

## Lesson 18

### Questions for the Lesson/What you need to know in this lesson:

What was the policies of KMT and CCP during the war period, 1937-18945?

Why was the Second United Front formed and why did it fail, just like the first United Front?

In what ways and to what extent was the Sino-Japanese War a turning point for the KMT and the CCP?

### IB Questions

#### Policies and Tactics during WWII

1. Compare and contrast the policies and tactics of the Guomindang (Kuomintang) and the Chinese Communist Party during the Sino-Japanese War (1937 – 1945). (N05, Q17)

#### Development and survival of the Chinese Communist Party between 1936-1945

2. The 2<sup>nd</sup> United Front (1936-1945) was responsible for the survival of the Chinese Communist Party.' To what extent do you agree with this statement? (M15)

#### Effectiveness of the Second United Front

1. "The United Front between the Chinese Communist Party and the Guomindang (Kuomintang) formed after the Xian (Sian) Incident in 1936, was never likely to last." How far do you agree with this statement? (M06, Q15)
3. "The main reason why the Guomindang (Kuomintang) lost the Chinese Civil War (1946–1949) to the Communists was that they were exhausted after fighting the Japanese in the Sino–Japanese War (1937–1945)." To what extent do you agree with this statement? (M12)
4. How significant was the Japanese invasion and occupation of China from 1931 to 1945 in ensuring the ultimate victory of the Communists in 1949? (N13)

## **The Sino-Japanese War, 1935-45**

### **A. Overview**

The prospect of a China united against foreign aggression worried the Japanese militarists and extremists, who feared for the future of their expansion policy on the continent. Barely half a year after the Sian incident and the adoption of the United Front policy in China, the Kwantung army officers manufactured an incident at the Marco Polo Bridge on 7 July 1937, precipitating a clash with the Chinese garrison.

The Japanese had wanted a short war to conquer North China. However, once hostilities began and all hope for a peaceful settlement had faded, the Chinese government became fiercely determined to fight for its survival to the bitter end. Due to the Second United Front too, China was in no mood for further concessions to Japan and the war thus turned out to be a long war of attrition that lasted till 1945.

This Second Sino-Japanese War in less than half a century produced serious and far-reaching repercussions in both countries: it led to the defeat of Japan for the first time in its modern history and thoroughly exhausted the Nationalist government in China, while giving the Communists a chance to expand their army and party in preparation for the ultimate seizure of power.

### **B. Brief Account of the Second Sino-Japanese War**

Invoking the Boxer Protocol of 1901 which permitted foreign signatories to station troops between Peking (Peiping) and the sea, the Japanese garrison in North China in early July 1937 held a field exercise outside Peiping, near the Marco Polo Bridge. On the pretext that a Japanese soldier was missing, the Japanese demanded to enter the nearby city of Wanping before midnight of July 7 to conduct a search. When refused by the local Chinese garrison - the 29<sup>th</sup> Army under General Sung Chy-yuan – the Japanese army bombarded the city and occupied it on the morning of July 8, thus precipitating an undeclared war between the two countries.

Once hostilities began, Japanese reinforcements from Manchuria and the home islands poured into North China, occupying all the strategic points outside Peiping. Obviously, the Marco Polo Bridge incident was but the beginning of a much larger design of invading North China. The Nanking government, having committed itself to the United Front against the Japanese aggression, was determined to fight. The war resistance that was delayed since 1931, finally assumed coherence and meaning. The Chinese people and the various parties – the KMT, the CCP, the Youth, etc – all enthusiastically pledged their support of the war.

Japan wanted a quick victory to seize North China and force Nanking into an economic cooperation. Disparaging China's ability and will to wage a full-fledged war, the Japanese military allowed 3 months to conclude the China affair. The modernized army proved more than a match for the Chinese. Having inflicted heavy losses on the 29<sup>th</sup> Army, the Japanese were poised to attack Peiping in late July. The Nationalists

decided to spare damage to the city of ancient treasure and culture and ordered evacuation on July 28. Two days later Tientsin also fell.

On August 13 the Japanese opened a second front in Shanghai, the financial centre of the nation, to destroy China's economic capacity for war. There, unexpectedly, Chiang threw in some of his best German-trained troops – the 87<sup>th</sup> and 88<sup>th</sup> divisions – which succeeded brilliantly in stalling the enemy advance for 3 months. But the Japanese still achieved a victory there and this left road to Nanking wide open and the Japanese swiftly advanced to the gate of the Chinese capital.

Chiang moved his capital to Chungking, Szechuan, where the rugged terrain, the precipitous gorges, and the rapid currents in the narrowing Yangtze would make it all but impossible for the enemy to penetrate. Chiang himself, as commander-in-chief remained in Wuhan to direct military operations, while schools, factories and other establishments were encouraged to migrate inwards. The southwest became a new base of resistance which dashed the Japanese dream of a quick settlement.

The fall of Nanking was followed by the indiscriminate massacre of approximately 100000 civilians, accompanied by innumerable cases of molestation of women. It was notorious and came to be known as the The Rape of Nanking.

After their conquest of Nanking, the main Japanese forces moved northward toward the important communication junction of Hsuechow, 1938. There they faced heroic resistance by Chinese forces and was a major success for the Chinese since the fall of Nanking but ultimately Hsuechow had to be evacuated and in June 1938, the Chinese broke the Yellow River dikes to slow the enemy advance.

The next battle was at Wuhan, where Chiang had established his headquarters. Wuhan too was finally relinquished in Dec 1938 and coupled with the loss of Canton in Oct, some of the unfirm Nationalist leaders fell to despair and despondency but Chiang carried on the fight as he had pledged. The fall of Wuhan marked the end of the first phase of the war. **During this time, the Chinese traded space for time and enticed the enemy deep into the hinterland. The Japanese army was mired deep in the abdomen of China from which it could not extricate.**

International sanctions were slow in coming, for Europe itself was threatened by Nazism and Fascism, and the US still clung to its neutrality. Yet, in spite of everything, the Japanese could not quickly win the war. Tokyo finally resigned itself to a stalemate. It adopted the policy of living off the conquered land with the help of puppet governments. In Oct 1937, a Mongolian Autonomous Government was created and another puppet provisional government was established in Peiping and a third in 1938 was set up at Nanking.

### C. The Nationalist Program of Resistance and Reconstruction

**During the years of the war, a number of important developments took place within the KMT and the government.** Of great significance was the convocation at Wuhan of the **KMT Provisional National Congress in April 1938** and its adoption of four major resolutions. Following the KMT Congress, **a People's Political Council was organized, comprised of members of all political persuasions including Mao and a number of other Communist leaders.** Its inaugural meeting convened at Wuhan between July 7 and 15, 1938, was **attended by 162 delegates who staunchly pledged that all Chinese, regardless of parties, religions, creeds and professions, were committed to supporting the war until the final victory was won.**

**The country was united in the struggle against Japan, yet behind the brave façade of national solidarity were critical cleavages and the seeds of discord, especially with regard to the question of the Communist Party.**

### D. The United Front

#### The Xian Incident, 1936

During the latter half of 1935, Comintern adopted a resolution urging the various national Communist parties to form alliance with leftist and anti-Fascist groups against the threat of these avowed enemies of Bolshevism and Marxism. Beginning in 1936, the CCP started to promote collaboration with all parties, groups and armies in a grand alliance against Japan as a United Front would have added benefit of relieving the Communists of Nationalists.

The Nanking government had decided on a policy of domestic consolidation before an external war. With the Communist pushed into a pocket in the Northwest, Chiang was anxious to finish them once and for all and ordered the Northeastern army and the Northwestern army to mount an offensive against the Communists. Homesick and weary of a civil war, the Northeastern officers and men became susceptible to the United Front propaganda. Communist agents became to infiltrate the Northeastern officers' training corps and commanders were won over to the United Front.

On Dec 3 Chiang flew to Sian, the headquarters of Chang and Yang, with a view to stabilize the restless situation and increasing the effectiveness of the campaign. There at daybreak on 12 Dec, a mutiny broke out engineered by the Northeastern 105<sup>th</sup> division and the second battalion of Chang's personal guard. With Chiang as his captive, he names his demands: reorganization of the Nanking government to include all the parties and groups responsible for the national salvation, release of political prisoners, protection of the people's right to assembly and faithful fulfilment of Dr Sun's will.

## Response from Moscow and CCP

Moscow condemned the kidnapping of Chiang as an attempt to frustrate Chiang's effort to unite the country and accused the kidnapper as a Japanese agent. Also there was a strong and unexpected public feeling in Chiang's favour, the degree of consternation expressed throughout China at his imprisonment, made it clear to the communists that to execute him would be politically disastrous. And any replacement of Chiang with more right-wing KMT members, they were even less likely to oppose the Japanese than he and so, in spite of Mao's resistance, the internationalist in CCP echoed Moscow's condemnation of the kidnap. **Thus we have the fact that the Second United Front which started the CCP on the road to national power, was created while the Party fumbled to take a decision. And Mao who was so brilliantly to exploit the opportunities of that United Front, was the man who has actually opposed it. The Maoist reaped the full advantages the situation offered – the expansion of Communist territory, the creation of a powerful Red Army and the end of the KMT's monopoly of political power and legitimacy. (Jack Gray)**

**The arrangements of the new United Front took 9 months of negotiations, and might have taken longer and not the Japanese Kwantung army concentrated Chinese minds by launching its final decision of China on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1937.** By the following month Nanjing and the Soviet Union had signed a non-aggression pact. By Sept the United Front was confirmed.

### E. The United Front: Aims, Hopes of the different parties

In retrospect, the United Front seems inevitable. Chiang already prepared to resist Japan, could not depend on the Western powers for the military equipment, due to uncertainties and possibilities of war in Europe and neutrality policy of America, which he so desperately needed, and thus he could only turn to the Soviet Union. And this being so, the Communist party had virtually no choice but to accept Nanjing as the legitimate government of China and to cooperate with it.

#### (i) Aims, hopes and Policy of CCP with regards to the United Front

Shortly after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, the CCP issued on Sept 22, 1937 an appealing manifesto entitled "Together We Confront the National Crisis" to explain its position during the war. **In it, it was mentioned that the CCP will struggle to fulfil Dr Sun's three people's principle, that CCP will abolish the policy of sabotage and Sovietization which aims at the overthrow of the KMT government, and will stop the forcible confiscation of the holdings of landlords, the CCP will abolish all existing Soviets in favour of democratic government, so as to achieve unified political administration throughout the country and the CCP will abolish the name and insignia of the Red Army, which will be reorganized as the National Revolutionary Army and is to be subject to control by the government's Military Commission; it is ready to march forward and fight the Japanese at the front.**

## (ii) Aims, hopes and Policy of Chiang Kai-Shek and the KMT Party with regards to the United Front

Welcoming the Communist pledges, Chiang expressed the hope that the CCP would prove its sincerity through actual contribution to the war and the cause of the National Revolution. The 30000 man Red Army was reorganized as the 8<sup>th</sup> Route army – later renamed the 18<sup>th</sup> Route army – under the command of Chu Teh and P'eng Te-huai. The army was sent out to fight the Japanese in northern Shansi. Later in Dec 1937, Communist units south of the Yangtze were organized as the New Fourth Army under the command of Yeh T'ing and Hsiang Ying, with a strength of 10000 men. A further symbol of KMT-CCP rapprochement was the election of Mao and other Communists leaders to the newly created People's Political Council in 1938. Thus, once again the two parties collaborated.

## (iii) Aims of the Comintern

The CCP had resumed contact with the Comintern in late 1935. But Comintern influence had waned during the Jiangxi Soviet and disappeared in the Long March. When the communists remerged into world consciousness in the northwest, Stalin for one seems largely to have dismissed them as peasant bandits. The Comintern did encourage the CCP to think of a united front in the hope that a strong Chiang would discourage Japanese incursions into northern Asia.

## F. The United Front: Was it bound to fail?

### (i) The CCP policy towards the Nationalist and the United Front

Yet this alliance, like the earlier one of 1923-27, was ill-fated. **From the beginning the Communist regarded it as nothing more than a means to carry out the orders of the Comintern, to be freed from the Nationalist attacks and build up strength during the war.**

So that the United Front might be exploited to full advantage, **Mao mapped out a three-stage strategy:** first, to achieve a compromise with the KMT in order to safeguard the existence of the CCP, second to struggle for parity with the KMT, and third infiltrate into central China and build up a new base from which to launch a counter-attack and seize the supreme power of state. Lest any member of his party misunderstood these secret objectives, **Mao admonished the cadres that they should fully utilize this opportunity of the Japanese war for self-expansion. "Our fixed policy" he said, "should be 70% expansion, 20% dealing with KMT and 10% resisting Japan."** The cadres were asked to act accordingly if they lost contact with the party headquarters. Mao made it very clear that **temporary cooperation with the KMT was not a betrayal of one's principles, nor a surrender to the enemy, but a realistic way to heal the battle fatigue and preserve the revolutionary strength for the future.** He assured his followers that reorganizing the Red Army into a National Revolutionary army and substituting border governments for the Soviet regimes were

merely changes in form and not in substance. Collaboration with the KMT, in short, afforded the CCP a chance to recoup, to expand and initiate a new approach in place of the old one that had not proved very successful.

In light of these explanations, it is not hard to see why the communists concentrated on self-development and expansion, striving toward the goal of 'a million Red soldiers and a million party members.' In March 1939 the Communists created their own Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia border government, and later established the Shensi-Hopeh-Chahar-Suiyuan border government. Clashes between the Nationalist and Communist forces began to occur with increasing frequency.

The growing tension between the KMT and CCP was catalysed by rapidly shifting international alignments. The signing of the German-Soviet Non-aggression Pact in August 1939 – followed by the Japanese –Soviet Neutrality Pact in April 1941 – had removed the doctrinal basis and expediency of the United Front. Conflict between the KMT and CCP became more serious.

**The situation was particularly critical in western Shantung and in Kiangsu where the New Fourth was stationed. On Jan 5, 1941, a major clash took place between the New Fourth Army and the Nationalist 40<sup>th</sup> division, resulting in the government decision, on Jan 17, to disband the new Fourth army and to arrest its commander for court martial. The CCP simply appointed another commander and retaliated by increasing the strength of the New Fourth Army to seven divisions. The "New Fourth Army incident" all but destroyed the United Front, and Communist members of the People's Political Council refused to attend. Resumption of talks between the two parties took place in March 1943, only to break down again over Communists demands for legal status and military expansion to four armies of twelve divisions. By the end of 1943 the CCP negotiator, Chou En-lai, had left Chungking.**

**Throughout the rest of the war, the KMT-CCP conflict was never resolved. Although Chiang repeatedly announced that the Communist problem, being political in nature, should be resolved by political means, he sent a large body of his best troops to blockade the Communist areas in the Northwest, with the intention of using them in the event of a civil war following the Japanese war. On their part, the Communist ceaselessly expanded their military forces and popular organizations and carried out a number of far-reaching programs in their base areas in preparation for the future confrontation.**

## **(ii) The Nationalist policy towards CCP**

**The Nationalist government had at first allowed Communist political centres to be established in its territory, permitted the publication of the Communist New China Daily and created a People's Political Council representing all parties including the Communist Party. The Red Army received a share of the military supplies, pay for three divisions and a financial subsidy.**

**However, alarm at the expansion of their territorial bases came to a crisis in Shanxi where three new bases were created in the territory of Yan Xishan.** Yan fought back. The result of this and of similar developments elsewhere led the **Nationalist to stiffen their attitude.** The Wuhan communist headquarters was closed down and Communist influenced organizations were put under surveillance. Communist expansion nevertheless went on. The Red Army had grown far beyond the 45 000 men originally agreed with Chiang, and the Communist Fourth Army operating in east central China had become powerful south of the Yangzi although Chiang had expected it to operate only north of it.

**It was this penetration of the South which led to the final crisis of the United Front. Chiang became alarmed at the rapidity with which the New Fourth Army had expanded in the area which he was determined not to yield.** He agreed to recognize north China, except for Yan Xishan's Shanxi, as the communist sphere of influence if the New Fourth Army would move north of the Yangzi. This was agreed. The Communist was already moving out when their rear guard was attacked by KMT troops and defeated with heavy casualties. The two sides of the United Front were now at open enmity. The Nationalist subsidy was cut off. Some 200000 Nationalist troops blockaded the Communist base round Yen'an. Communist activities in the Nationalist areas were repressed and with them the liberals who protested at the repression.

**The withdrawal of subsidy and the blockade had drastic economic effects on the Communists areas.** The consequences of the Hundred Regiment Offensive brought retaliation from the Japanese. By a military counter-attacks backed up by indiscriminate terror against villages which had sheltered guerrillas, the Japanese reduced Communist territory from areas containing 45 million people to containing 25 million. **In the long-run the kill-all, burn-all, loot-all policy was counter-productive as it drove the population into the arms of the communist party and was the main factor in creating a Red Army of a million men by the end of the war.** In the short run, however it was highly effective in spite of the appalling poverty of the areas, their economies under the Communist administration had been viable. Communist administration had fed its people. It had maintained the army and the apparatus of the government with only minimal taxation. There had to be profound changes of policy to meet the crisis and it was out of these that Maoism was born.

### **G. Mao and CCP's Yen'an Experience**

**The Yen'an period of wartime resistance (1937-1945) provided Mao and the CCP with the much needed time to reconstruct the party and the army, organize the masses and develop new social, political and economic institutions.** Mao was at the peak of his creativity, ingeniously reconciling the universalist Marxists-Leninist principles with the particularist demand of Chinese conditions and the Chinese revolutionary experience. Hence, **the Yen'an experience was of seminal**

importance to the development of the Chinese Communism; in it was planted the seed of Mao's ultimate success.

**The heart of the Yen-an way was the perfection of the mass line and the sharpening of revolutionary nationalism in the countryside, which became the twin pillars of Maoism.** To be sure, these ideas were first developed during the Kiangsi/Jiangxi but they were precluded from full expression by repeated Nationalist from without and by incessant party squabble from within. The Moscow-trained Chinese Communists such as Li Li-san, opposed Mao's policies and advocated the urban-oriented Soviet model of proletarian revolution. **Now, able to carry out his own strategy and develop his own work style that was to become the benchmark of Chinese Communism.**

In accordance with his mass line approach, **Mao vigorously addressed himself to the needs of the peasants, carried out land reforms and rent reduction programs, and brought the peasants into full participation in the political, economic and military organizations in the base areas.** Indeed, the poverty of Shensi and the border areas stimulated rather than impeded the birth of 'peasant radicalism' and the Japanese war gave new impetus to revolutionary nationalism. The Yen-an period was therefore one of growth and preparation for the ultimate seizure of power. **The party learned how to govern in those years, following policies of economic self-sufficiency, administrative discipline, and mass mobilization (but not radical land reform).**

## (i) Political policies and its Impact on CCP and KMT

CCP and its Policies	KMT and its Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To activate the inexperienced peasantry, Mao created the poor-peasant corps and the farm labour-union under the hsiang level and encouraged them to participate actively in land confiscation and redistribution movements.</li> <li><b>The direct involvement of the peasantry in the process of mass socio-political mobilization against the endemic problems of rural poverty and oppression not only sharpened their class consciousness but also forced them to shed their traditional timidity.</b></li> <li>Moreover during 1937-1941 all peasants who were 16 or older were drawn into the mainstream of political activities in the border areas through the institution of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot. This effort was to ensure that all could transcend limitations of class, experience and ideology to act actively in building a new China.</li> <li>Mao also formulated the 'Three-thirds system', which limited party-member participation in government and councils of the base areas to one-third, leaving the other two-thirds to progressive leftists and independents.</li> <li><b>On the surface at least, these United Front policies gave the border areas a democratic overtone.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Democratic criticisms of Chiang's autocratic ways continued as before the war.</b></li> <li>At the beginning of the war, Chiang tried to become head of a united Chinese war effort, encouraging minor parties to re-establish themselves and of course recognizing the CCP. <b>In effect, the freedoms of speech, assembly and the press briefly returned.</b></li> <li><b>However, Chiang never trusted popular mobilization, even in war and Chongqing soon moved against the minor parties and dissent.</b></li> <li>Kunming's Southwest Associated University was formed out of Beijing, Qinghua and Nankai Universities, and became a centre for criticism of the regime. In all, some 52 educational institutions had fled into this interior, while another 25 uprooted themselves to Hong Kong or the foreign concessions.</li> <li>Ironically, even with the defacto breakdown of the United Front in 1941, Communists in Chongqing were protected by like foreign diplomats, but other critics of the KMT were subject to arrest and assassination.</li> <li>The promise of an American victory over Japan freed Chiang of the need to placate his opposition.</li> </ul>

**Consensus Building:** Though the Nationalist/Chiang were condemned for denying democratic rights to the Chinese people, it should be noted that the Communists in their own areas claimed the same one party-control as Chiang sought to assert in his. The only difference was that the communists did so with an effectiveness which concealed their failings while the failings of the Nationalist government were public knowledge (Jack Gray)

**(ii) Economic policies and its Impact on CCP and KMT**

CCP and its Policies	KMT and its Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Party adopted following policies of economic self-sufficiency but not radical land reform.</li> <li>• It understood that radical land reforms would have scared off educated persons most capable of assuming administrative responsibilities</li> <li>• But communists' policies did include tax reform, interest reduction on loans, and rent reduction. <b>Tax reform and interest reduction were particularly important in improving the positions of the poorer peasants.</b></li> <li>• <b>Honest collection of taxes and the imposition of progressive tax systems acted, modestly, to transfer wealth from the wealthier segments of the rural society.</b> Rural China had long suffered from lack of credit, and interest rates were often exorbitant and costing many families their land. Hence reductions in interest payments also helped the poorest families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the KMT government at Chongqing, the problems was how to find the economic resources to conduct any kind of war at all.</li> <li>• <b>Chongqing was able to take control over much of the southwestern economy, such as it was.</b></li> <li>• In 1941 it reclaimed the land tax, long lost to provincial or lower-level governments.</li> <li>• <b>State monopolies were established</b> in tobacco, sugar, salt and matches. <b>The state took over all mines and freely commandeered factories for war production.</b></li> <li>• <b>Grains were seized from the peasants, budget deficit were partially financed by forced bond sales and price controls were tried to slow down inflation.</b></li> <li>• <b>In the economic spheres, for all its inefficiencies, the earlier Nanjing regime at least had been farsighted enough to begin</b></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CCP also encouraged industry i.e non-farming enterprises such as handicrafts, brickmaking and manufacturing of rope and weaving cloth. In sum these policies benefitted the poor without much punishing the rich. The number of independent owner-cultivation increased and the society became more stable.</li> </ul>	<p><b>building industrial enterprises deep in the interior by the mid-1930s.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunan, Jiangxi, and Sichuan were blessed with state-owned steel, heavy machinery and electrical equipment factories.</li> <li>But the factories in Hunan and Jiangxi were vulnerable to Japanese bombing.</li> <li>Also, the industrialization of Chongqing remained backward, but in the first years of the war over 600 private factories were relocated to the southwest region and some 42000 skilled and semi-skilled workers followed.</li> <li>This was less than 6% of Shanghai's factories <b>but nonetheless was critical to Chongqing.</b> Tons of equipment were loaded onto junks as the bullets were flying in Shanghai in summer of 1937.</li> <li>Half of Shanghai's industries were destroyed in the first two years of the war; up to 80% in the Nanjing region.</li> <li>However, since China had been then still largely a pre-industrial nation on the whole, the loss of urban industry thus mattered less than otherwise have been the case.</li> <li><b>Not all of these policies were successful, and many of them had disastrous long-term consequences. But they illustrate the degree to which Chongqing</b></li> </ul>
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	<p><b>became involved in economic planning and management.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic planning became Chongqing's largest bureaucracies, expanding as the war continued. The hands-on training given <b>to</b> thousands of economic officials during the war aided the economic growth of Taiwan under the KMT in the post-civil war years and perhaps contributed to Maoist development policies. The world's largest dam, the Yangzi Three Gorges project, which was only started in the last years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, had its roots in the Nationalists' economic planning for post-war development.</li> <li>• Inflation ran at 230 percent a year from 1942 to 1945 in Nationalist territories. <b>This was a major problem, since key KMT supporters – army, officers, bureaucrats, teachers were especially vulnerable to inflation. The rate in Japanese occupied east China was even higher.</b></li> <li>• <b>But it is not clear what choice the government had. It had to pay for the military and new infrastructure like roads, railroads and industry. It lost its old revenues and so 75% of government wartime expenditures were met by printing money. (Jack Gray)</b></li> <li>• <b>Chongqing moved to collect land taxes in kind, which had its advantages.</b> It gave the government instant access to food for its soldiers and lessened its needs to print money. But it also prevented grains</li> </ul>
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	<p>from reaching the markets, which further contributed to price pressures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Unemployment rose as Japanese bombing destroyed mines and factories. Property losses in the war totalled US\$100 billion. Famines in the countryside were unchecked by any significant relief efforts. Farming suffered as something like 6 million peasant boys were conscripted along with livestock and carts.</b></li> <li>• By the end of the war, 72% of shipping and 96% of railroads were damaged. Mines were flooded or looted. As the war continued, resentment at the war profiteers only increased.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Consensus Building:</b></p> <p><b>The Communist rural policies such as policies of rent reduction, accompanied by low and equitable taxation and by participation in a system of elected government, was radical changes, and appealed to the rural society, considering the failure of the Nationalist Party to deliver much.(Jack Gray)</b></p> <p><b>The contrast with the sober good order and honest efficiency of the Communist areas became even more apparent. As Chinese protest grew, Nationalist repression grew in response. As repression grew, China's liberal elements turned to the Communists as the only hope of reform.</b> The repression was redoubled; government became as arbitrary as it was corrupt.</p>	

## (iii) Military policies and its Impact on CCP and KMT

CCP and its Policies	KMT and its Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Second United Front meant that the GMD would allow the CCP to build its base areas in the north unimpeded and even grant it financial support, but this remained an uneasy coalition.</li> <li>• The CCP, headquartered in Yanan far to the northwest, was isolated but in the early years of the war the Communists organized a vast military apparatus ranging from small guerrilla bands operating behind Japanese lines to large armies capable of positional warfare.</li> <li>• The communists organized peasants behind the Japanese lines and staged persistent guerrilla attacks to keep Japanese forces off balance.</li> <li>• During the war, the CCP grew to 1.2 million members and the Communists armies grew to almost a million soldiers</li> <li>• But the Japanese had neither the means nor the desire to establish power throughout the rural areas where the Communists were established. There areas were subjected only to occasional attacks. The 8<sup>th</sup> Route Army participated in opposing the first Japanese attacks in the north. Thereafter, the Japanese largely ignored them and left rural China mainly to Chinese puppet troops.</li> <li>• Only once in 1940 did the Red Army launch a major attack on the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Nationalist retreated to the southwest and the Communists to the northwest, and these regions became the bases from which to launch challenges to Japanese power.</li> <li>• Chiang's troops resisted the Japanese onslaught in a number of extremely bloody battles, but by 1939 they had retreated to Sichuan, thousands of miles up the Yangzi River. There, Chiang attempted to wait out the war, preserving his military strength until the US should enter the war and defeat Japan.</li> <li>• The heroic and dogged, if sometimes incompetent, resistance of Nationalist troops against the Japanese in the first year of the war literally cost Chiang most of his best troops. After 1938, his strategy was to retreat and wait: trading space for time. Giving up territory for time to build up strength was the only choice, although the long years isolated in Chongqing were hard on the KMT.</li> <li>• For all the bravery of the Nationalist troops, especially during the Shanghai fighting, the fact remains that Chiang also never consistently entrusted command to his best generals. Cai Tingkai, who had led the successful Chinese resistance to Japan in Shanghai during the 1932 fighting, was never given command again. Chiang</li> </ul>

<p>Japanese and it brought down such retribution on their heads that they did not repeat it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 1942, KMT and CCP armies had clashed on a number of occasions. After 1942, the CCP too ceased large-scale conventional operations against the Japanese as they too waited for Japan to collapse under US pressure.</li> <li>Yet by their guerrilla activities they appeared to be winning back Chinese territory. However, the CCP military organization was in the long run less important than the reorganization of local society on which it rested.</li> </ul>	<p>trained as a military men, served as a commander-in-chief and not a field commander. Yet Chiang feared rivals so much that he constantly replaced capable subordinates with mediocre and incompetent sycophants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chiang sometimes did interfere with battles when they were in progress, with disastrous results. He was known for countermanding his own staff and telephoning detailed orders directly to commanders in the midst of a battle. Even if Chiang understood military strategy, no one can direct a battle from hundreds of miles away.</li> <li>In addition, Chiang had to use his troops to defend territories from both local rivals, the Communists, and the Japanese. With US in the war, Chiang wanted to preserve his best troops for the future struggle with the CCP. Chiang's was a defensive strategy, including an economic blockade against the CCP bases.</li> <li>The rapid success of the Japanese was also due to the Chinese unpreparedness of the Chinese. No plans had been made to ambush Japanese troops as they made use of China's few north-south railroad lines. Even as Chinese armies retreated south, a few attacks on vulnerable points would have dramatically slowed the Japanese advance.</li> <li>Although individual cities were sometimes defended with great</li> </ul>
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	<p>valour, by and large Chinese troops were simply routed. Also, <b>there is no doubt of Japan's vast advantages over the Chinese in terms of guns and ammunition, planes and battleships, transport vehicles and tanks.</b> In 1935, China had only 457 pieces of artillery in its entire army.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conscripts were sometimes deprived of their clothing at night so that they could not sneak away. Food rations, stolen by senior officers, were inadequate and men had to sometimes drink from the puddles on the road. There was also little treatment available for wounded men and units could easily lose over half of their soldiers to disease and desertion. It is generally agreed that due to official malfeasance, over a million Nationalist troops died of disease and malnutrition during the Sino-Japanese War. Chinese leaders, including Chiang, were aware of these problems, but little could be done</li> <li>• <b>In the early years of the Sino-Japanese War the GMD received small amounts of aid from Russia and the US.</b> Stalin supported Chiang as the best way of keeping the Japanese too busy to mount another attack on eastern Siberia. Several thousand Soviet advisers helped to improve China's combat ability, and Russia sent several hundred warplanes to China as well.</li> <li>• The US proffered a series of loans to Chongqing in the \$25-\$50 million dollar range. This was not much compared to the governments'</li> </ul>
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	<p>needs; the Chinese currency slipped and as Chongqing printed money, inflation ensued.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chiang understood that more aid might be forthcoming if he could continue to hold out against the Japanese drew admiration in the West. Eventually, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, the US responded with war and increased its aid to Chongqing. China's trade of space for time was finally rewarded</li> <li>• <b>Overall, the long stalemate weakened the Nationalist armies in several ways.</b> First ongoing fighting eliminated many competent men, especially the junior and non-commissioned officers that form an army's backbone. Second, Chiang promoted second rate military men. Senior officers were more noted for their factional infighting than their military prowess. Third, officer training, inadequate to begin with, did not keep up with wartime needs. And fourth, enlisted men faced horrifying conditions.</li> </ul>
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### Consensus Building:

The course of the war put Chiang and KMT at a disadvantage before public opinion. The Japanese sought to take over the coastal cities and the main communication routes, especially the railways. **To do this they had to defeat mainly the Nationalist, not the Communist, forces. The Nationalist government suffered a series of humiliating defeats and enormous losses of territory.**

**However, although the Nationalist armies bore the brunt of Japanese attacks, it was the Communist armies which impressed the Chinese public.** While the Communist guerrilla campaigns could not win the war, they left no doubt of the tenacity, skill and daring of the peasant volunteers of the Red Army.

**The fact is that neither party in China covered itself with much military glory.**

By end of 1938, the Japanese had taken as much of China they wanted. The Japanese then sat back waiting for China to surrender and **major Japanese operations revived only in 1944 when the US forces were threatening Japan's maritime lines of communications and establishing air bases in China; but by this time it was clear that Japan would be defeated by the West and the two Chinese parties were not much distracted by the Japanese presence from their primary concern with fighting with each other.**

**Although the Communists were also carrying out a waiting strategy they provided better government in the areas under their control** and continued to put pressure on the Japanese such as the Hundred Regiments Offensive against Japanese held forts and railroad in 1940, although the Communist lost 100 000 men to casualties and desertion. **Morale was thus overall higher in Yenan than in Chongqing.**

#### **H. Why did the Sino-Japanese War period become a turning point for both the KMT and the CCP parties?**

Chongqing, the Nationalist' new capital, was isolated and backward compared to Nanjing. From Chongqing had to rebuild an army based in a province that had never been a Nationalist stronghold. The Nationalist also had to bring Yunnan under their control. Kunming, the capital of Yunnan. The Nationalist had some control over Hunan, southern Jiangxi, western Hubei and Henan, and southern Shaanxi, and pockets in Guangxi and Guangdong. **Isolated from its traditional sources of support and revenue, the GMD became increasingly arbitrary, dictatorial, factionalized, and corrupt and after 1942, dependant on US aid. (Peter Zarrow)**

**The roots of Chiang's difficulties also laid in own choice of policies a decade ago before, such as his failure to extirpate the warlord nature of the Nationalist armies.** Now, if he attacked the Japanese with competent troops loyal to himself, he was weakening his own base. If he ordered regional commander into battle, they would either refuse or demand more money and equipment. And if he did nothing his government and military decayed while patriotic garlands went to the Communists. **When he did choose to do the latter course, carrying the waiting strategy to its logical conclusion, the regime lost popularity as peasants were drafted into the army regardless of their families' needs and taxes were high in the areas under Chiang's control, leading to popular unrest, while intellectuals and students were particularly hurt by the inflation.**

Unfortunately for the Nationalists, the **problems of extreme scarcities of supplies and equipment was added the effects of inflation**, which so corrupted the military as well as the civilians. Add that the **best of the Nationalist forces were used not**

against the Japanese but to contain the forces of the Communist Party, while a large proportion of the rest was still under the control of the warlords resistant to Nationalist orders, and one can see why the Allies pinned their hopes on the slow and costly process of approaching Japan via the Pacific islands rather than on the Nationalist Chinese armies, in which conscripts were dying of maltreatment and starvation before they even reached the front. The fact is that under the pressures of hyperinflation Nationalist China, military as well as civil, was sinking into chaos. By the time of surrender, the Nationalist China as an ally was not an asset but a liability.

**In contrast, the mass line approach to politics, economics, war and revolution forged close link between the leaders and the people, and formed the core of the Yen-an experience.** The policies adopted in Yen-an included land reforms and/or reduction of rent and interest rates in areas where there was no land reform by 25 to 40 percent so that they would not exceed one-third of the total yield of the land, introduction of the mutual-aid cooperative movement to reorganize the village economy, introduction of an “organizational economy” to make every organization and cadre participate in managerial as well as manual work and a new education movement of social, economic and cultural transformation of the rural society. **The existence of another China with its own territory, government, disciplined party and army, and prominent leadership attracted the curiosity of even the foreigners who wanted to see for themselves how different this separate political entity was from the KMT region.** As a result a number of foreign visitors entered the Communists areas and wrote reports about their discoveries.

## I. Conclusion

The Nationalists emerged from the war with a number of apparent advantages: military strength, control of the cities and China’s industrial resources, a real degree of legitimacy and the political and military support of the US. Despite winning the war eventually, the Nationalist lost it so quickly in the subsequent civil war. They faced a communist movement far stronger than it had been at the start of the war.

There is little point in making any judgement of the decay of the Nationalist wartime regime in personal terms. It is doubtful that any leader could have succeeded in the circumstance, and it is also doubtful if any leader other than Chiang could have won even as much unity and obedience from China as succeeded in maintaining almost to the end. He had to fight a war without much arsenals and almost without revenues, with military satraps of doubtful loyalty and with colleagues many of whom could have preferred an alliance with Japan against the communism to alliance with the Soviet Union and the CCP against Japan. He could have adopted the Communists style guerrilla tactics, arm the people and resort to guerrilla defence, but this would have guaranteed immediate Communist domination. **(Jack Gray)**

**Twelve years of war and revolution created popular nationalism, encouraged popular participation and the disintegration of the existing government, and**

**finally defined a new nation through class-based revolution.** Certainly, the Japanese gravely weakened the KMT, decimating conservative forces and fostering popular nationalism, which the CCP was able to tap.

**The Communists became stronger during the war, exercising leadership in the resistance and gaining experience both in rural mobilisation and local government. Mao is said to have stated in 1972 to the first Japanese delegation which visited China that the CCP would never have come to power without the invasion.** At the war's ends, Communists rules over 90 million people, mostly peasants in "liberated base areas" – islands in a sea of Japanese occupation.

Although the Communists certainly appealed primarily for loyalty to the nation, winning support for the rural population by the patriotic role played by the party in leading the peasants against the Japanese, it was to the nation that could be rather than to the nation as it had been; i.e. nationalism and revolution are not two mutually exclusive kinds of appeal. If Chiang objected to the expansion of Communist territory, he was seen as obstructing their re-conquest of China from the invaders. If he forbade an increase in the Communist armies, he was weakening China's defence capacity. The same applied if Chiang opposed the arming of peasants and if he checked Communist political activity in the KMT areas – activity explicitly aimed at the eventual overthrow of the government – he was denying democratic rights to the Chinese people. The Communist United Front with KMT had been represented to Chinese public opinion as a sacrifice of Communist independence to the cause of resistance to foreign invaders.