” Roll 50, frame 51.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.; USDS, *CWP*, 153.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 155.

clashes escalated, the CCP used this event to attack the US Government in general and General Marshall personally.²⁷⁸

After his withdrawal from formal mediation, Marshall put more and more weight on third force groups to bring the two fighting sides to a compromise. He conferred with representatives of the third force more frequently.

Marshall noticed the mutual distrust among the various groups of the third force and hoped that they could unite and give him full support in his efforts to mediate. When asked what could be done to break up the political stalemate at the conference with representatives from the CYP on May 10 and 17, Marshall replied that the “simplest way” was by combining the DL, the CYP, and non-party groups into a “neutral political party.” He pointed out the necessity for them to assist each other in solving problems. “This is not a permanent measure but an interim method in order to hasten the two major contesting parties to reach an agreement.”²⁷⁹ In his conversation with Carsun Chang and Lo Lung-chi on May 26, Marshall stated along similar lines: “the DL, Young China Party, and other small political groups should come together...to render some important and helpful service.”²⁸⁰

Marshall was very concerned about the violent propaganda war between the government and the Communists, which he thought made the already deteriorating situation more hopeless. According to scholar Wang Chen-main, Marshall tried three measures to lessen the attacks on both sides. To reduce the government’s attacks on the CCP, he recommended John Beal to the National Government to assist with press

²⁷⁸ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 50, frame 66.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., Roll 16, frame 254-255.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 557-558.

releases. As to the CCP's attacks, he emphasized to Chou En-lai the severe consequences of the vicious aggression towards each other.²⁸¹ Marshall also referred the propaganda war to the public by openly criticizing it on May 20, which did silence the attacks on each other for a short period.²⁸² But critical editorials soon reappeared in newspapers of both sides, especially the CCP side.²⁸³

In his effort to eliminate the feeling of distrust on both sides, Marshall turned to the third force groups for help. In his meeting with the representatives from the CYP and the DL on May 17 and May 26 respectively, he suggested that the third force should "join in an effort to influence newspaper editors and individual party members toward a more tolerant point of view.... The most valuable weapons at this time would be to influence public opinion at high levels."²⁸⁴ He told Lo Lungchi and Carsun Chang, "what is needed now is some middle men to bring both sides to a less suspicious attitude to convince them that they must moderate their feelings." Marshall further elaborated this point to Chang and Lo. He suggested that the third force should just focus on the few most important members of each side and two or three key editors. The third force should try to make them realize that their opinions were in large part shaped by mutual apprehension and suspicion. For example, Marshall explained, the Nationalists reproached the DL as tails of the CCP while the CCP referred to the CYP as dogs of the government. If the DL and the CYP would unite and work together on a few people, they could achieve a lot with regard to reducing mutual distrust between the KMT and the CCP.²⁸⁵

²⁸¹ Wang, "Marshall's Approaches to the Mediation Effort," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 34.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, also see USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946, Vol. IX, 865.

²⁸³ Wang, "Marshall's Approaches," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed., Bland, 34.

²⁸⁴ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 557-558.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 624.

On May 24, Chiang sent Marshall his formal terms for a cease-fire in Manchuria, one of which suggested giving American members in the EH and field teams the final deciding vote. By this strategy, Chiang argued, the Communists could not delay the execution of agreements reached.²⁸⁶ Marshall was unwilling to let US members shoulder such a heavy responsibility, fearing that the US Government would be involved. But he agreed to take final authority regarding the restoration of communications and reports of teams.²⁸⁷ For the former, Marshall believed, it would be easy to win Communist approval. To gain Communist support for the latter, Marshall turned to the third force for assistance.

In their meeting on May 26, Marshall informed Chang and Lo of Chiang's conditions and explained in detail his position with regard to giving US members final authority. Marshall emphasized the necessity to exert every influence to end the fighting and dispatch a senior section of the EH to Changchun.²⁸⁸ However, he insisted that unless the Americans in the field teams were given final authority he would not let the EH go to Changchun.²⁸⁹

In his meeting with Lo Lung-Chi on June 1, Marshall further explained the importance for the US members in field teams to have the final authority. In that case, Marshall argued, the field teams could go anywhere they saw fit and stop the activities

²⁸⁶ USDS, *CWP*, 156; USDS, "RMM," Role 16, frame 644. The other two conditions are: (1) CCP facilitate the restoration of communication; (2) Provisions be made to execute the agreement of Feb. 25th. See USDS, "RMM," Roll 50, frame 62.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, Roll 16, frame 625.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 645.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 625.

that were against the agreement of January 10.²⁹⁰ Without such final authority, he believed, the three agreements reached in early 1946 might never be carried out.²⁹¹

Lo asked Marshall whether the Manchuria problem could be settled if the deciding vote was granted to US members in the field teams. Marshall answered that in that case, the Committee of Three would then negotiate policies and put them on paper. Marshall showed Lo the draft proposal regarding the activities of the field teams.²⁹² At Lo's request, he gave Lo a copy.²⁹³ Lo agreed to tell Chou En-lai about the special proposals suggested by Marshall regarding teams, and hoped that if Chou accepted the proposal, Marshall would ask the Generalissimo to issue orders to cease fire immediately.²⁹⁴

By giving Lo that draft proposal, Marshall was just trying to utilize "every source he could find that might help." But later, Marshall regretted his indiscretion because he knew little about Lo's approach and it was inappropriate to circulate a secret draft among a large group of people.²⁹⁵

In this meeting, Marshall also proposed that the DL and the CYP investigate more deeply into the fighting region. Marshall suggested creating some teams, each including one American, two members from the DL, and two from the CYP. These teams would tour the areas of conflict in North China and Manchuria.²⁹⁶ The reason for such a suggestion, as later explained to Chou by Marshall was to lessen the unfavorable feelings among many CCP cadres toward the United States as a result of its transporting and

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 647.

²⁹¹ USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946, Vol. IX, 967.

²⁹² USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 647.

²⁹³ USDS, *FRUS, China*, 969.

²⁹⁴ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 647.

equipping the Nationalist army. Marshall explained that, if he were to accept the responsibilities as stipulated in Chiang's proposal, he would of course "have an overall inspection service to reassure him personally that everything was uniform as to the operations of the teams and that ineffective officers were removed." In that case, an overall team should be established with some civilian representatives who would see to it that it was "a fair deal" from beginning to end.²⁹⁷ No records show whether Marshall later mentioned this idea to Chiang, but the idea itself demonstrates that Marshall put much more weight on the third force than in earlier periods.

The third force, for its part, did not just cooperate with Marshall after suspending its mediation efforts on April 29. As fighting intensified in Manchuria, the League reactivated its attempts to stop further bloodshed. In addition to its public plea for peace, the DL revised its earlier, unpublicized plan of late April. This revised plan contained four new demands. First, the Communists should evacuate Changchun, which would then be governed by the Manchuria Political Council instead of the KMT troops.²⁹⁸ Second, the Northeast Political and Economic Councils should be reorganized with a ratio of three government representatives, three Communist representatives, and three non-partisan representatives. Third, a non-KMT and non-CCP candidate should take over the responsibility of the Mayor of Changchun, though the Municipal Council would include representatives from the two parties. Fourth, the Mayor or magistrate should organize a neutral police force to take charge of local security.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁵ USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946, Vol. IX, 969, 970.

²⁹⁶ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 645.

²⁹⁷ USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946, Vol. IX, 969.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 851-852.

²⁹⁹ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 57.

From the current records, it seems that the DL did not nominate in its proposal the non-partisan representatives to the Northeast Political Council or those to the Northeast Political and Economic Council, nor did it nominate the non-KMT and non-CCP candidate for Mayor of Changchun. Therefore, we cannot tell how much political power the DL had wanted to exert in the Northeast. Nevertheless, as the DL had been publicly denying its status as a political party, and as the DL had recruited some of the most prominent individuals in China, it could expect to enjoy a much stronger position in Manchuria if its proposals were carried out. However, the reaction of the government put an end to the DL's hope.

On May 21, five members of the DL jointly cabled their proposal to Mao and Chiang. Since the Communists had lost Siping, the gate to Changchun, it would do them no harm to accept the DL's plan. Therefore, on May 23, Mao cabled his approval to the DL. The government, with Changchun within its reach, turned down this proposal. The KMT organ, *Chung-yang-jih-pao* (Central Daily), criticized the DL for its failure to submit the plan earlier when the Communists held tight control of the city, and questioned its impartiality because of its rush to present the proposal on the eve of the government's takeover.³⁰⁰

This charge is untenable. As shown above, the DL had asked Marshall to convey its proposal to both sides, a proposal that Chiang quickly rejected. The DL's real intention was, in Shaheen's words, "to establish a regional coalition government for Manchuria and a municipal administration for Changchun."³⁰¹ What is more, since early

³⁰⁰ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 364-365. The five members were Carsun Chang, Huang Yen-pei, Shen Chun-ju, Chang Po-chun, and Liang Shu-min.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 365.

May, General Marshall had been advocating a similar plan to that of the League.³⁰² To Marshall, who had conferred with the third force many times since his return, the DL was earnest and assiduous in taking on the tough task of mediation. But most of their efforts were unknown to the public, as these efforts were made in the background. A better known part of the DL's work was that of its organ *Min-Chu-Chou-Kan* (Democratic Weekly), which one-sidedly attacked the KMT in May, thus making it easy to interpret the DL as being biased against the government.³⁰³

The KMT considered the DL submissive to the CCP and the League's proposal planned by the Communists.³⁰⁴ Therefore, in late May, Chiang not only rejected the DL's plan for reshuffling political organizations, but also forbade the League from becoming involved in the government organization in Manchuria. Chiang would only have the Committee of Three to discuss military redistribution and political organization in the Northeast.³⁰⁵

As Chiang's army continued to advance in Manchuria and Chiang increased his conditions for negotiations, the US position in the Chinese civil war and its impartiality were not only frequently attacked by the CCP but also questioned by the DL. In his meeting with Marshall on June 1, Lo attributed the CCP's unfavorable feeling toward the United States to American's training and transportation of the Nationalist troops now fighting the Communists. In addition, the US Navy was still providing supplies for the Nationalist troops in Manchuria. Marshall explained that the United States trained and

³⁰² Chang, *Force in China*, 175. Marshall's plan was "(1) a Nationalist token force should enter Changchun; (2) the railway line should not be used for transportation in the army; and (3) a non-partisan-neither CCP or KMT figure-should be appointed major of Changchun."

³⁰³ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 366.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 365.

equipped of the Chinese army according to an agreement reached in World War Two. In fact, Marshall further stated, US assistance was being reduced, and the National Government was taking charge of the transportation by sea and providing its own supplies for Manchuria.³⁰⁶

In the meantime, the CCP's attacks on and the DL's questioning of US policy and impartiality did have an influence on Marshall. He pressed Chiang to halt the advance of his troops in the Northeast. On May 29, Marshall informed Chiang of his great concern via T.V. Soong that “the continued advances of the government troops in Manchuria...are making my services as a possible mediator extremely difficult and may soon make them virtually impossible.”³⁰⁷ On May 31, he sent a tougher message to Chiang. “I must repeat that my services in mediation are becoming not only increasingly difficult, but a point is being reached where the integrity of my position is open to serious question. Therefore, I request you again to immediately issue an order terminating advances, attacks, and pursuits by government troops....”³⁰⁸

Chiang was very reluctant to halt the advance of his troops. However, he finally agreed to a fifteen-day cease-fire for starting June 6. This fifteen-day truce later extended to June 30.³⁰⁹

Mediation in the Truce Period of June

Talks in June made slow progress, with neither side willing to oblige itself first to re-station its army in Manchuria and North China.³¹⁰ A more difficult question was the

³⁰⁵ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 50, frame 66.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., Roll 16, frame 646, 647.

³⁰⁷ USDS, *FRUS, China*, 1946, Vol. IX, 912.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 926.

³⁰⁹ Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 369.

problem of local government in the areas of North China to be evacuated by the Communist troops. The government demanded that a new administration be established while the CCP insisted on the maintenance of the status quo as stipulated in the PCC resolutions.³¹¹ Although agreement was finally reached on the cessation of hostilities in Manchuria on June 26,³¹² the two sides could not concur on the question of local governments, especially those in North Jiangsu, which, as Shaheen writes, “toppled the house of cards which Marshall, with some assistance from the DL, had so skillfully but precariously built.”³¹³

During June, members of the DL made great efforts to seek Chou En-lai’s approval to giving US members the final authority in the EH and in the field teams as Chiang demanded in May.³¹⁴ On June 19, Lo and Chang met with Marshall to discuss the problem of final authority. Chang conveyed to Marshall the CCP’s reasons for rejecting the proposal of giving Americans the final decision: the draft proposal “covered too wide a field.” In Marshall’s view, the CCP’s rejection was due to its belief after the government takeover of Changchun that Marshall supported the government. Chiang’s insistence on giving US members the final decisive vote also increased the CCP’s doubts.³¹⁵ Lo suggested changing the term “final authority” to “by a major vote” to stop the propaganda war over the issue of final authority. Marshall disagreed on the grounds that “a major vote” did not suit the situation where the US member wanted to conform to neither side. “By giving the Americans the final authority,” Marshall believed, “it would

³¹⁰ USDS, *CWP*, 159.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 165-166, 168.

³¹² *Ibid.*, 162.

³¹³ Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 369.

³¹⁴ USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946, Vol. IX, 967, 970, 1079-1081, 1114-1115.

eliminate prejudice on both sides.”³¹⁶ Lo then informed Marshall of the forthcoming gathering in Nanjing of representatives of different political groups and their meeting with delegates of the two fighting sides, and further offered their assistance to Marshall’s mission. Marshall deemed it very helpful if they would bring the Communists to an agreement on the issue of the final authority of the Americans.³¹⁷

After this meeting, Lo and Chang met Chou, and suggested that he consider granting the US member the final authority in making local investigation. Chou agreed to give American representatives the final authority in ordering a cease-fire and deciding the time and areas to go. On June 21, Lo and Chang met with Marshall again to inform him of the developments. Marshall thought Chou was ambiguous in saying that he would agree to give the Americans the final decision in ordering a cease-fire. For example, if fighting ceased, what were the measures to prevent further conflicts? Chang clarified that Chou’s implication was that US members had the power to decide to what distance each side should pull back. Marshall pointed out that “it was not enough to merely imply.” He did not think lower officials of the CCP would abide by the implication. They could not understand why they should listen to the Americans while the US Government was supplying the Nationalist troops with weapons, shells, ordnance, and other materials, which were being used to fight their fellow Communist soldiers. They all looked upon Americans with disfavor, and because of this Chou had been reluctant to give US members the final authority.³¹⁸

³¹⁵ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 16, frame 867.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 868.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 867-869.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 881-882.

Lo raised another dead-locked issue--Marshall's arbitration power in the Committee of Three. Marshall reiterated his unwillingness to accept such power as proposed by Chiang Kai-shek "because it would impose too many responsibilities upon the US Government." Lo expressed readiness to see Chou the next day regarding the point Marshall had just raised.³¹⁹

With the combined efforts of Marshall and the third force, the Chinese Communists finally agreed to grant the final authority to the American members in field teams and the EH in matters relating to "cessation of hostilities procedures, interpretation of agreements, and their execution."³²⁰

In addition to military problems, the third force wanted to solve political issues at the same time. On June 8, in a meeting between Marshall and eight members of the PCC, Liang Shu-min suggested that all political parties should discuss political problems as a way to solve the present situation. Liang asked Marshall to suggest to Chiang the convocation of the PCC Steering Committee to discuss political issues while the Committee of Three handled military problems. He also proposed to set up a means of liaison between the two committees so that the two could exchange conclusions reached in their respective committees. He elaborated the point by stating that, when the Committee of Three came to a conclusion, three PCC representatives should be informed so that the two could meet and exchange opinions. For example, Liang further explained, "when the Committee of Three discussed the disposition of troops in Manchuria, the

³¹⁹ Ibid., 882.

³²⁰ USDS, *CWP*, 161.

steering committee would discuss political issues regarding the reorganization of local and provincial governments in the same area.”³²¹

Marshall agreed to Liang’s idea of convening a “parallel committee” to discuss political matters and keep in touch with the Committee of Three, but deemed it improper for him to make such a suggestion to the National Government. He further pointed out that the Steering Committee of the PCC had a lengthier procedure to go through than the Committee of Three. To make clear the differences in the procedure between the two committees, he explained in great detail that used by the Committee of Three in negotiations on the restoration of communications.³²²

In addition, Marshall pointed out some of the difficulties that were hampering China in its realization of democracy: “illiteracy, lack of a common dialect, and inadequate means of communication.” He suggested initiating mass education. “Some such expeditious methods would be necessary to a successful effort to launch a genuine democracy.”³²³

Marshall once again urged the combination of third force groups when Liang pointed out as exaggerated the statement that the CYP was subservient to the KMT and the DL to the CCP. In that way, Marshall believed, the third force could exert “greater influence on important individuals and editors of both sides,” which would persuade the two sides to make some compromise so that “a solution other than a devastating war might be reached.”³²⁴

³²¹USDS, “RMM,” Roll 16, frame 684.

³²² Ibid, 685.

³²³ Ibid, 686.

³²⁴ Ibid., 686.

Conclusion

During the second phase of the Marshall mission, Marshall and the third force worked closely in their efforts to bring peace to China. Although the third force did not make much progress in stopping the fighting, Marshall put increasing weight on their opinions. He conferred frequently with members of the third force, especially the DL. Marshall's interaction with the third force can be classified as follows:

First, encouraging the unity of the third force: Nearly every time Marshall met with members of the third force, he emphasized the necessity of combining the third party groups and hoped in this way that the third force could provide helpful support to his mission.

Second, soliciting support from the third force in subduing the propaganda war between the Communists and the government: He suggested that the third force concentrate its efforts on some important leaders of each side to bring about the mutual trust which is indispensable for furthering genuine negotiations.

Third, getting the assistance of the third force to persuade the CCP to accept draft proposals with regard to giving the American representative in the EH and field teams the final decision.

Fourth, asking members of the third force to pass messages to the two fighting sides, especially after he withdrew from formal mediation. For instance, his truce proposal was conveyed to Chou En-lai via Carsun Chang. In this way, Marshall could be aware of the CCP's position before forwarding his proposal himself, thus avoiding the possible embarrassment if rejected. Another advantage of using the third force as a messenger was

that Marshall could keep himself from getting too enmeshed in China's complicated political affairs.³²⁵

The third force groups, on their part, were more than happy to serve as messengers because, by passing messages to both sides, they could draw attention from both the two parties and the public.³²⁶ Third force members visited Marshall frequently to make suggestions and ask for instruction as to how they could help with Marshall's mission. They also presented their own proposal for solving the Manchuria problem, which gained thorough approval from Marshall. They, too, asked Marshall to forward their proposals to the two contending sides. Though as fighting went on they became suspicious of US China policy, they did not doubt the impartiality of Marshall. On the contrary, the third force enjoyed working with Marshall and respected Marshall's personality. As Lo Lung-chi told Payne, "there is nothing so exciting as working with him (Marshall). General Marshall should at least teach the Chinese militarists that their personalities have no weight against the suffering the civil war produces. He should know—he is the greatest general of them all."³²⁷ More importantly, third force members placed high hopes in Marshall in his efforts to bring peace and democracy to China. Lo referred to Marshall in his speaking to Payne on April 15 as a man who "has a mind like a clasp knife." "On the subject of peace I have never met a more persuasive advocate. What is certain is that if he (Marshall) fails, no one else will ever succeed."³²⁸ Lo also mentioned to Marshall himself that the success of talks

³²⁵ Wang, "Marshall's Approaches," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 35.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Payne, *Chinese Diaries, 1941-46*, 319.

³²⁸ Ibid. The author of the thesis adds the parenthesis.

between the CCP and the KMT within the fifteen-day truce depended largely on Marshall's efforts.³²⁹

³²⁹ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 868.

CHAPTER V
“LAST CHANCE FOR PEACE:” THIRD FORCE MEDIATION EFFORTS
IN SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, AND NOVEMBER OF 1946

As we saw in the last chapter, due to the endeavors of General Marshall and the third force to stop the fighting over Manchuria, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek finally agreed to a truce beginning on June 6 and ending on June 30. Although no agreement was reached regarding the army redistribution in Manchuria and North China when the truce period ended, both sides issued announcements that they would continue to forbid their troops to take the offensive against the other side. General Marshall was also invited to resume his work of mediation.³³⁰

Nevertheless, the continuous deterioration of the military situation and the increasingly violent propaganda attacks on the impartiality of the United States in July, August, and September led to Marshall's withdrawal from formal mediation in early October. For the rest of October, the third force took Marshall's place as middleman in a vigorous effort to grasp the “last chance for peace” in China. After these efforts failed, China was set on the road of all-out civil war.

In this chapter I will explore the mediation efforts of the third force from late September to mid November 1946. To get a better understanding of the role of the

³³⁰ USDS, *CWP*, 169.

third force in this crucial phase and its relations with the Americans, it is necessary to look briefly at the development of the situation in China in the previous three months.

Situation in July, August, and September and the DL's Activities

The conflict between the Nationalists and the Communists over North China began on June 7, the first day of the June truce period, with a Communist offensive in Shandong province.³³¹ North China had the heaviest concentration of Communist troops. Chiang wanted to scale down the CCP's bases in this area to fewer and isolated places. On June 17, he demanded as prerequisites for his issuing a cease-fire order the Communist withdrawal from Jehol, Chahar, and the territories in Shandong occupied by Communist troops after June 7. The Communists refused Chiang's demands.³³² During July, the military situation in North China further deteriorated with the KMT-CCP hostilities spreading in various areas. Clashes in Shangdong, North Jiangsu, Shanxi, and along the Henan-Hubei border escalated both in scope and in violence.³³³ The progress of the peace talks was further hindered by the Generalissimo's absence from the negotiations after July 14, when he left for Guling (Kuling) in Jiangxi, staying there until mid-September to avoid the hot summer of Nanjing.³³⁴

Paralleling the worsening of the military situation in North China was the spreading of white terror by the extreme right faction of the KMT.³³⁵ To prevent an ultimate compromise with liberal elements, the reactionaries decided to get rid of the liberals

³³¹ Ibid., 159.

³³² USDS, *CWP*, 160.

³³³ USDS, "RIAC," Roll 4, frame 0234.

³³⁴ USDS, *CWP*, 171.

³³⁵ Ibid., 172.

entirely, disregarding the immediate severe political consequences.³³⁶ Under orders from the extremists, secret police in the Yunnan Garrison killed Li Kung-pu and Wen I-to, two prominent members of the DL, on July 11 and 15 respectively.³³⁷ Other important members of the DL, especially the Chairman and the General Secretary of the DL's Yunnan Branch, were also on the assassins' hit-list. The aftermath of these brutal killings saw the spread of fear among members of the DL. In Nanjing they hid out in the PPC building appealing to the government for protection.³³⁸ In Kunming, the leading members of its Yunnan branch sought asylum in the American Consulate in Kunming, where they and their families stayed until July 27 when the Consulate made sure that their safety was guaranteed by the KMT Central Government and that arrangements had been completed for their protection.³³⁹

Fearing that the government would settle the issues arbitrarily and unilaterally, the DL strongly demanded that the government and the League jointly investigate these two murders.³⁴⁰ It also sought to enlist the impartial perspective of the Americans in the investigation. On July 26, several days after sending a letter to Marshall, in which he described the Kunming assassinations, Lo Lung-chi visited Marshall and proposed the idea of organizing an investigative committee composed of representatives from the government, the DL, and the United States. Lo told Marshall that government representatives sent to investigate were secret policemen. He felt it impossible for the DL

³³⁶ USDS, "RIAC," Roll 4, frame 0183.

³³⁷ Shaheen, "The Democratic League," 371-372. Li was head of the DL's Kunming branch, Wen was the most beloved professor in the universities of Kunming.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 372.

³³⁹ USDS, "RIAC," frame 0183, 0260. These members were Tsu Tu-nan (Chairman), Chao Feng (Secretary), Fei Xiaotong, Pan Guangnian, Chang Shiyong, Fei Chu-nan, Pan Ta-kui, Shang Yue, and Feng Satao. Also see USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946 Vol. IX, 1451.

³⁴⁰ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 372.

to send its member to Kunming to investigate when the safety of this individual was not guaranteed and when the DL would have no say except as a part of a joint committee. Lo asked Marshall to take this matter up with Chiang.³⁴¹

Marshall did not concur on Lo's point of involving American representatives in the joint investigation, but agreed to convey to Chiang the DL's demand for a joint Government-League investigation during his coming trip to Guling.³⁴² On August 8, Marshall referred to these murders and other forms of suppression of liberal elements by the KMT in his meeting with Chiang. He strongly warned Chiang that this would greatly damage his prestige as the leader of China.³⁴³ Marshall also frankly discussed the worsening political situation with other senior Nationalist officials, trying to make them understand the gravity of the situation from the viewpoint of American public opinion. On July 31, for example, he told the KMT representative Yu Ta-wei that "to the Americans the evident persecution of the most highly educated and most liberal minded people in China and the suppression of newspapers and publications were antagonistic to every conception of democracy."³⁴⁴

Marshall's criticism of the KMT's persecution of the DL members was based on solid facts. The US Consulate in Kunming gathered considerable evidence which suggested that the responsibility for the terrorism in Kunming rested in Nanjing.³⁴⁵ On July 24, Dr. J. Leighton Stuart also talked about the current political situation in China in his first conversation with the Chinese President after his formal appointment as the

³⁴¹ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 1138; Roll 3, frame 1040-1041.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Ibid., Roll 50, frame 286.

³⁴⁴ Ibid., 276-277.

³⁴⁵ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 373.

American Ambassador to China. He gave Chiang two suggestions. First, Chiang should dispel the fear of the intellectuals by a public assurance that they would not be prosecuted for their speaking, political affiliations, or other democratic activities. Second, the government should remove the ban on the press.³⁴⁶

The pressure from the two Americans did have some effects. Although Li's assassins were never brought to justice, and although two low-ranking officers of the Yunnan Garrison Command were executed as scapegoats for Wen's murder, the terrorism in Yunnan and Nanjing stopped in August.³⁴⁷ However, this did not lessen the gravity of the military situation. The reorganization and redistribution of the army continued to be the most insurmountable obstacle to an agreement. Although the CCP consented to withdraw from the large ports of Hebei, Shanxi, Shandong, and the Yangzi Valley, it rejected Chiang's demand that they evacuate the entire North Jiangsu and southern Jehol. The Communists also insisted that the areas evacuated by them should not be occupied by the Nationalist troops, and that the existing civil administrations remain intact pending an overall political settlement. These demands of the CCP were refused by Chiang, whose objective was to reduce CCP political and military control in North China to a few isolated places.³⁴⁸

Since it was impossible to bring the two to an agreement on army redistribution, General Marshall and Dr. Stuart tried to break the impasse by reaching some political settlements. On August 1, Dr. Stuart proposed to Chiang the formation of a Five-Man Committee, composed of two representatives of the KMT and two of the CCP, with

³⁴⁶ USDS, "RIAC," Roll 4, frame 200.

³⁴⁷ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 372.

³⁴⁸ USDS, "RIAC," Roll 4, frame 283. Also see USDS, *CWP*, 165-166.

himself as Chairman, to discuss the reorganization of the State Council, hoping that Chiang would agree to end the fighting if the committee could reach certain agreement.³⁴⁹ On August 5, Chiang agreed to Stuart's proposal, but made the establishment of the committee contingent on the CCP's acceptance of his five conditions: the CCP should withdraw its troops (1) to the north of the Lung-hai railway; (2) from the Jinan-Qingdao railway; (3) from Chengde and areas south of Chengde in Jehol province; (4) to two and a half provinces in Manchuria; and (5) from places in Shanxi and Shandong occupied by the CCP after June 7.³⁵⁰ The Communists, who had been demanding a cease-fire, welcomed Stuart's idea since the committee was now the only hope for stopping the fighting. But they refused to accept Chiang's five conditions on the grounds that none of them mentioned a solution to the problem of local government and that the CCP felt that the KMT should also withdraw from places it occupied after June 7.³⁵¹

To break the deadlock by arousing public opinion to put pressure on both parties, General Marshall and the Ambassador issued a joint public statement on August 10, in which they informed the Chinese people of the serious situation in China. They declared that the greatest obstacles to a KMT-CCP settlement were the disagreement on the problem of local government and army redistribution.³⁵² Three days later, Chiang replied to the Marshall-Stuart Statement by blaming everything on the Communists.³⁵³ It was not

³⁴⁹ USDS, *CWP*, 174.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 175.

³⁵¹ USDS, "RMM," Roll 50, frame 282.

³⁵² USDS, *CWP*, 175-176.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 177.

surprising that the CCP did the same thing, holding the Nationalists responsible for the fighting.³⁵⁴

In the meantime, the military situation grew worse day by day. In early August, the Communist troops advanced on Datong, capital of Shanxi province, and occupied the airfield and the city power plant.³⁵⁵ They also launched attacks along the Lung-hai Railroad between Suzhou (in North Jiangsu) and Chengzhou (in South Shandong). The government troops, on their part, kept attacking the Communist armies in North Jiangsu, driving them from the Jinan-Qingdao Railway and taking Chengde on August 29.³⁵⁶

Although by September 3, under the endless efforts of Marshall and Stuart, the KMT and the CCP finally named their representatives to the Five-Man Committee, the committee never convened. The CCP insisted that a political agreement reached by the Committee should automatically mean a cease-fire, while the KMT only agreed to discuss a cease-fire after a political settlement was reached and refused to drop its five-point demand.³⁵⁷ On September 16, with both sides refusing to budge, Chou En-lai left Nanjing for Shanghai, leaving behind him the one condition under which he would go back to Nanjing to resume the negotiations—the convocation of the Committee of Three to discuss a cease-fire.³⁵⁸

The DL in these two and a half months (July, August, and first half of September) seemed to have been totally forgotten by the government, the Communists, and the Americans, a development that resulted from the direct fighting between the KMT and the

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 178.

³⁵⁵ USDS, "RMM," Roll 50, frame 284.

³⁵⁶ USDS, *CWP*, 178.

³⁵⁷ USDS, "RMM," Roll 50, frame 327.

³⁵⁸ USDS, *CWP*, 184.

CCP.³⁵⁹ However, the DL did not acquiesce in its being laid aside. It tried to make its voice heard by publicly criticizing the Five-Man Committee and US China policy.

Chou En-lai actually attempted to involve the DL in the discussions of government reorganization. In early August, when Dr. Stuart put forward the idea of creating a Five-Man committee, Chou suggested that Dr. Stuart get in touch with minority parties “so that they would not feel completely detached from the negotiations.”³⁶⁰ The Americans failed to do so, which caused great dissatisfaction within the League, who publicly resisted the setting up of the Five-Man Committee.

On September 4, the DL declared in the *Min-Chu Pao* that the creation of the Five-Man committee was not in accordance with the PCC resolution. The DL predicted that this committee would yield no results, nor would it break the current impasse. It would only be used by the government as a cover to prepare for another military campaign. In October, this newspaper further attacked the committee by labeling it “a serious violation of Chinese sovereignty” on the ground that it would allow non-Chinese to meddle with the reorganization of the Chinese government.³⁶¹ The DL’s important leader Lo Lung-chi also declared that, by leaving out the DL, this committee degraded the PCC and represented American interference with China’s domestic matters.³⁶²

The DL also attacked Marshall and Stuart personally for presenting the idea of such a committee. *Min-chu Pao* criticized them for not recommending the two sides to restart their talks in the way set by the PCC. In so doing, it argued, Marshall and Stuart had “once more helped the Chinese government in violating the PCC agreement. As a

³⁵⁹ USDS, “RIAC,” Roll 4, frame 0178.

³⁶⁰ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 50, frame 281.

³⁶¹ Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 386-387.

result, the hope for peace of the Chinese people will be more cruelly smashed in the near future.”³⁶³ Shen Chun-ru, one of the important leaders of the DL, charged Marshall with “hypocrisy” and indicated that the intentions of Marshall and Stuart to create such a committee were to cover America’s “brutal policy” of “continuing to fan civil war” in China.³⁶⁴

To the two Americans, the League’s public opposition to the Five-Man Committee complicated the situation and reduced the committee’s potential for success.³⁶⁵ Marshall felt that Lo made such arguments to obtain a seat for the DL on the committee. He criticized Lo for the latter’s selfishness and the complications Lo’s argument had caused.³⁶⁶ Marshall referred to Lo in a conversation with Chen-Pien Lee, Director of the Serum Institution of the Chinese Military of Defense, as “fearful of losing power.” He also believed that the DL was now following the CCP, “which was the only hope for it to gain power.”³⁶⁷

The attacks of the DL on US China policy related closely to the DL’s objection to the Five-Man Committee were. On August 14, in reply to the Marshall-Stuart statement of August 10, *Min-Chu Pao* criticized the US Government for giving one-sided military support to the National Government in eliminating the CCP while Marshall and Stuart tried to bring a reconciliation between the two. Because of this assistance, the DL argued, the KMT gained the courage to start fighting. On these grounds, the DL held the United

³⁶² USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946, X, 171.

³⁶³ *Min-Chu pao* (Chongqing) 4 September 1946, translated in *CPR* (Chongqing, no. 25, 7 September 1946), 1-2, as cited in Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 386.

³⁶⁴ *Lian-ho Jih-pao* (Shanghai) 9 September 1946, translated in *CPR* (Shanghai, no. 143, 4 September 1946), 5, as cited in *ibid.*, 387.

³⁶⁵ USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946, Vol. X, 199.

³⁶⁶ Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 387.

³⁶⁷ USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946, Vol. X, 199.

States responsible for the present war. To stop the war, the DL demanded that the United States withdraw all its troops from China and halt all its military aid to the Nationalists.³⁶⁸

The DL's attack was certainly well founded. Even the *China White Paper* admitted, "General Marshall was placed in an untenable position of mediation...while...the United States Government was continuing to supply arms and ammunitions to...the National Government."³⁶⁹ US aid to the National Government had been substantial since V-J Day. Shortly after V-J Day, the Americans air-lifted three Nationalist armies to East and North China.³⁷⁰ In October, the US Government further sent 50,000 marines to China to assist the Chinese Government in occupying important cities and communication lines in North China. Before V-J Day, the Americans had begun to equip an air force and 39 divisions of the government; afterwards, they continued to transfer military materials to the 39-division army until it was fully equipped. Other lend-lease materials also continued to arrive in China, which strengthened the government's capability for operations in North China and Manchuria.³⁷¹ In late February 1946, Truman authorized the Secretaries of War and Navy to organize a US Military Advisory Group to China to help the Chinese Government in establishing "adequate control over liberated areas in China, including Manchuria...."³⁷² On June 13 and 14, when the Lend-lease was about to expire, those favoring Chiang introduced a bill in Congress to continue American military advice and assistance to the

³⁶⁸ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 376-377.

³⁶⁹ USDS, *CWP*, 181.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 311.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 312.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, 339-340.

National Government.³⁷³ On August 30, the US Government signed an agreement with the National Government, selling US surplus property in the Pacific islands to China. Though this transaction did not include fighting materials as explained by Marshall to Chou En-lai, it contained machines, trucks, communication facilities and other combat serviceable items that could be used for military purpose.³⁷⁴ More importantly, at a time when the negotiations were about to break down, such a move by the US Government tended to strengthen the intransigence of Chiang Kai-shek by leaving him with the impression that, despite the outcome of the negotiations, the US Government would continue to support him.

In view of the rapid deterioration of the military situation in China, and perhaps in response to the attacks on the American policy, General Marshall ordered a ten-month embargo on the shipment of arms to China from the United States or its Pacific bases. This embargo took effect in the United States and the Pacific areas in late July and mid-August of 1946 respectively, with a suspension of licenses for exporting to China of arms and ammunition that had been authorized to be sold to the Chinese Government.³⁷⁵ However, this ban actually had little effect on slowing down the pace of Chiang's military activity, since in August his storage of munitions was enough and he was determined to occupy by force the areas that he could not obtain at the negotiating table.³⁷⁶ In addition, the embargo was offset by other forms of aid to the National Government, for example, the transfer of US surplus properties in the Pacific islands.³⁷⁷

³⁷³ Ibid., 339.

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 180.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 181, 355-356; Marshall, *Marshall's Mission to China, Records*, Vol. I, xxvii.

³⁷⁶ USDS, *CWP*, 181.

³⁷⁷ Marshall, *Marshall's Mission to China, Records*, Vol. I, xxvii.

In mid-September, in the midst of criticism of the US foreign policy by Chinese liberals for bias against the Soviet Union, the DL further disparaged Truman's policy as "one that will lead the world to chaos and a new global war." It charged that "American reactionaries are trying to isolate the Soviet Union, to suppress the rising democratic forces everywhere, and to execute a good neighbor policy toward the vanquished Axis powers. Why they have been so doing is because they want to secure strategic points from which to launch a new war."³⁷⁸

However, even in its sharpest attacks on US China policy, the DL remained alert for any opportunities of future cooperation with the Americans. Although the DL opposed the American policy of continuously assisting the National Government even while China was at war, the DL did not oppose America itself. The United States was still the symbol of the democracy for which the DL had been fighting. In addition, the United States was the sole country that could give China needed resources in its reconstruction. Therefore, even Chang Tungshun, who opposed the US policy most strongly of all League members, looked forward to cooperating with the Americans: "as long as the United States does not want China to be an anti-Soviet base, China would naturally rather be pro-American than pro-Soviet."³⁷⁹ In late September when Marshall once again called upon the third force for assistance in his mediation efforts after he realized that the government's real intention behind the negotiations was to prepare itself for the seizure of Zhangjiakou (Kalgan), the CCP's political and military center northwest

³⁷⁸ *Min-chu-pao*, translated in *CPR*, Chongqing, no. 32, 19 September 1946, as cited in Shaheen, "Democratic League," 378.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 381.

of Beijing, the third force readily offered its support.³⁸⁰ As in April and May, third force members once again cooperated closely with Marshall in their efforts to break the impasse and stop the tide of war. This cooperation manifested itself in further attempts at mediation.

From Late September to Mid October

The third force's re-involvement in the mediation began on September 16 when Chou En-lai left Nanjing for Shanghai. From late September to mid October, when the government finally seized Zhangjiakou, third force members frequently kept Marshall informed about their mediating work. They tried to enlist his influence in stopping the government troops from marching toward Zhangjiakou.³⁸¹

Following Chou's arrival in Shanghai, a government delegation also came to the city to discuss with leaders of the DL the reconvoation of the PCC Steering Committee. Though the DL had been advocating the meeting of the Committee to discuss important issues, the League believed it useless to do so if the fighting was going on and thus demanded an immediate stoppage of civil war. On September 21, Carsun Chang conveyed this demand of the DL to Marshall in a letter via Liang Shuming.³⁸² To Chang's disappointment, he did not receive any reply from Marshall. On October 1, one day after the government announced its campaign against Zhangjiakou, Chang wrote to Marshall again. In this letter, he first expressed his disappointment with Marshall and reiterated the contents of his letter of September 21. Then he asked Marshall to "make use of your position and the American strength behind you" to dissuade Chiang from

³⁸⁰ Roger B. Jeans, "Last Chance for China: Zhang Junmei (Carsun Chang) and Third-Party Mediation in the Chinese Civil War," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 298.

³⁸¹ Jeans, "Last Chance for China," in *ibid.*, 299.

marching against Zhangjiakou. Meanwhile, Chang also gave Marshall his word that he would talk the CCP into presenting its list of delegates to the National Assembly if the government would stop its campaign against Zhangjiakou.³⁸³

Marshall's failure to write back, as made clear in his reply to Chang's October 1 letter, was because of his fear that things in writing would be easily divulged to the press. Marshall explained that he had talked with T.V. Soong, President of the Executive Yuan, about Chang's "views and estimates of the situation," and had requested Soong to confer with Chang. Marshall further expressed his wish to see Chang at the end of his letter, but said that he did not want to address his opinions and questions in informal letters.³⁸⁴

By requesting Washington to recall him, Marshall did exert his influence to extract a five-day truce from the government on October 5. The government's major condition for the truce was to carry out Chiang's two proposals on October 2.³⁸⁵ However, the Communists rejected the government's truce proposal, arguing that no limit should be put on the time and contents of peace-talks.³⁸⁶

The CCP's position was passed on to Marshall in Chang's letter of October 8. Chang and other leaders of the DL had contacted the CCP in Shanghai frequently, and were very clear about the CCP's stand. According to Chang, the CCP sounded pessimistic about the outcome of peace talks. It wanted a complete stoppage of the fighting over Zhangjiakou. Chang believed that the government should stop attacking

³⁸² Ibid., 298, 299.

³⁸³ Carsun to Marshall, 1 October 1946, letter, China Mission files, George C. Marshall Papers (hereafter, Marshall Papers), George C. Marshall Research Library, Lexington, Virginia, as cited in *ibid.*, 299.

³⁸⁴ Marshall to Carsun Chang, 5 October 1946, letter, Marshall Papers, as cited in *ibid.*, 300.

³⁸⁵ USDS, *CWP*, 193. These two proposals were (1) the CCP be granted 8 seats in the State Council, the DL, 4; an additional seat be assigned to an independent recommended by the CCP and agreed by Chiang; (2) the location of the CCP army be determined soon and the CCP enter them by agreed dates. *Ibid.*, 190.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 194.

this city. He expressed his willingness to proceed to the capital if needed. He also offered his service to Marshall, writing that he was “motivated by nothing but...earnest desire to ... make your mission a success.”³⁸⁷

While attempting to stop the Nationalist drive on Zhangjiakou, third force members also tried to persuade Chou En-lai to return to Nanjing. On October 8, leaders of the third force, Sun Fo, and Chou gathered at Chang’s residence. They agreed that the government should invite Chou back to the capital and decided to send a third force delegation to extract such an invitation from the government. The next day, Chang reported this meeting to Marshall in another letter, and informed Marshall that this delegation would visit him. Once again, Chang proposed that they would “exert all...efforts to help you...accomplish your mission.”³⁸⁸ But Chang did not know that, at the time when he wrote the letter, General Marshall was in Shanghai himself. Like the third force, Marshall also tried to bring Chou back to the capital.³⁸⁹

On October 10, Chiang extended his welcome to the delegation via Sun Fo. On the same day, third force members held another meeting with Chou, at which they discussed with Chou a new three-point proposal and decided to bring it with them to Nanjing on October 13. These three points specified were that the government should (1) stop attacking Zhangjiakou; (2) carry out the PCC resolutions according to the PCC procedure; and (3) reconvene conferences of the PCC Steering Committee. Chou agreed

³⁸⁷ Carsun Chang to Marshall, 8 October 1946, Marshall papers, as cited in Jeans, “Last Chance for Peace,” in *Marshall’s Mission*, ed. Bland, 300-301.

³⁸⁸ Carsun Chang to Marshall, 9 October 1946, Marshall papers, as cited in *ibid.*, 301-302.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

to return to Nanjing if the delegation could persuade the government to accept this proposal.³⁹⁰

However, the government's seizure of Zhangjiakou on October 10 and, much worse, its unilateral announcement of the convocation of the National Assembly on November 12 nullified all the mediation efforts of the third force.³⁹¹ To the CCP and the third force, the government's announcement was proof of dictatorship because, at the PCC Steering Meeting of April 24, the KMT had agreed that all parties of interest would discuss and decide on which day the Assembly would be convened.³⁹² At this moment, the third force and the CCP were very pessimistic about the negotiations, as Liang Shuming told Ambassador Stuart. To him and the CCP, "the possibility of the resumption of peace negotiations between the government and the Communists is now a thing of the past." This action of the government's was a "initial step toward fascism."³⁹³

Marshall and Stuart did not take Chiang's announcement so seriously as the DL and the CCP did. Marshall regarded it as only an "unnecessary irritation."³⁹⁴ He considered the date for convening the National Assembly a matter of procedure and warned the DL members against focusing too much on procedural problems. To him, the essential thing was to have a functioning Assembly.³⁹⁵

Marshall's argument did not convince the DL and the CCP, who told Marshall and Stuart that it would be a big mistake to consider Chiang's decision anything other

³⁹⁰ Ibid., 302.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² USDS, *CWP*, 148; *ibid.*, 303.

³⁹³ USDS, *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946 Vol. X, 362-363, and 366.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., 382.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 440-441, 443.

than an ultimatum.³⁹⁶ Therefore, as a result of Chiang's announcement, Chou, who had been persuaded by the third force to return to Nanjing and had decided to do so even after hearing of the fall of Zhangjiakou, cancelled his trip.³⁹⁷ The third force also suspended the dispatch of its delegation to Nanjing, and would not restart its mediation efforts until both the government and the CCP had elucidated their attitudes.³⁹⁸

Chiang's Eight-Point Plan and the Rejection of the Proposals of the Third Force

On October 16, the Generalissimo announced an eight-point proposal as a prerequisite for the cessation of hostilities. This proposal covered subjects such as the separation of opposite troops in Manchuria, "the restoration of communications," and "the method for settling disagreements in the field teams." It also demanded that (1) the KMT and the CCP immediately confirm the tentative agreements reached by the Committee of Three in June concerning army redistribution and reorganization; (2) government troops north of the Yangzi River stay in their present locations pending an agreement in the Committee of Three "on reorganization, redistribution, and demobilization;" (3) the PCC Steering Committee immediately approve decisions reached at the Five-Man Committee; (4) the reorganized State Council settle issues of local government; (5) the Constitutional Reviewing Committee be resummoned immediately to submit a revised constitution to the National Assembly.³⁹⁹

Chiang's proposal let the third force down because it had demanded an unconditional cease-fire. On October 17, third force members visited Chou, who

³⁹⁶ Ibid., 371, 382.

³⁹⁷ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 391.

³⁹⁸ Jeans, "Last Chance for Peace," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 304.

informed them of the CCP's rejection of Chiang's plan. Late in the afternoon of that same day, Liang Shuming and Yeh Tuyi, Chang's secretary, reported the CCP's reaction to Marshall in person. Liang recounted in detail the recent activities of the third force in Shanghai, and invited Marshall and Stuart to its meeting there.⁴⁰⁰ Liang argued that third force groups needed Marshall's advice on many issues regarding military matters and that Marshall's presence would give them a better chance of success. Marshall declined this invitation on the ground that it was time for the Chinese to settle the problem for themselves, but he promised to participate in the mediation after the third force had made progress and obtained encouragement from Chou.⁴⁰¹ Marshall's refraining from direct involvement in the talks had a lot to do with the CCP's doubts as to whether he was a truly disinterested mediator. As Marshall explained to Liang, if he attended the meeting of minority parties, the CCP would suspect that he was trying to gain their favor. Marshall then elaborated on how the CCP used the surplus property transaction in its propaganda and why such a transaction was concluded on August 30. In defense, he explained that this property did not include any armaments.⁴⁰² Liang thanked Marshall for his explanation and expressed willingness to be the bridge between the United States and the CCP to find some common ground between their conflicting viewpoints. He then added that it was wrong for the KMT to plan on forming a government that excluded the CCP. Marshall agreed, and once again pointed out that the major problem still lay in the deep mutual distrust and the lack of appreciation of the fears felt by the other side. He emphasized the extreme difficulty he had in persuading Chiang to issue the eight-point

³⁹⁹ USDS, *CWP*, "annex 104," 673-674.

⁴⁰⁰ Jeans, "Last Chance for Peace," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 305-306.

⁴⁰¹ USDS, "RMM," Roll 3, frame 315, 316, 319.

proposal, and said that it was “extremely important” for the CCP to look at it without suspicion. Marshall was confident that if the CCP could accept the proposal, the Committee of Three could obtain an order for a total cease-fire in two hours.⁴⁰³

Yeh came back to Shanghai that evening and reported the whole conversation to Chang. On October 19, Chang wrote another letter to Marshall. He described at length the third force’s mediating activities from October 8 to October 18 and lamented that Yen-an’s reaction to Chiang’s proposal was “very stiff.” However, he continued, he still had hope for the negotiations and was joining the endeavors of other DL members to bring Chou back to Nanjing. He once again made clear the third force’s stand: stop fighting first, then define a military boundary for the opposing troops, and finally let the EH oversee the armistice. He thanked Marshall for his efforts to bring about Chiang’s eight-point plan, but he still hoped that these points would not be binding in the peace talks.⁴⁰⁴

The endeavors of Chang and his fellow members of the third force soon generated new hope for the negotiations. On October 20, they finally obtained Chou’s agreement to return to Nanjing. Given the Communists’ rejection of the eight demands of the government, the third force’s success exceeded Marshall’s expectation.⁴⁰⁵ Although Chou made this concession only after the third force had agreed to take the same position as the CCP regarding the nomination of representatives to the National Assembly, at least he was back and ready to continue with the talks.⁴⁰⁶ This development delighted

⁴⁰² Ibid., 316.

⁴⁰³ Ibid., 318.

⁴⁰⁴ Jeans, “Last Chance for Peace” in *Marshall’s Mission*, ed. Bland, 306.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., 309.

⁴⁰⁶ Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 396.

Marshall and Stuart, as we can see from Stuart's speech at his residence on October 22, which was addressed to the third force members who had accompanied Chou back to Nanjing the previous day. Stuart stated that "we (he and Marshall) feel extremely encouraged and grateful that the third force group has been so active and has accomplished so much."⁴⁰⁷ Marshall even mentioned this development to Truman, praising the third force for its unity and its endeavor to lead China into peace.⁴⁰⁸

The third force certainly did attract much positive attention in mid October. On October 19, an Associated Press correspondent reported that third force groups were "now showing unexpected weight and influence in the last efforts to save the peace talks from complete rupture." Their leaders "finally formed a solid bloc with which to enforce their own demands for peace."⁴⁰⁹ An American diplomatic official in Nanjing also observed in his dispatch to the State Department that mid-October "marked a high point in third-party activities since the heyday of the PCC."⁴¹⁰ Meanwhile, Chinese newspapers made similar comments. For example, *Peace Daily* highlighted the fresh vigor of the third force in the formidable task of reconciling the two feuding sides.⁴¹¹ *Sin min wan-pao* praised the DL and the CYP for their impartiality in their mediation efforts.⁴¹²

It seemed that both the Chinese and Americans now focused their hope for peace on third force members. However, neither the CCP nor the government would commit itself to a peaceful solution. Therefore, the third force mediation team had to work out a

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.; USDS, "RMM," Roll 4, frame 306; *FRUS, Far East, China*, 1946, Vol. X, 401.

⁴⁰⁸ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 396.

⁴⁰⁹ "History of the Peiping Executive Headquarters," October-November 1946, 39, Army Intelligence Documents File, ID 923365m RG 319, NA, as cited in Jeans, "Last Chance for China," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 308.

⁴¹⁰ Dispatch no. 751, 27 October 1946, decimal file 893.00, 1945-49, RG 59 (State Department), NA, as cited in *ibid.*

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*

proposal that appealed to both parties. In attempting to do so, third force members, most notably Carsun Chang and Lo Lung-chi, asked Marshall for suggestions.⁴¹³

On the night of October 22, Chang visited Marshall by himself. He first informed Marshall that the CCP felt that accepting Chiang's proposal meant surrender. Then he pointed out the two points in Chiang's proposal that violated the PCC resolutions: (1) the demand that the CCP submit to the current government its list of delegate to the National Assembly and (2) the exclusion of the local government problem in Manchuria from discussion by the State Council. For the first, the PCC resolutions required the submission of such a list to the reorganized government; for the second, the PCC stipulated that the State Council should discuss the issue of local government in the whole of China. In reply, Marshall outlined the great difficulties in obtaining Chiang's eight points, four of which Marshall believed to be concessions on the part of the government. Therefore, he was very disappointed with the CCP's rejection.⁴¹⁴ Chang then proposed the idea of holding an informal meeting among the government, the CCP, and the third force to discuss all important questions of arranging for a cease-fire. This meeting would also include a general discussion of other unsettled points. Marshall agreed to Chang's idea, and added that discussions should not be limited to Chiang's eight points and that such limitation was not the intention of the government's proposal.⁴¹⁵

At this meeting, Chang and Marshall also talked about the situation in Manchuria. Chang felt that the CCP would refuse to give up Harbin after losing Zhangjiakou. This

⁴¹² Shaheen, "Democratic League," 396.

⁴¹³ Ibid., 396-397.

⁴¹⁴ USDS, "RMM," Roll 4, frame 307.

was just what Marshall feared, as he believed that, in that case, the peace talks would break down completely.⁴¹⁶ On October 25, in a meeting with Lo Lung-chi, Marshall once more tackled the Zhangjiakou-Harbin question. He hoped that the third force could bring the two sides to an agreement on this issue. Lo then requested that Marshall convince Chiang to give up his demand that the CCP reply in written to his eight points.⁴¹⁷

On October 27, Lo visited Marshall again. This time, he put forward the peace package of the third force and asked Marshall for his opinion. The package had three articles. First, all troops should remain in their present location and cease fighting. Second, the State Council should decide local government problems in all of China. Third, the five resolutions of the PCC should be carried out according to the specified procedure.⁴¹⁸ Marshall felt that Article One was sound and Article Two a matter of getting the approval of the government. Article Three might get all parties bogged down with details of procedures. Therefore, he suggested it should be reduced to two points: the reorganization of the government and the nomination of delegates to the National Assembly.⁴¹⁹ Their talks then centered on these two points.

On the National Assembly, Lo felt that the opening ceremony could be held on November 12, but that all meetings should be postponed until a month later for the purpose of awaiting the arrival of all delegates. Marshall disagreed. He argued that the postponement of the Assembly might cause a winter campaign or a total war. He considered it very important for the third force delegates to “do everything possible to get

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 308.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ Jeans, “Last Chance for Peace,” in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 311.

⁴¹⁸ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 4, frame 264.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid., 265.

the National Assembly in session early.” As far as the reorganization of the government was concerned, Marshall thought that third force groups should get the State Council established, where debate and discussion could be held. “This is of the essence,” he argued, because the EH had been weakened by the violent attacks on American policy.⁴²⁰ He believed that what the third force needed to do then was to insist on its demand that the government be reorganized “within some stipulated period,” but “not within three or four years.”⁴²¹

The endeavors of the third force to generate a peace package once again became fruitless as a result of the government’s seizure of Andong in Manchuria on October 25.⁴²² On October 27, Lo reported this to Marshall, telling him that Chou had basically accepted the third force’s three-point proposal on October 26, but now wanted to stop the talks because of the government’s new offensive. Lo felt very frustrated. Marshall told Lo not to be bothered by fighting of this kind, and said that it might happen again.⁴²³ Lo asked Marshall to exert his influence to stop Chiang from continuing this campaign or at least to slow it down.⁴²⁴

Despite renewed fighting between the two sides, third force members proceeded with their mediation efforts. The chance of success for the third force mediation was “very limited,” as Chang lamented to Marshall on October 28. For the three-point

⁴²⁰ Ibid., 264.

⁴²¹ Ibid., 265.

⁴²² Shaheen, “Democratic League,” 397.

⁴²³ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 4, frame 163.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 164-165.

proposal of the third force to be accepted by the government, it would be crucial to obtain the CCP's nomination of representatives to the National Assembly.⁴²⁵

Nevertheless, to make the CCP nominate its delegates to the Assembly, the government had to make some political concessions. The problem was that the government refused to make more concessions than those offered in the eight-point proposal. The third force was so discouraged that, on the day before they presented their proposal to Chiang, Chang and Lo conferred with Marshall again. If the government would not concede politically, Chang argued, the Communists would be less willing to accept the three-point proposal, because they had demanded that the Executive Yuan should be reorganized before it nominated a delegation to the National Assembly. Lo added that, if the government expected the CCP to give up its army, Chiang must make political concessions that would ensure broadening the basis of government.⁴²⁶

Chang and Lo's argument reminded Marshall of the major demands of the two rivals since the end of February. He traced the whole process from May until October when the issue of local governments and the nomination of representatives to the National Assembly remained major obstacles to an agreement.⁴²⁷ For the former, Chang felt that the State Council might provide a solution. He considered it possible to settle the problem of army redistribution in Manchuria if the CCP could enter the local government there. For the latter, Lo argued that the CCP's main wish was to carry out PCC resolutions in accordance with the PCC procedure. Marshall replied that avoiding delay in convening the Assembly "would be fatal to the continuation of (the) armistice." He

⁴²⁵ Ibid., 257

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ Ibid., 258.

believed it impractical to reorganize the government in a few weeks. He then warned the third force against becoming submerged in details and overlooking the essential issues.⁴²⁸ He advised them to take up the political issues first and then the military situation. Otherwise, Marshall felt, they might never get to discuss the political issues.⁴²⁹ In closing, Lo reiterated his appreciation of Marshall's influence in China, which, together with that of the United States, could help China become democratic.⁴³⁰

In view of the obvious discouragement of Lo and Chang, who considered the chances for their success "very limited" and even thought of withdrawing the third force mediation team to Shanghai,⁴³¹ Marshall visited Chiang on the evening of October 28. He urged Chiang to "show them every consideration and build up their prestige by making concessions and encouraging them to speak frankly to him" because they "appeared to be the only hope in the situation."⁴³²

Chiang did not follow Marshall's advice. When the third force delegates handed in their proposal the next day, he told them that they should either adopt his proposal or present him with a plan from the CCP instead of submitting a proposal of their own.⁴³³ The Communists were no more willing than the government to accept the proposal, which had been amended at the suggestion of Mo Teh-hui, a leading non-partisan from the Northeast and a member of the Presidium of the PPC. Mo proposed that in the Northeast the government should control the major communication lines, including railway and truck lines, and the areas along those lines, while the Communists should

⁴²⁸ Ibid., 259.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., 265.

⁴³⁰ Ibid., 261.

⁴³¹ Ibid.

⁴³² USDS, *CWP*, 202.

have the rest of Manchuria. When Mo, Liang Shuming, and Li Huang reported the proposal to Chou, he exploded with anger. Carsun Chang's memoirs described the scene. "Tears ran down Chou's cheek. He pointed to Liang and said 'You are a hypocrite. Though our friendship has lasted twenty years, it broke away.... Today you are our enemy'.... The three who had called on Chou stood there speechless."⁴³⁴

Actually, the rejection of their proposals by both sides did not surprise the majority of the third force, who had lost confidence in bringing peace through mediation. Liang Shuming alone remained hopeful about a peaceful settlement until the day the final proposal was submitted. After its rejection, even he gave up as well.⁴³⁵

Because neither the KMT nor the CCP accepted their proposal, and Because they were unable to generate a new plan, the third force mediators left Nanjing.⁴³⁶ As Shaheen points out, "for all intent and purposes, the Democratic League's role as a mediator ended on October 28, buried in the realization that its efforts had been 'a waste of time and energy.'"⁴³⁷ However, this does not mean that the third force stopped all its activities and efforts on that very day. In early November, its efforts lingered on until the convocation of the National Assembly, which, in the words of Chou En-lai, "slammed" the door of the KMT-CCP negotiations.⁴³⁸

⁴³³ Ibid.; Shaheen, "Democratic League," 400.

⁴³⁴ Chang, *Third Force*, 182; Shaheen, "Democratic League," 398-399.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 400.

⁴³⁶ Jeans, "Last Chance for Peace," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 319.

⁴³⁷ *Ta Kung pao* (Shanghai) in *CPR* (Shanghai, no. 196, 7 November 1946), 4, as cited in Shaheen, "Democratic League," 400.

⁴³⁸ USDS, *CWP*, 208.

Lingering Efforts of the Third Force in November, the Resumption of Mediation of the Americans, and Final Rupture

Chiang's rejection of the peace-proposal disappointed Carsun Chang so much that he returned to Shanghai the next day and for two days he turned down all requests for his return to Nanjing. However, Chang did not give up and came back to the capital on November 2. He immediately visited the Generalissimo, which the Chinese newspapers described as generating a new "wave of optimism." They talked about things concerning the National Assembly, such as the draft constitution and the question of whether or not to postpone the Assembly.⁴³⁹ Chang also suggested convening an informal meeting among the government, the CCP, and the third force, an idea to which the CCP had agreed. Chiang accepted this suggestion. This meeting was then scheduled on November 4.⁴⁴⁰ The next afternoon, Chang and Lo went to report this development to Marshall and asked him for comments on the informal meeting to be convened the next day. Marshall suggested that the third force focus its efforts on settling political issues. That is "when and to whom the CCP should submit the list of delegates to the National Assembly."⁴⁴¹

However, the KMT representative did not appear at the informal meeting, while both the third force and the CCP participated as scheduled. Third force members could only ask Chou for the CCP's demands.⁴⁴² The next day Chou came up with a nine-point program, which was immediately conveyed to the government by the third force. Five of the nine points were political items and four were military.⁴⁴³ Chou continued to refuse

⁴³⁹ Jeans, "Last Chance for Peace," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 315.

⁴⁴⁰ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 240.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴⁴² USDS, *CWP*, 204.

⁴⁴³ For the detail of the nine-point program, see USDS, "RMM," Role 16, frame 217-218.

to nominate Communist delegates to the Assembly, which he believed would leave the Communists, in Jean's words, with no "political weapon and guarantee" in the negotiations. But the government insisted on obtaining such a list as a prerequisite for ceasing hostilities. The third force requested both sides to take a middle road, but neither side was willing to compromise.⁴⁴⁴ By now the third force had almost totally lost its hope for a peaceful settlement, as the Chinese press reported on November 5.⁴⁴⁵

With the third force gradually retreating from the mediation process, the Americans resumed their role as mediator. On November 5, Marshall and Stuart visited Chiang, expressing their regret at the government's failure to attend the informal meeting.⁴⁴⁶ With the time for convening the National Assembly imminent, and with the government troops having taken all the cities the government had demanded since June, Chiang expressed a desire to issue an order for a cessation of hostilities. He asked Marshall and Stuart to give him some suggestions regarding the announcement of such an order. On November 7, Chiang gave his draft announcement to the two Americans, who believed that his statement was "highly provocative" and would only worsen the already hopeless situation. They gave Chiang their draft the next day when he invited them to a meeting.⁴⁴⁷ On November 8, Chiang issued a modified statement, but "the method proposed for stopping the fighting was inconclusive and still held...a threat of renewed battle to force a political decision."⁴⁴⁸ On the same day, Chou En-lai forwarded Marshall the CCP's reply to the government's eight-point proposal, which Marshall conveyed to

⁴⁴⁴ *Yishibao* (Beiping, 8 November 1946), translated in *CPR* (Beiping-Tianjing, No. 191, 8 November 1946) 4-5, as cited in Jeans, "Last Chance for Peace," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 317.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 318.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*; USDS, *CWP*, 204.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

the government immediately. This reply came out of a meeting between the third force and Chou the previous evening.⁴⁴⁹ In this reply, Chou also demanded that the National Assembly be called off for seven to fourteen days to allow a chance for successful talks.⁴⁵⁰ On November 11, the government agreed to call off the Assembly for three days, provided that the third force would nominate its delegates to the Assembly.⁴⁵¹

By now the third force mediation had almost ceased, but Marshall still desired its involvement in the negotiations, as he told Chou En-lai on November 10. He felt that the efforts of the third force “relieve(d) me from the burden of misunderstanding.”⁴⁵² He continued to confer frequently with representatives of the third force. On November 14, he met with Chou Tsien-chung, a member of the CYP, whose purpose of visiting was to secure Marshall’s advice on how to break the deadlock over the National Assembly. Marshall felt that the important issue was the constitution, not details regarding the convocation of the Assembly or names of the delegates.⁴⁵³

Marshall’s major interest lay in the true intention of the National Government concerning the constitution—whether it would be “a genuine democratic document or a hollow instrument of dictatorship.”⁴⁵⁴ He believed that the only hope for the situation was for the government to carry out the PCC resolutions genuinely, “both in spirit and in letter,” which would leave the CCP no excuse. When Chou stated that Chiang wanted a coalition government composed of the KMT, the DL, and the CYP, and asked whether the US Government would support such a government, Marshall’s answer was no. He

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 205-206.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid, 206.

⁴⁵⁰ Jeans, “Last Chance for Peace,” in *Marshall’s Mission*, ed. Bland, 318.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., 319.

⁴⁵² Marshall, *Marshall’s Mission to China*, Vol. 1, 367, as cited in *ibid.*.

declared that the US Government would only support “a real, genuine two-party government, instead of a fictitious two-party government.” Without the CCP in the government, even if its seats were left vacant as Chou proposed, the KMT would be the majority and there would be no veto power, which meant a continuous one-party rule by the KMT. He further argued that China must have an opposition party because the KMT could not reform itself. Chou agreed that the government would maintain one-party rule in practice.⁴⁵⁵ In closing, Chou asked Marshall to exert his influence so that the government would maintain goodwill in the National Assembly, to which Marshall replied that that was what he had been doing. Marshall once again pointed out that the fundamental problem was mutual distrust.⁴⁵⁶

Marshall was right. The twenty-year-long mutual distrust and hatred had created a gap between the two parties that was too wide to close. In addition, the basic difference over whether priority should be given to a political settlement or a military solution turned out unlikely to settle.⁴⁵⁷ Even if the government had agreed to the request of the third force for temporarily adjourning the National Assembly to permit the negotiations to continue, it is doubtful that any agreement would have come out of it. With the National Assembly convening on November 15 without the participation of the CCP and the majority of the DL, the door of negotiation was closed.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵³ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 4, frame 163.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 164.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 166.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 167.

⁴⁵⁷ Jeans, “Last Chance for Peace,” in *Marshall’s Mission*, ed. Bland, 320.

The Split of the Third Force

The third force split shortly after the final breakdown of the KMT-CCP talks. The controversy over whether or not the third force should attend the National Assembly and the government reorganization created, in Carsun Chang's words, "a precarious position" for the third force.⁴⁵⁹ The CYP, which had cooperated closely with the DL in the October mediation, now took the KMT's side. The DL, having allied itself with the CCP in most of the negotiations, divided. Carsun Chang's decision for the Democratic Socialist Party to attend the National Assembly and join the reorganization of the government not only caused a split in the newly-formed DSP but also led to his party's formal break-away from the DL at the end of December 1946.⁴⁶⁰ Therefore, rather than becoming solid and strong as Marshall had hoped, the third force grew "increasingly fragmented and weak."⁴⁶¹

It is understandable why Chang made such a decision. It was Chang who had spent the previous several months in writing the Constitution Draft.⁴⁶² It was he who had drawn up most of the principles of the PCC resolutions. How could he give up, after all the energies he had devoted to the democratic cause? He wouldn't have given up even if there had merely been a thread of hope. Chang certainly did not make this decision for his own advantage. He himself did not enter the government. As shown in his memoirs, he actually realized that at that time his party was not prepared for joining the government. It was his wish that his party could act as "an opposition party for a few

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., 321, USDS, *CWP*, 208.

⁴⁵⁹ Chang, *Third Force*, 186, Jeans, "Last Chance for Peace," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 320-321.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid., 321-322.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid., 320.

⁴⁶² Ibid., 321.

more years until more experienced men had joined us and we could shoulder the burden of political responsibilities....” Joining government “was too heavy a burden for my party.”⁴⁶³

Even so, to Chang, “there was no alternative but to join the National Assembly and pass the Constitution Draft in order to lay down at least a corner stone for the legal and peaceful development of the Chinese Republic.”⁴⁶⁴ As to joining the government, Chang’s intention was to “accept few seats in the government, but to ask for more compliance with the announced programs.” But Chang also realized that, if the United States failed to make Chiang change his policy, “the one or two ministers nominated by my party could not possibly have any influence on him.”⁴⁶⁵

The split of the third force seemed inevitable in light of the complete rupture of the talks, as Chang rightly observed in his memoirs. “Before the break, there had been a middle-of-the-road policy, but after the KMT and the Communists had come to a parting of the ways, there was no further room for that policy...the situation...demanded that we take a definite stand. I chose the lesser of the two evils and sided with the government because it at least agreed to have the constitution as a basis for the rule of law.”⁴⁶⁶

Conclusion

The fall of 1946 saw the most intense interaction between Marshall and the third force. Never before did Marshall put so much weight on the third force in his attempt to keep alive the peace talks, nor at any other time did he so warmly welcome the third force’s mediation attempts, hoping that the Chinese would find a solution for themselves

⁴⁶³ Chang, *Third Force*, 223.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 186.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 232.

to China's problems.⁴⁶⁷ After months of vain efforts to obtain a compromise from the two contending parties on the fundamental issue of priority given to military reorganization or political settlement, Marshall viewed the third force as "the only hope" for success where he had failed. He tried every effort to back up the third force, as we can see from his last-minute call on the Generalissimo the night before the third force presented its peace-proposal, urging Chiang to build up its prestige. Marshall's effort to strengthen the third force could also be seen from his conversation with Chou En-lai during which he expressed his sincere backing for its mediation in his stead.

Although withdrawing from formal mediation for most of the closing months of his mission, and although repeatedly refusing to resume his role as a middleman as requested by the third force, Marshall did everything he could to help smooth the negotiations. He exerted his influence to stop Chiang's military offensive and extract concessions from the government. When Chiang's departure for Taiwan on the day Chou returned to Nanjing, coupled with the government's military campaign in Andong, greatly hampered the negotiations, Marshall cabled Chiang, urging his return to the capital. Marshall did this despite his reluctance to involve himself in the negotiations and despite his refusal of such a request by the third force a few days before.⁴⁶⁸ He also conferred with Communist representatives, trying to make them understand that the concessions made by the government were real and not a trick. More important, he endeavored to build up the confidence and morale of the third force by encouraging its members whenever there was a renewed crisis in the negotiations. He gave guidelines to the third

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 186.

⁴⁶⁷ Jeans, "Last Chance for Peace," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 322.

⁴⁶⁸ USDS, "RMM," Roll 4, frame262.

force regarding its proposals: topics to be discussed with the government, procedures for reorganizing the government and political reformation, and other issues in the negotiations.

As in April and May, Marshall emphasized the importance of the unity in the third force. He was very disappointed with the breakup of the third force, as shown in his lament to Lo Lung-chi on December 18:

Unfortunately, minority parties have allowed themselves to be split by the two major parties. Therefore they are unable to influence the situation. If they could band together into a single, liberal, patriotic organization...they would be able to exert profound influence and this influence would increase as the party received positions, power, and patronage. Such a party would stand between the two major parties and neither of them could take a decisive step without the support of the liberal party. Now, however, minor parties were disunited and were unable to prevent the use of military force by the government or the promotion of economic collapse by the CCP.⁴⁶⁹

Rather than stressing the need for unity of the third force in order to lessen the mutual distrust between the two rivals, as he did in the spring, this time Marshall put more emphasis on its role as a balancing power between the two major parties. On November 19 in a conversation with Lo Chung-shu, a member of the CYP, Marshall emphasized the importance of the third force to form “an ever-growing organization” to exert “balancing power.”⁴⁷⁰ In a meeting with Lo four days earlier, Marshall expressed his belief that if it were not for the Manchuria Crisis and the hindrance of the KMT CEC, by the end of 1946, “a sizable liberal party” would have been “in existence.” Such “a balanced party,” Marshall continued, would ultimately become “the dominating party in China” and the KMT and the CCP would have been forced to join with it. Marshall further envisioned that such a party must draw in businessmen, recover the young intellectuals from the CCP, and absorb the liberals now in the KMT. “Such a party has

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., 486-487.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid., 145.

been my hope,” Marshall added, “I even have considered lending support to such a liberal movement.”⁴⁷¹

Marshall did make efforts to achieve a coalition of the minority parties in mid December, as he told Li Weikuo, a senior Nationalist General on December 23. He stressed to Li the necessity for incorporating “the liberal progressive elements into a single patriotic party.” According to the minutes of their conversation, Marshall had suggested to third force groups that they elect representatives to form a steering committee which would be controlled by trusted, respected selfless non-party men, such as Hu Shi, President of the Beijing University, Hu Lin, Editor of the liberal newspaper *Ta Kung pao*, and perhaps, Mo The-hui.⁴⁷² Marshall had high expectations of Hu Lin. As early as October 22, Marshall expressed his hope to Hu that the third force could be united under the leadership of Hu and other non-party men of high standing in China. He especially hoped that Hu could “break down the particular theme of propaganda through judicious application and treatment of this subject in his paper.”⁴⁷³ Hu, on his part, in the words of Li Weikuo, hoped for a split in the KMT and would be willing to join the liberal faction of the KMT if Chiang Kai-shek permitted this faction to operate openly within the party.⁴⁷⁴

October 1946 marked the climax of the third force’s political career. Even in the heyday of the PCC, it did not receive as much attention as now. Why? In the words of

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 160.

⁴⁷² Ibid., 465, 466.

⁴⁷³ Ibid., 300-301.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 466.

Marshall, the third force was then “in a position to wield what amounts to a power. Whichever way they throw their weight is bound to affect any political settlement.”⁴⁷⁵

Marshall’s observation was true. Without the participation of the third force, either the National Assembly or the reorganized government would be viewed by the United States as continuously ruled by the KMT. Both the government and the Chinese Communists were aware of this simple fact. Hence, whether or not to submit its list of delegates to the National Assembly and the State Council became a question that carried real power for the third force. It was because of this power that the third force was able to serve as a middleman in Marshall’s stead rather than a messenger as in April and May.

Third force members welcomed this formidable task. They held countless meetings among themselves, trying to find a proposal acceptable to both sides. They met with representatives of the government and the CCP, endeavoring to persuade them to make a compromise. When a renewed military campaign on the part of the government put the negotiations in danger of breaking down altogether, they managed to persuade Chou En-lai to return to Nanjing, which led to new hope and a new round of talks. When all their efforts to bring about a peaceful settlement finally proved completely futile in face of the intransigence of the two armed parties, they put their last hope in the Constitution, hoping it would establish the basis for a democratic government. They revised the Draft Constitution of 1936 and tried hard to get the revised constitution to be passed by the National Assembly.⁴⁷⁶

In all these efforts to bring peace and democracy to China, third force members did not rely merely on themselves. Though it was the wish of some leaders, such as

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., 283.

Carsun Chang, that Chinese should settle their internal affairs for themselves instead of depending on a foreigner,⁴⁷⁷ the third force mediators continued to seek Marshall's encouragement, advice, and help. Many times they went to Marshall, asking him to exert influence on Chiang to stop his military campaign and make a political compromise in exchange for the CCP's concession on the problem of naming delegations to the National Assembly. Several times, they invited Marshall to their conferences in Shanghai, which they thought would generate better chances for success. When the negotiations reached an impasse, the third force requested Marshall to resume his role as a mediator. To make sure that Chiang would maintain goodwill at the National Assembly, they once again turned to Marshall for his help. On constitutional and other issues regarding political reformation, they also consulted Marshall. For example, Carsun Chang sent Marshall an English copy of the modified Constitution for his advice on August 10.⁴⁷⁸ He also discussed with Marshall the three things that he thought must be settled before the reorganization of the Executive Yuan.⁴⁷⁹

For all intents and purposes, the third force's cooperation with Marshall was genuine and sincere. But this does not mean the third force would cooperate with the Americans all the time under any conditions. When US policy was not in its best interest, the third force fiercely protested it, as we can see from the Democratic League's late-September and early-October attacks on the Five-Man Committee and even General Marshall himself. Third force groups, especially the DL, were unwilling to allow the committee to work out a political solution without consulting them. They already had no

⁴⁷⁶ USDS, *CWP*, 214.

⁴⁷⁷ Jeans, "Last Chance for Peace," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 322.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 299.

say in military matters, so how could they withdraw from the political arena, the only scene where they had the possibility of getting power even if that possibility was small?

⁴⁷⁹ USDS, "RMM," Roll 16, frame 241.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

On November 19, Chou En-lai left Nanjing for Yen-an, thus ending the year-long negotiations between the National Government and the Chinese Communist Party.⁴⁸⁰ On December 4, Chou sent Marshall the CCP's terms for the resumption of negotiations: "the dissolution of the National Assembly" and "the restoration of the troop positions held as of January 13." Chou's message did not answer Marshall's question on November 12 as to whether the CCP still desired Marshall to continue his mediation. By presenting conditions that were obviously unacceptable to the government and making no reply to Marshall's question of the CCP's openness to his mediation efforts, the CCP in effect rejected the continuation of American mediation.⁴⁸¹ On January 7, 1947, Marshall left China for Washington, terminating his mission that had begun in December 1945.⁴⁸²

The whole process of Marshall's mission can be divided into four phases. Phase one lasted from December 21, 1945 to March 11, 1946 when Marshall returned to Washington to report on his work and seek aid for China. Of the four phases, this period represented the greatest achievements and success for the American mediators and the third force. The agreement on the cessation of hostilities on January 10, the five PCC resolutions passed on January 31, and the agreement on army reorganization and

⁴⁸⁰ USDS, *CWP*, 209.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 212.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*, 219. On the same day, Truman announced the nomination of Marshall as Secretary of State.

redisposition of February 25 exceeded any concessions Chiang had ever made, and they set the theoretical basis in China for a constitutional government and a united national army. The essential point was how well the government and the CCP adhered to them in the days to come.

Nevertheless, these agreements and resolutions contained seeds of future conflict. The cessation of hostilities agreement, by permitting the government to enter and move within Manchuria, left open the possibility of future clashes between the KMT and CCP troops in this area.⁴⁸³ In fact, fighting broke out in Manchuria the very next day after the cease-fire order was executed.⁴⁸⁴ The PCC Resolutions, though stipulating steps and measures to reorganize the existing government into a constitutional government, depended on the operation of the State Council as the real guarantee of the plan's execution.⁴⁸⁵ However, controversy over the allocation of the twenty seats among the non-KMT delegates ultimately destroyed the plan and pushed China toward civil conflict.⁴⁸⁶ In addition, though the Agreement of February 25 established the basis for army reorganization and redistribution, the CCP refused to submit the required list of army units, arguing that the Nationalist army was on the offensive in Manchuria and the government had no sincere intention of carrying out the PCC Resolutions.

These subsequent events undermined these early achievements. The fighting over Manchuria in phase two (March-June 30) resulted in the postponement of the National Assembly, which was scheduled to convene on May 5. It also led to the adjournment of the PCC Steering Meeting, and the suspension of the work of revising the constitution. Though

⁴⁸³ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 359.

⁴⁸⁴ Furuya, *Chiang Kai-shek*, 862.

⁴⁸⁵ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 327.

fighting stopped in Manchuria in early June, no agreements regarding the issue of local government and army redispotion in the Northeast were signed. Without such agreements, the general problem of government reorganization and the establishment of a constitutional government in China could not be settled.⁴⁸⁷

The third phase (July, August, and September) could be characterized by stalemate in political negotiations coupled with escalating military conflicts. This phase also saw the violent attacks on the American China policy by the CCP as well as the Democratic League. The Americans tried to approach the problem of stopping the fighting from a political angle. They suggested discussing the reorganization of the State Council, which would settle the problem of local government in China—another major obstacle in the negotiations. Their efforts were bogged down in the KMT-CCP controversy over whether priority be given to the political or military settlement.

In face of the protracted “series of accusations and counter-accusation, of proposals and counter-proposals” between the two parties without any agreement,⁴⁸⁸ frustrated by the overwhelming distrust of the two sides toward the intentions of the other, and attacked by the CCP who perceived him to be biased toward the Nationalists, General Marshall withdrew from the formal mediation in early October after the CCP rejected the government’s truce proposal over Zhangjiakou. In the last phase of his mission, Marshall remained in the background and the third force took his place instead as a middleman. The controversy then centered on the nomination of delegates to the National Assembly. The CCP and the third force called the convening of the Assembly on November 12 and again

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid., 328.

⁴⁸⁷ USDS, *CWP*, 148.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., 188.

on November 15 illegal on the ground that the date was not decided among all interested parties as agreed in April. The CCP demanded the postponement of the Assembly and refused to nominate its delegates unless the government ordered an unconditional cease-fire. The third force split over the issue of participating in the Assembly. Finally, with the National Assembly opening on November 15, with only the KMT and part of the third force as participants, the KMT-CCP negotiations actually came to a complete halt. Marshall stayed in China for one more month, hoping his presence would facilitate the adoption of a genuine democratic constitution.⁴⁸⁹ The third force, on the one hand, managed to have the Assembly adopt a constitution as outlined in the PCC resolutions; on the other hand, it fell apart and became too weak to affect future situations.⁴⁹⁰

In retrospect, the interactions between Marshall and the third force throughout the mission intensified as the negotiations went on, except in the summer, when their direct contacts were very few. Before arriving in China, Marshall had already known of the existence of a third force in China which advocated democratizing Chinese politics along the lines of Anglo-American models. It was expected that Marshall would get in close touch with these vanguards of the Chinese democratic movement in his mission to help bring “peace, unity, and democracy” to China, because the ideology of the third force was much closer to that of the United States than that of the two autocratic parties.

However, in the first two months of his mission, Marshall did not pay much attention to the third force, though he did receive its representatives shortly after his arrival in China. The contacts between Marshall and third force members in the first phase were minimal. This was because the situation was relatively simple at that stage. No fighting

⁴⁸⁹ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 4, frame 487.

was going on; military and political issues were generally separated. While Marshall concentrated on the cease-fire and army reorganization and redistribution, the third force had its hands full with political issues. In the military arena, the third force had no army to be reorganized, nor did it have military knowledge to help Marshall, who, for his part, did not want to involve himself in the internal political matters of China. Nor did the third force need much help in setting up democratic principles, which had been its demand for years.

As the situation in China got more and more complicated, with political concerns entangling with military issues, contacts between the third force and Marshall intensified. Marshall attached increasing importance to the mediation efforts of the third force. For example, right after his return to China on April 18, he took the initiative to invite Carsun Chang for a talk about the settlement of the fighting over Changchun. During their discussions, Marshall even proposed that a non-partisan be appointed to be the Mayor of Changchun.⁴⁹¹ During the second phase, Marshall often used the third force to convey messages to the CCP. More important, he asked members of the DL, especially Lo Lungchi and Carsun Chang, to persuade Chou En-lai to make a concession on the issue of giving the American members the deciding vote in the EH and the field teams. Because the DL had good and close relations with the CCP, it was easier for League members to obtain the CCP's agreement on granting the Americans the final authority. In fact, Lo and Chang succeeded in this objective.

The summer of 1946 saw the relations between Marshall and the third force reaching the lowest point as a result of the American suggestion of establishing a Five-Man-Committee, which, without the representation of the third force, was to settle the issue of

⁴⁹⁰ USDS, *CWP*, 214; Jeans, "Last Chance for Peace," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed. Bland, 323.

government reorganization. This move on the part of Marshall and Stuart showed their doubt that the third force was an influential political entity, whereas the third force's strong reaction to it demonstrated that, though it was eager to get American help for its democratic course, it did not lose its independence, and was ready to protect its interests even at the risk of provoking the United States.

The interactions of Marshall and the third force rose to a historical peak in the closing months of Marshall's mission. Feeling impotent in face of the complicated situation in which political and military issues could not be separated from each other, Marshall now rested his hopes for peace on the third force. He did whatever he could to strengthen the mediation team. He conferred with Chiang and Chou to emphasize the importance of the third force. He built up its morale whenever its members were discouraged by the hopeless situation. He gave detailed suggestions as to its proposals and measures for political reformation. At the request of the third force, he exerted his influence to smooth the way for negotiations. Even when the efforts of the third force at mediation turned out unsuccessful, he continued to encourage third force members to unite in their efforts to build a peaceful and democratic China.

Encouraging the unity of the third force was a persistent theme in the conversations between Marshall and third force members. Throughout his mission, he tried to persuade the various groups of the third force to make genuine sacrifices in order to serve as a buffer between the KMT and the CCP. Toward the end of his mission, he went further in encouraging the formation of a liberal party that would incorporate liberal elements from all factions. "A truly liberal party is China's best hope," Marshall told Li Weiguo on

⁴⁹¹ Chang, *Third Force*, 175.

December 23.⁴⁹² But he felt that such an idea was impossible without the support of the Generalissimo. Therefore, he suggested that Chiang “father a coalition of the minority groups into a liberal party.”⁴⁹³ Marshall even pictured the preliminary step for the formation of such a liberal party on December 31 in a conversation with Sun Tan-lin, former Minister of Interior and a strict non-partisan.⁴⁹⁴ He suggested that first non-partisans should elect representatives to form “a strong third party steering group,” which would absorb two liberal members from every minor party. This small organization, Marshall envisioned, “would have a very simple platform...and should gradually knit together all of the liberal elements in China into an effective force.”⁴⁹⁵

However, Marshall’s hope for a united liberal party in China was never realized. As Jeans puts it, “it would be too much to expect that, with one element of the TPG siding with the government, while the other found itself at the same side of the fence as the CCP, the unity of ...the major force of the TPG, could long survive.”⁴⁹⁶ For sure, there was just no middle road in China that the third force could take, as its leader Carsun Chang later observed in his memoirs. The third force further collapsed as the civil war went on in China. Some of the members joined the government, some served the Communists, some returned to their academic posts, and others came to the United States.⁴⁹⁷ Never again did they come to the center of Chinese politics as they did in October 1946.

⁴⁹² USDS, “RMM,” Roll 4, frame 465.

⁴⁹³ USDS, *CWP*, 216.

⁴⁹⁴ USDS, “RMM,” Roll 4, frame 448.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 449.

⁴⁹⁶ Jeans, “Last Chance for Peace,” in *Marshall’s Mission*, ed., Bland, 321. “TPG” is abbreviation for “third party group.”

⁴⁹⁷ Guo Xixiao, “The Climax of Sino-American Relations 1944-1947” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Georgia, 1997), 212.

Putting aside Marshall's hope for the third force, how did the third force view Marshall and the United States behind him? The third force had always believed that the United States was the greatest force that could influence Chiang Kai-shek to initiate needed reforms in the government. Even before Marshall's mission, the third force had repeatedly approached American diplomats in China, trying to get the support of the US government for its democratic movement. When Truman announced the dispatch of Marshall to China, the third force extended the most sincere and enthusiastic welcome to the General and his mediation mission. Many times throughout the mission, third force members emphasized the influence of Marshall and his government in making Chiang stop military offensives and democratize Chinese politics, as we can see from their articles in newspapers and their conversations with American journalists and diplomatic officials, or even with Marshall himself. Even when Marshall and Stuart disappointed them by excluding them from the discussion of government reorganization, they still held open the possibility for future cooperation with the United States.

As we look back on the whole mission, no matter how hard they tried, third force groups actually could not have much effect on the fate of the Marshall mission. Though in October they generated the "last hope for peace" because of their key role in deciding whether or not to participate in the National Assembly, their peace proposals were finally rejected. During 1946 they aroused public opinion by demanding civil liberty through their publications and lectures, but in vain, as all their efforts proved ineffective before guns and armaments. Although Marshall and other Americans had sympathy and respect for them,

this respect and praise could not automatically force either the government or the CCP to make compromises.⁴⁹⁸

Even if the mediation efforts of the third force had not fallen victim to the conflict between the two big parties, could it have won? The answer is no. As mentioned several times before, the third force was just a coalition of intellectuals, professors, businessmen, and industrialists, lacking mass support from workers or peasants. It also had no military bases or armies as did the Communists, and thus existed only at the pleasure of the government.⁴⁹⁹ In addition, third force members were, in Jeans' words, "poor politicians."⁵⁰⁰ Most of them were professors, lacking real experience in politics. They were poor organizers, not skilled in manipulating propaganda to recruit supporters. More important, they could not unite among themselves. There were competition between individuals and, more seriously, between different parties and groups for leadership.⁵⁰¹ What would China look like now if, as Marshall had hoped, minority parties had banded together "into a single, liberal, and patriotic organization devoted to the welfare of the people of China and not to the selfish interests of party members?"⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁸ Jeans, "Last Chance for Peace," in *Marshall's Mission*, ed., Bland, 325.

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 323.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 324.

⁵⁰¹ Shaheen, "Democratic League," 239-246..

⁵⁰² USDS, "RMM," Roll 4, frame 486.

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