

**The Kiangsi Soviet Republic:
Mao and the National Congresses
of 1931 and 1934**

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/ N U M B E R T E N

The Kiangsi
Soviet Republic:
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National Congresses
of 1931 and 1934

DEREK J. WALLER



陳世驥題

Although the Center for Chinese Studies is responsible for the selection and acceptance of monographs in this series, responsibility for the opinions expressed in them and for the accuracy of statements contained in them rests with their authors.

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TO MY WIFE

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ABBREVIATIONS

PUBLICATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

CC	Central Committee
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CEC	Central Executive Committee
CPC	Council of People's Commissars
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CRBRD	<i>Collection of Red Bandit Reactionary Documents</i>
ECCI	Executive Committee of the Communist International
HCCP	<i>Hung-ch'i chou-pao</i> (Red Flag Weekly)
HCJP	<i>Hung-ch'i jih-pao</i> (Red Flag Daily)
HCYT	<i>Hsuan-chü yun-tung chou-pao</i> (Election Campaign Weekly)
HH	<i>Hung hsing</i> (Red Star)
HSCH	<i>Hung-se chung-hua</i> (Red China)
KMT	Kuomintang
RCQHP	Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of our Party
RMC	Revolutionary Military Council
SSC	Shih Sou (Ch'en Ch'eng) Collection
TC	<i>Tou-cheng</i> (Struggle)
WPI	Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate

PROVINCES

Che	Chekiang
Hsiang	Hunan
Kan	Kiangsi
Min	Fukien
O	Hupei
Wan	Anhwei
Yü	Honan
Yueh	Kwangtung

PERSONAL NAMES

Lo Fu	Chang Wen-t'ien
Lo Mai	Li Wei-han
Po Ku	Ch'in Pang-hsien
Wang Ming	Ch'en Shao-yü

I

Introduction

The early 1930's, or Kiangsi soviet period, is one of the most obscure in the history of the Chinese Communist Party [CCP]. This monograph takes as its focal point the two National Soviet Congresses convened at Juichin, Kiangsi (the capital of the Chinese Soviet Republic) in November 1931 and January–February 1934. The major significance for this study of these two National Congresses is that focussing attention on them provides new information on the inter-related themes of political processes and power relations, as well as facilitating examination of the role of Mao Tse-tung during these years.

It was after Chiang Kai-shek's anti-communist coup of April 1927 that Stalin first mooted the possibility of soviets in China.¹ The term "soviet" was borrowed directly from Russian experience and referred to the representative councils of workers, peasants, and soldiers first set up at the time of the 1905 revolution and later repeated in 1917. In China it later came to refer more generally to any territorial area controlled by the CCP.

CHINGKANGSHAN

After the failure of the Autumn Harvest Uprisings, Mao Tse-tung took refuge in the mountain fastness of Ching kangshan on the Hunan-Kiangsi border, where he began to establish "soviet areas." There were at least three hundred of these soviet areas in existence at one time or another during the tortuous and complex history of the CCP from its foundation in 1921 to the proclamation of the People's Republic of China in 1949.² The soviets sprang to life in different provinces of China, lasted for varying periods of time, and ranged in nature from a hideout for purely bandit guerrilla operations to functioning, viable political entities—

¹ *Pravda*, July 28, 1927; quoted in Robert C. North, *Moscow and Chinese Communists*, (Second Edn., Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1963), p. 109.

² *Hung-ch'i jih-pao* [hereafter *HCJP*] (Red Flag Daily), 52 (October 8, 1930), p. 1; also, Chung-kuo kung-nung-ping hui-i (su-wei-ai) ti-i-tz'u ch'ian-kuo tai-piao ta-hui chung-yang chun-pei wei-yuan-hui ch'ian-t'i hui-i pu-kao (Proclamation of the Plenum of the Central Preparatory Committee for the First National Congress of the Chinese Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Meetings [Soviets]), printed in Hsiao Tso-liang, *Power Relations within the Chinese Communist Movement, 1930–1934* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967), Volume II, the Chinese Documents, p. 82. I am particularly indebted throughout this monograph to the pioneering work of Professor Hsiao, and also to his earlier volume of the same title, consisting of commentaries on the documents (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961).

autonomous enclaves in the heart of China. The so-called "Kiangsi soviet period" in the history of the CCP is the early history of the Chinese Soviet Republic which existed in south-central China from the spring of 1929³ to the autumn of 1934, and was, prior to the Long March, the most important of the latter type of soviet mentioned above.

Quite clearly, the experience of Chinggangshan was essentially one of failure, and in early 1929 it effectively ceased to exist as a revolutionary base area when Mao Tse-tung, Chu Teh, and their followers withdrew under Kuomintang [KMT] pressure to search for a more suitable location. Nevertheless, Mao concluded that his policies of creating an army, operating out of a rural base area, were fundamentally correct. Departure from Chinggangshan meant, not a return to the cities, but the establishment of a new soviet base, which proved to be a far more enduring and viable political entity than any of its forerunners. Chalmers Johnson has aptly described the idea of the territorial bases as "a 'rebel infrastructure,' or 'autonomous government,' . . . [providing] food, refuge, an area in which military equipment may be manufactured, and training bases; and they weaken the status quo power by removing territory from the system's productive substructure."⁴ It is greatly to be doubted whether the Chinggangshan base met such requirements, but it was there that the foundation was laid for the future Chinese Soviet Republic.

Breaking through the KMT blockade in January 1929, Chu and Mao, with P'eng Teh-huai's Fifth Army guarding their rear, began campaigning in Kiangsi. During 1929 they consolidated their base in the south Kiangsi and west Fukien area, with Juichin as its center. By the end of 1930 nearly the whole of south Kiangsi had fallen to the Red Army, and the base of the central soviet regions had been established, an area of about seventeen *hsien* on the Kiangsi-Fukien border with a population of three million.⁵

In line with the demands of the Ninth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern [ECCI], held in Moscow in February 1928, the CCP leadership attempted to create a single centralized Red Army from bands of roving guerrilla units in order to carry out the agrarian revolution. By 1930 therefore, the stage was set for the protracted struggle of the Party leadership to call the First National Soviet Congress, establish a formal soviet regime, and thereby extend their authority over the Red Army and the soviet bases. The struggle was to last almost two years.

³ The Chinese Soviet Republic was not actually established until November 1931, and was only formally abandoned in 1937 on the conclusion of an anti-Japanese united front with the KMT.

⁴ Chalmers Johnson, *Revolution and the Social System* (Hoover Institution Studies No. 3; Hoover Institution: Stanford University, 1964), p. 62.

⁵ Harold R. Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* (Second Revised Edition, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 337.

II

The Li Li-san Period

During 1929, the CCP leader Li Li-san was trying, with little success, to exercise his mandate to recapture the Party's proletarian bases by making great efforts to organize the Party in the cities. In spite of this lack of success, the Comintern announced in October 1929 that the trough between the waves was ending, that a new revolutionary wave was beginning, and that the CCP should "take steps to overthrow the landlord-bourgeois regime and set up a dictatorship of peasants and workers of the Soviet type."¹

It is in the light of a flood of directives from Moscow prophesying an imminent revolutionary wave, coupled with the apathy of the urban proletariat, that we must view the development of the so-called "Li Li-san Line" during 1930. Both Li and Moscow wished to make use of the growing strength of the Red Army in the countryside, but without endangering the leading role of the proletariat in the cities. Up to and including April 1930, Li's idea was to foment uprisings in the cities, which would expand towards the countryside, where they would be supported by the guerrillas.

But the proletariat stubbornly refused to revolt: in May, Li's policy began, slowly, to shift. Li hypothesized that if a revolutionary wave was present, then there could be no harm in allowing the Red Army to ignite the spark of revolution in the cities. This policy—the heart of the Li Li-san line—of using the rural-based Red Army to attack the urban centers was sanctioned by the Comintern in July, although it was to be nearly twenty years before it was successfully put into effect.

It is against the background of the Li Li-san line in 1930 that we must see the attempts made by the Party Central in Shanghai to bring into closer co-ordination the scattered soviet areas, to establish a soviet government, and to affirm the control of the Party Central over the guerrilla leaders. Use of the Red Army in conjunction with urban uprisings would obviously require close collaboration between the Party Central and the soviet area leaders, as well as acceptance by the soviet leaders of orders from Shanghai.

Li's aim was to convene a National [All-China] Soviet Congress, which would formally establish a soviet government to co-ordinate all the

¹ *Hung-ch'i* (Red Flag), 16 (February 15, 1930), p. 9. Quoted in Benjamin Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 134.

soviet areas, and inaugurate a soviet regime as an alternative to KMT rule. This would establish his authority in the red bases, and the resulting "co-ordination" would facilitate the execution of the Li Li-san line. Furthermore, the existence of an alternative regime within China would be of great propaganda value to the CCP.

As a preliminary move towards the establishing of a soviet government, Li called for a national Conference of Delegates from the Soviet Areas. The call was issued on February 25, 1930, jointly by the CCP and the National Labor Federation.²

The chief purpose of the conference (apart from the long-range goal of setting up a soviet regime) was to secure a closer connection between partisan actions and the activities of the urban proletariat. In communist jargon, this was spoken of as "the need for a greater amount of proletarian hegemony in the soviet areas." By achieving this hegemony, Li Li-san hoped to arrive at a joint program of uniform tactics for the forthcoming struggle. In order to acquaint Mao Tse-tung with his plans and to gain his acceptance, or to remove Mao from his position of power in the soviet areas, Li urged the soviet leader to come to Shanghai to attend the conference. Li's headquarters sent two letters with this request to Mao's Fourth Front Army, on April 3 and April 26, 1930, but no evidence can be found that Mao actually went to Shanghai to attend the conference.³

The conference finally convened in Shanghai toward the end of May 1930. It was attended by 49 delegates from the Party, the trade unions, revolutionary organizations, the Red Army, and the various soviet areas, although who these delegates were is unknown. The major documents approved by the conference included a temporary land law, a labor protection law, and a declaration on the national political situation and the tasks of the soviet areas.⁴ A Central Preparatory Committee was also established to prepare for the projected National Soviet Congress.

As can be imagined, the declaration clearly manifested the current Li Li-san line, and spoke of the existence in China of two different political systems—one the system of the gentry, landlords, comprador bourgeoisie, and KMT; and the other the soviet regime of the workers, peasants, soldiers, and toiling masses. These two regimes, it was announced, represented the final battle between two different classes. The declaration called for armed uprisings and said that the workers' struggle, peasant uprisings, the development of the Red Army and the soviet areas

² Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 74.

³ An English translation of both letters can be found in *Issues and Studies*, II, 5 (February 1966), pp. 49–52.

⁴ Wang Chien-min, *Chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang shih-kao* (A History of the CCP), (Three vols.: Taiwan, 1965), II, p. 277. [All future reference to Wang Chien-min refer to Vol. II.]

were all proof that the ruling classes were on the point of collapse.⁵

The Li Li-san line at this time (May 1930) had not yet reached the extreme stage of using the Red Army to attack the towns. Indeed Li himself had written articles during April and May in which he said that encircling the cities with the country, or relying on the Red Army to take the cities, was sheer nonsense.⁶ This was just the policy he was in fact to adopt in a few weeks. Li's original policy was that armed uprisings in the cities would expand into the countryside, to be supported by the guerrillas. The prime role of the city would ensure proletarian hegemony. By the time of the conference, it seemed as though a middle position between the two was favored—that the Red Army might be used in conjunction with urban uprisings to take the cities.

The first indications that Li was moving toward the position of using the Red Army to attack the cities came shortly after the conference in a Politburo resolution published on June 11, 1930.⁷ In the resolution, which still decried the "erroneous concept" of relying on the Red Army alone to occupy the cities, there are references to "powerful assaults by the Red Army" and of using the Red Army for "resolute attacks on the major forces of the enemy, [and] assaults on key cities."

Since the resolution called for armed uprisings in the cities coupled with attacks on key cities by the Red Army, it is not surprising that the implication throughout is that a soviet government should be set up in an *urban* area without delay. Referring to the strategy of the Red Army in winning preliminary successes in one or more provinces, the resolution said "the over-all aim of this task [of the Red Army] is the seizure of political power and the establishment of a national revolutionary regime in coordination with armed uprisings in key cities."⁸ The prime target was to be Wuhan.

This policy was repeated in Moscow by Chou En-lai when he addressed the 16th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [CPSU] on July 5, 1930. Chou spoke in favor of centralizing the soviet areas and strengthening the Red Army's command so as to develop towards the industrial centers, after the occupation of which a central government was to be established to act as a base for opposition to the KMT.⁹

The tactic of siting the proposed soviet government in a major industrial center such as Wuhan, or at least in Changsha or Nanchang, had

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

⁶ *Hung-ch'i*, 90 (April 5, 1930), and 104 (May 24, 1930), cited in Schwartz, *Chinese Communism*, p. 139.

⁷ Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Schwartz and J. K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952), pp. 184-200.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

⁹ Chung-kuo ko-ming hsin kao-ch'ao yü chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang (The New High Tide of the Chinese Revolution and the CCP), Hsiao, Vol II, p. 138.

been CCP policy as early as the May conference of delegates from the soviet areas.¹⁰

However, after the Comintern had deliberated on the June 11 resolution of Li Li-san, it issued a directive which was published in China later the following month, on July 23.¹¹ This directive, although it gave general approval to the task of achieving initial victories in one or several provinces, nevertheless did not sanction the creation of the soviet government in a major industrial center. The Comintern, while it approved the idea of founding such a government, said that on the tactical question of where it was to be sited it should be associated with the Red Army and set up in "*the most protected area.*"¹²

Li Li-san was therefore more optimistic than the Comintern that his policy of capturing key cities would succeed. Moscow, more cautious, urged him to found the government in the revolutionary base areas. Nevertheless, Li continued with his plan to take Changsha and Nanchang, and then march on Wuhan. On July 27 P'eng Teh-huai took Changsha, but found little popular support for the CCP and withdrew within a few days, whereupon Mao and Chu Teh made a brief attack on Nanchang and failed to break the city's defences.

But notwithstanding the Comintern's directive on the site of the government, the Li Li-san line continued unchanged. In spite of the fact that Changsha had been heavily reinforced with KMT troops, Li ordered a second attack on the city preparatory to a march on Wuhan. Mao and Chu Teh carried out orders but soon commanded their troops to withdraw, without however, seeking permission from the Central Committee.

There had of course to be an inquest on these failures of the Li Li-san line. This took place at the Third Plenum of the CC/CCP, meeting from September 24–28, 1930. Li's main opponents were not the soviet area leaders, but a group of young Chinese intellectuals who had recently returned from Moscow after four years study in the Soviet Union. The "Returned Student" group, as they were known, were led by Wang Ming (Ch'en Shao-yü), Po Ku (Ch'in Pang-hsien), and Lo Fu (Chang Wen-t'ien). They had as their mentor and powerful patron one Pavel Mif, the most eminent of Stalin's experts on China and Comintern representative in that country.

¹⁰ The available documentation of the May conference does not mention the site for the government, but confines itself to resolutions urging its establishment. The allegation about siting it in Wuhan was made by Chou En-lai in his report to the Third Plenum in September.

¹¹ *Chung-kuo wen-i' chueh-i-an* (Resolution on the Chinese Problem), passed by the ECCI Political Secretariat July 23, 1930. Shih Sou Collection [hereafter SSC] Microfilm reel 16. The actual date of the Resolution was late June 1930.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 16 (emphasis added). Presumably Chou En-lai in favoring Li Li-san's site for the government in his speech to the 16th CPSU Congress, had not read this directive.

The Third Plenum found no basic errors of line in the actions of Li Li-san, except that he had been guilty of errors in tactics, for example in his attack on Changsha.¹³ But from this time on, with his policy of armed uprisings in ruins, Li's authority began to wane.

That same summer a former leader of the CCP, Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, was sent back to Shanghai from Moscow, where he attacked Li at the Third Plenum. But surprisingly, in spite of the opposition of Ch'ü who was anxious to regain his position of leadership, and of the ambitious Returned Student group, the plenum reconfirmed Li in power. Li had in fact a strong grip on the Party machine, and was staunchly supported by Chou En-lai. Furthermore, it was extremely difficult for Ch'ü to criticize the Li Li-san line without criticizing the Comintern line, since the two were identical in their strategy.¹⁴ Mif was reported to be infuriated with the result of the Plenum, claimed that it had been held behind his back, and redoubled his efforts to unseat Li and his protégés.¹⁵

At the Third Plenum, Chou En-lai (under his alias of Shao Shan) reversed his earlier standpoint of July and criticized the May conference of delegates for insisting that the government be located in a major city. "Of course," said Chou, "it is better to establish it [the provisional central government] in a key city rather than a small city, but this is a question of secondary importance." He advocated a government which would "advance towards the key industrial cities."¹⁶

The resolution passed by the Third Plenum accepting the Comintern's July 23 directive acknowledged that one of the most important tasks of the Party was to establish a provisional central government in the most secure area—the soviet bases—and also create a strong army which could, according to political and military circumstances, occupy one or several political and industrial centers.¹⁷ However, in spite of this resolution, Li Li-san (under his alias of Po Shan) took a different line at the Plenum. While admitting that to insist that the central regime be linked to victories in one or several provinces was a "mechanical concept," as also was the insistence on Wuhan as the only suitable place, he never-

¹³ *Shao Shan pao-kao; san-chung ch'üan-hui ts'ai-liao ti chiu-hao* (Report of Shao Shan; reference item No. 9 of the Third Plenum of the CC [CCP]), September 24, 1930, pp. 3–4. (Pamphlet dated January 3, 1931.)

¹⁴ For an analysis of the Li Li-san line which concludes that Li did deviate from the Comintern line, see Richard C. Thornton, *The Comintern and the Chinese Communists, 1928–1931* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969).

¹⁵ *Chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang chung-yang wei-yuan-hui k'uo-ta-hui ti szu-tz'u ch'üan-t'i hui-i chueh-i-an* (Resolution of the Enlarged Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee of the CCP), January 1931, in *Ch'ih-fei fan-tung wen-chien hui-pien* (A Collection of Red Bandit Reactionary Documents), compiled by General Ch'en Ch'eng, 1935; reprinted 1960 (Taipei: microfilm), p. 430 [henceforth *CRBRD*].

¹⁶ *Shao Shan pao-kao*, pp. 3–4 (emphasis added).

¹⁷ *Cheng-chih chuang-k'uang ho tang ti tsung jen-wu i-chueh-an* (Resolution on the Political Situation and the Party's General Tasks), Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 179.

theless condemned the idea of establishing it in the mountains (*shan-shang*) as a "joke," and asked why it could not be set up in Kian, Changsha, or Nanchang.¹⁸

It is clear, however, that even before the Third Plenum, CCP policy was switching from an urban to a more rural orientation. The second attack on Changsha in early September had been accompanied by a telegram dated September 12 from the Plenum of the Central Preparatory Committee, which was then in session, declaring that the Red Armies were attacking towards the central cities in order to struggle for a national soviet regime.¹⁹

But after the failure of this second attack, CCP policy changed emphasis from the urban to the rural areas. An editorial in *Hung-ch'i Jih-pao* of September 17 said that the Red Army should not just concentrate on Changsha, but should pay greater attention to the *hsien* and *hsiang* soviet areas in Hunan.²⁰ There is no clear indication though, following the Third Plenum, of the location of the new site for the central government in the revolutionary base areas. In none of the available issues of *Hung-ch'i Jih-pao* for October is any place named for the proposed government, although there are articles going into great detail concerning the preparations for the National Soviet Congress.

The Comintern letter of November 16, 1930,²¹ which devastatingly attacked Li Li-san for major errors of line, resulted in his resignation at a Politburo meeting on November 25.²² In addition, Li was heavily criticized for not having set up a soviet government. The letter said that the significance of setting up such a government was that the CCP was working towards armed uprisings in the big cities, but that to undertake this task without estimating the environment, or analyzing the balance of forces in the big cities, was "blind actionism" and not Leninism. The Comintern reiterated that the government must be set up in the revolutionary base areas, where it could rely on the Red Army.²³

In his report to the Presidium of the ECCI, made in Moscow the following month, Li confessed that he had not understood the Comintern's policy on the necessity for consolidated bases—bases which could be-

¹⁸ Po Shan fa-yen; san-chung ch'üan-hui ts'ai-liao ti shih-hao (Statement of Po Shan; reference item No. 10 of the Third Plenum), Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 157.

¹⁹ Ch'üan-kuo su-wei-ai ta-hui chung-yang chun-pei-hui ch'üan-t'i hui-i wei-lao hung-chün ti-san, szu, wu, pa, shih-erh chün tien (Congratulatory Telegram from the Plenary Session of the Central Preparatory Committee of the National Soviet Congress to the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 8th, and 12th Red Armies), Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 71.

²⁰ Hung-chün wei-kung Ch'ang-sha ti chan-lueh (The Strategy of the Red Army in the Encircling of Changsha), Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 72.

²¹ Kung-ch'an kuo-chi chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui kei chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang chung-yang wei-yuan-hui ti hsin (Letter from the ECCI to the Central Committee of the CCP), received November 16, 1930; Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 201-204.

²² According to Schwartz, *Chinese Communism*, p. 156.

²³ Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 202-203.

come the starting points for developing the revolution elsewhere. He also admitted to not understanding the significance of establishing a provisional revolutionary government, and confessed that he had erred in deciding to delay this until after the big industrial cities had been occupied by the Red Army.²⁴

Other Comintern documents also accused Li of failing to establish a soviet government in the base areas, and criticized him for his comment (made at the Central Committee's Third Plenum) that this was "ascend mountainism" (*shang-shan chu-i*). The Comintern said that Li also considered this an annexationist line that only wanted to found a soviet government in areas outside the direct influence of the proletariat.²⁵

These differences over the siting of the government did not affect the basic duplicity of the Comintern when they attacked Li Li-san's "errors of line." The broad outlines of Li's policies were identical with those of the Comintern. The divergence was one of tactic—not of line. No one disputed the general line—that it was imperative to establish a central government—but there were discrepancies in tactics as to where to establish it and the speed with which this could be accomplished. Li, in advocating an urban base, was too ambitious and was caught by the failure of the Red Army's attacks on the cities that summer. As Chang Kuo-t'ao later (1950) remarked: Li went beyond Moscow's orders in planning the insurrectionary policy in 1930: "[he] tended always to be adventurist in those days."²⁶

On the tactical question of where to locate the proposed soviet government, the Comintern was closer to Mao Tse-tung than Li Li-san; for Mao, instead of leaning towards the cities, wanted to establish "Red political power" in the rural soviet areas.²⁷ In 1945, Mao was to characterize the Li Li-san line as "adventurist," and to say that he had never agreed with it. Mao complained that his desired policy of consolidating the rural base areas had been dismissed by Li Li-san as "utterly erroneous . . . localism and conservatism characteristic of peasant mentality."²⁸

The general collapse of Li's policies of seizing key cities did not imply any abandonment of the basic task of establishing a central soviet regime

²⁴ Li-san Pao-kao (Li-san's Report), Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 210.

²⁵ Kuo-chi tung-fang-pu kuan-yü chung-kuo tang san-chung ch'üan-hui yü Li Li-san t'ung-chih ti ts'o-wu ti pao-kao (Report of the Comintern Eastern Department on the Errors of the CCP Third Plenum and of Comrade Li Li-san), Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 205.

²⁶ Robert C. North interview with Chang Kuo-t'ao (November 3, 1950), Hoover Library, Stanford University, 1962.

²⁷ Mao Tse-tung, "A Single Spark can Start a Prairie Fire," (dated January 5, 1930) *Selected Works* (Four Vols., Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), I, pp. 117–128.

²⁸ "Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of our Party" (hereafter RCQHP), *Selected Works*, III, p. 184.

and a provisional soviet government. Indeed it was clear from the proceedings of the May conference of delegates from soviet areas that, although the immediate aim was to formalize contacts between the Red Army and the central organs of the Party in Shanghai, the long-term goal was to create a soviet regime that would be a "state within a state" from which to conduct operations against the KMT. Therefore the failure of the Li Li-san line did not initially inhibit the activities of the Central Preparatory Committee in its drive to call a National Soviet Congress which would formally set up a soviet government.

Months before Li's political downfall, before the first attack of the Red Army on Changsha, the Presidium of the National Conference of Delegates from the Soviet Areas met on July 7.

The declaration issued by the Presidium stated that it had been decided to convene the National Soviet Congress on November 7, 1930, the anniversary of the Russian Revolution.²⁹ To prepare for this event, it was resolved to invite delegates of the CCP, the National Labor Federation, the soviet areas, Red Army units, and all revolutionary organizations, to organize a Central Preparatory Committee. This committee would have the tasks of holding mass meetings in every factory, workshop, village, school, and street to elect delegates to attend the National Soviet Congress.

A plenary session of the Central Preparatory Committee convened on September 12, probably in Nanking.³⁰ The proclamation issued by the plenum stated that in the conditions of having created a 300,000-man strong Red Army and 300 soviet areas, the current tasks were to link up the scattered soviet regimes and centralize their directing organs. This task was to be coordinated with armed uprisings in the KMT areas. The election of a provisional Central Executive Committee of the soviet government by a National Congress was spoken of as the most basic and urgent task. Once established, the government would unify the regimes of the various soviet areas, and put the Red Army under centralized command.³¹

The major task of the Central Preparatory Committee was to continue preparatory work towards the convening of the National Soviet Congress,

²⁹ Hao-chao chung-kuo kung-nung-ping hui-i (su-wei-ai) ti-i-tz'u ch'üan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui hsuan-yen (Declaration calling for the First National Congress of Chinese Workers' Peasants' and Soldiers' Meetings [Soviets]) Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 74-75.

³⁰ Yung-hu su-wei-ai chung-yang chun-pei wei-yuan-hui yü chien-li ch'üan-kuo chung-yang su-wei-ai cheng-ch'üan (Support the Soviet Central Preparatory Committee and Establish a National Central Soviet Regime), Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 79.

³¹ Chung-kuo kung-nung-ping hui-i (su-wei-ai) ti-i-tz'u ch'üan-kuo tai-piao ta hui chung-yang chun-pei wei-yuan hui ch'üan-t'i hui-i pu-kao (Proclamation of the Plenum of the Central Preparatory Committee for the First National Congress of Chinese Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Meetings [Soviets]), Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 82-83.

which would set up a National Soviet Government. The plenum decided to postpone the calling of the First National Soviet Congress from November 7 to December 11, the anniversary of the Canton Commune. The reason given was the need for preparatory work to be carried out fully.³² A proposal that the Committee should move to the soviet areas was accepted unanimously, and according to one source, the move to the soviet areas was to be made to south Kiangsi.³³ The plenum also passed a series of electoral regulations, and the draft outline of a constitution which was proposed by the CCP Central Committee.³⁴

Finally, the Committee elected the following nine men as members of the Standing Committee:³⁵ Hsiang Chung-fa, Hsiang Ying, Mao Tse-tung, Yü Fei, Yuan Ping-hui, Hsu Hsi-ken, Ch'en Yü, Lin Yü-nan, Lin Ju-lan.

Hsiang Chung-fa, who was probably chairman of the Standing Committee (being listed first), was a Politburo member and Secretary-General of the CCP; Hsiang Ying was possibly a Politburo member at the time and almost certainly a member of the CCP Central Committee; Mao was on the Central Committee, as were Yü Fei, Hsu Hsi-ken and Ch'en Yü.³⁶ Little is known of Yuan Ping-hui, Lin Yü-nan, or Lin Ju-lan; but the impressive number of high-ranking men on the committee gave some indication of the top priority that the Party assigned to the task of creating a soviet government.

It is particularly interesting that Mao, in spite of his lack of cooperation in executing the attack on Changsha and his apparent refusal to attend the May conference of delegates, was considered to be powerful enough to warrant inclusion on the Standing Committee. The fact that the committee was planning to move to the soviet areas must have been instrumental in adding Mao's name.

Some two weeks later, the Party leadership called on all members to step up preparations for the Congress,³⁷ and the work of preparing for the National Congress was given great emphasis.

By drawing together the more than 300 scattered soviet areas and a Red Army reported to be 300,000 strong under a single unified administration, Li Li-san thought that the result would be a relatively rapid expansion of the soviet areas throughout the whole of China. His view was given credence when the Red Army, returning after the failure of their second attack on Changsha, captured Kian in South Kiangsi on

³² Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 79-80.

³³ Wang Chien-min, *shih-kao*, p. 284.

³⁴ Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo kuo-chia ken-pen-fa (hsien-fa) ta-kang ts'ao-an (Draft Outline of the State Basic Law [Constitution] of the Chinese Soviet Republic), Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 96-99.

³⁵ Wang Chien-min, *shih-kao*, p. 284.

³⁶ Wu Hsiang-hsiang (ed.), *Chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang chih t'ou-shih* (Revelations of the CCP) (Taipei: 1962), III, p. 118.

³⁷ Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 109-112.

October 4.³⁸ It was after this event that the Central Soviet Area was created and a Kiangsi Provincial Soviet Government established.³⁹

Furthermore, it was expected that the "broad masses" would compare conditions in the soviet areas with those under the KMT. The "cruel oppression" of the Nationalists would contrast with the soviet areas, where, it was claimed, the landlords' and warlords' land was confiscated and distributed to all, taxes were low, education was free, and women had equal rights with men, as did soldiers with officers.⁴⁰

In the preparations for the congress, the task of establishing a central government was described as the most important current need and central task of the broad mass movement.⁴¹ It was also the central task of the Party. All mass organizations were to be used as propaganda vehicles, and Party branches were to be their leadership cores. It was stressed that it was essential to link propaganda for the Soviet Congress to the everyday problems of the masses, so that the struggle to create a soviet government would become, via participation in the electoral movement, a political struggle against imperialism and the KMT.⁴²

On November 20, 1930, the Central Preparatory Committee formally invited the CCP to send delegates to the Congress.⁴³ But after this date no more was heard of the proposed National Soviet Congress of December 11, 1930. Clearly, the immediate reason for the sudden lack of interest in the Congress was the fall of Li Li-san who, it will be remembered, was toppled by the receipt of the Comintern directive on November 16. This led to his resignation and departure for Moscow. But since the policy of Moscow was to set up a central soviet government, and this policy remained unchanged with the fall of Li Li-san, the explanation of the cancellation of the December 11 Congress must be sought elsewhere.

Two main reasons for this can be discerned. First, the departure of Li for Moscow led to a power struggle within the CCP which, until it was resolved in 1931, pre-empted all organizational matters. The struggle was between the "Returned Student" group on the one hand, backed by Pavel Mif, and the faction centered around the north China labor leader Ho Meng-hsiung, on the other. Factionalism within the Party was further complicated by the occurrence of "Li Li-san-ism without Li Li-san"—

³⁸ "Chien-li kung-nung-ping tai-piao hui-i [su-wei-ai cheng-ch'üan]" (The Establishment of a Worker, Peasant, Soldier Delegate Conference [Soviet Regime]), in *HCJP*, 54 (October 11, 1930), p. 1.

³⁹ Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 423.

⁴⁰ "Chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang chung-yang wei-yuan-hui wei su-wei-ai ti-i-tz'u ch'üan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui kao min-chung shu" (A Message to the People from the CCP Central Committee concerning the First National Soviet Congress), *HCJP*, 53 (October 9, 1930), p. 1.

⁴¹ *HCJP*, 52 (October 8, 1930), p. 1.

⁴² *HCJP*, 55 (October 12, 1930), p. 1.

⁴³ Chih chung-kung chung-yang kung-han (An Official Letter to CCP Central), Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 109.

the fight of Li's loyal supporters against the Returned Students.⁴⁴ The Party obviously did not wish to convene a Congress that might be dominated by Li Li-san-ists.

Ho Meng-hsiung had opposed Li Li-san's "adventurist" policies at least since May 1930. He claimed that Li exaggerated the role of the Chinese revolution and followed incorrect policies with regard to the Chinese labor movement.⁴⁵ Eventually, in October, under the prevalence of Li Li-san, Ho confessed to his "errors."⁴⁶ With the fall of Li Li-san in November, Ho was rehabilitated but soon found himself in opposition to the Returned Student group. He was defeated by them at the Fourth Plenum in January 1931. It is a further indication of Mao's view of Li Li-san that he subsequently spoke well of Ho Meng-hsiung.⁴⁷ Since the Returned Student leaders were not established in power until January 1931 (and even then were still subject to opposition from Ho Meng-hsiung and former Li Li-san-ists), it is not surprising that they did not feel able to organize the December 11 National Congress. No doubt the Party also felt the need to put on a show of unity at such an occasion.

The second reason for not holding the Congress was undoubtedly the prevailing military situation. The Nationalists were particularly active towards the end of 1930 in hunting down Communists in the cities; but, more importantly, the first "bandit encirclement campaign" was launched by Chiang Kai-shek in December against the soviet areas. Therefore one cannot be surprised that the Congress never met in 1930. But such was the importance of the Congress that it again became a major item of Party policy as early as January 1931 when the Returned Student group formally triumphed at the Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee.

⁴⁴ See Hsiao, Vol. I, pp. 125-149.

⁴⁵ *Ho Meng-hsiung i-chien-shu* (A Statement of the Views of Ho Meng-hsiung), dated September 8, 1930. Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 112-119.

⁴⁶ *Ho Meng-hsiung i-chien-shu* (A Statement of the Views of Ho Meng-hsiung), dated October 9, 1930. Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 125-127.

⁴⁷ RCQHP, p. 188.

III

The First National Soviet Congress

The Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee was convened in Shanghai on January 16, 1931. It pointed out the bad influences of the Li Li-san line on the Party: the weakening of the Party's influence over the masses, and the weakening of the mass organizations.¹ It especially condemned the premature attack on Changsha without, according to the Plenum, adequate preparation. Li Li-san was also castigated for neglecting the task of establishing a strong central soviet government.²

As was discussed in the preceding chapter, Li had in fact paid considerable attention to the creation of a soviet government, and a good deal of preparatory work had been carried out. The only point concerning the soviet government on which he could be held guilty was the tactical error of proposing to site it in a large city, rather than in the rural soviet areas. This had led him to delay the creation of a central soviet government while he attempted to occupy a key city with the Red Army. The fact that the National Soviet Congress was not held on the date proposed was largely due to factors not under Li's control.

The Plenum elected a new Politburo of sixteen full and alternate members. Wang Ming, Po Ku, Lo Fu, and Shen Tse-min, members of the Returned Student group, were made leaders of the Party, while many of those associated with the Li Li-san leadership or with opposition to the "28 Bolsheviks" were removed from power. Hsiang Chung-fa was re-elected and retained as General Secretary after making a public confession. Chou En-lai was also re-elected and appointed head of the Military Affairs Department.

The establishment of a new leadership in power meant no lessening of the priority accorded to the creation of a soviet regime: this was made clear by the resolution of the Fourth Plenum. This did not imply, however, any abandonment of the Party's main task of capturing the urban proletariat. On the contrary, the Fourth Plenum spoke of giving special emphasis to Party work in the factories; and, as will be discussed shortly, Party documents during 1931 generally spoke of the soviet areas being developed so as to occupy cities such as Changsha and Wuhan as soon as practicable, a policy which in fact differed little from that of Li Li-san.

¹ *Chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang chung-yang wei-yuan-hui k'uo-ta-hui ti-szu-tz'u ch'üan-t'i hui-i i-chueh-an* (Resolution of the Enlarged Fourth Plenum of the CCP Central Committee), SSC 15. Also in *CRBRD*, p. 424

² *CRBRD*, pp. 425-426.

In spite of the desire of the Party leadership not to lose sight of their urban goals, it became apparent during 1931 that lack of response by urban workers to the Party's overtures, and the increasing harshness of Kuomintang oppression and police supervision, coupled with the desire of the new CCP leadership to establish control over Mao in the rural hinterland (for the soviet areas had been developing extensively), led the Party to pay increasing attention to the countryside—a switch which was institutionalized by the formal creation of the Chinese Soviet Republic at Juichin, Kiangsi on November 7, 1931.

Soon after the Fourth Plenum, the new Party leadership created the Central Bureau of the Soviet Areas³—a new organ directly responsible to the Politburo but located in the soviet areas—to be in charge of preparatory work for the Soviet Congress⁴ and of facilitating the transfer of the CC from Shanghai to Kiangsi.⁵ A Preparatory Commission was also set up, but its work was halted when twenty-four of its members were arrested in January 1931, and executed the following month.⁶

Notice No. 1 of the Central Bureau stated that under the situation of the new revolutionary high tide in China, the Party had two major tasks. The first was to consolidate the soviet areas, establish a national soviet base and a provisional central government, and strengthen the leadership of the Party in the soviet areas so that “in the future, according to political and military circumstances, [we will] be able to occupy one or several key industrial or administrative centers,” which were specified as Nanchang, Changsha or Wuhan.⁷ The second task was to strengthen the Party's leadership of the workers' movement, so as to ensure the leadership of the proletariat with respect to the soviet areas. Armed uprisings were called for, to be coordinated with the work in the soviet areas. For the implementation of these tasks, the existing soviet areas were divided into six administrative districts.

The Central Soviet District—and seat of the provisional central government—was comprised of the southwest Kiangsi and Hsiang-o-kan (Hunan-Hupei-Kiangsi) areas. The other districts were Hsiang-o-hsi, which included west Hupei and northwest Hunan; O-yü-wan (Hupei-Honan-Anhwei), which included northeast Hupei, southeast Honan and west Anhwei; Kan-min-wan (Kiangsi-Fukien-Anhwei) which included

³ Wang Chien-min, *shih-kao*, p. 503.

⁴ *Su-wei-ai ch'ü-yü chung-yang-chü ti ch'eng-li chi ch'i jen-wu* (Establishment of the Central Bureau of the Soviet Areas and its Tasks), Notice No. 1 of the CCP Central Bureau of the Soviet Areas (January 15, 1931), SSC 14. Although formally inaugurated at this time, the Central Bureau had its origins at the Third Plenum of September 1930.

⁵ Hsiao, Vol. I, p. 151.

⁶ Agnes Smedley, *China's Red Army Marches* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1934), pp. 290–291.

⁷ Wang Chien-min, *shih-kao*, pp. 504–505.

east Kiangsi, north Fukien and the Anhwei-Kiangsi border; Min-yueh-kan (Fukien-Kwangtung-Kiangsi) which included west Fukien, north-east Kwangtung and a part of southeast Kiangsi; and finally the Kwangsi Left and Right River Soviets.⁸

The Party was urged to establish a broad mass base in the soviet areas, carry out land reform, and equally distribute the land. The Party leadership also specified that the active participation of the masses in the soviet organization should be encouraged by means of elections, and that these elections should be used to facilitate progress toward the National Soviet Congress and the establishment of a central government.

The Central Bureau had a membership of nine, headed by Chou En-lai, and included Hsiang Ying, Mao Tse-tung, Chu Teh, Jen Pi-shih, Yü Fei, Tseng Shan and two others—one from the Hsiang-kan special border area, and one from the Central Committee of the Young Communists,⁹ probably Ku Tso-lin.¹⁰ The Maoists (Mao, Chu, and Tseng Shan) were clearly the dominant grouping among those members actually present in the soviet areas. Chou En-lai did not move to Juichin until later in 1931, about the same time as Jen Pi-shih left for the Hsiang-o-hsi soviet area.¹¹ Yü Fei ceased to be a member of the Bureau early that year. Hsiang Ying was the only Returned Student supporter on the Central Bureau actually present in the soviet areas for the few months after its creation in January 1931.¹² So Mao was able to consolidate his position by temporarily capturing the Central Bureau, and also by virtue of his position as director of the General Political Department of the Revolutionary Military Council.¹³ Mao retained control of the Central Bureau at least up to the time of its first expanded meeting in March.¹⁴ By the autumn however, following the transfer of the bulk of the Central Committee to the soviet areas, Mao had lost his hold over the Party apparatus.

Slow progress was made towards calling a National Soviet Congress. In February, the Politburo re-emphasized that one of the central tasks of the CCP was the coordination of the soviet areas in preparation for the establishment of a soviet government, which was to be a government of

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 505.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 503.

¹⁰ Warren Kuo, "The CCP after Japanese Invasion of Manchuria (Part 1)," *Issues and Studies*, III, 6 (March 1967), p. 50.

¹¹ Hsiao, Vol. I, interview with Chang Kuo-t'ao, p. 162.

¹² It is not known where Ku Tso-lin was at the time.

¹³ The directive establishing the Central Bureau had ordered the immediate creation of a Central Revolutionary Military Council to unify the Red Army command. (Wang Chien-min, *shih-kao*, p. 505.) In January 1931, Mao was appointed director of its General Political Department. [Warren Kuo, "The CCP 6th CC's 4th Plenum and Party Rift (Part 3)," *Issues and Studies*, III, 2 (November 1966), p. 45.]

¹⁴ The Returned Students later attacked the March meeting for "errors of left and right opportunism" (Wang Chien-min, *shih-kao*, pp. 509-510).

the laboring masses under proletarian leadership.¹⁵ A June directive of the CC said that the Congress should be convened in the central soviet in Kiangsi by August 1 at the latest.¹⁶

The fact that Mao was not associated with the calls to convene a National Congress is a fairly clear indication that he realized that the Returned Student leadership was out to use the Congress to change the policies he was implementing in the revolutionary base areas.

Chu Teh related to Agnes Smedley that on receiving the instructions to prepare for the National Soviet Congress on August 1 (in south Kiangsi), he and Mao called a conference of Communist Party delegates from all the soviet districts which lasted nearly one month. There are no records of this conference, but it is probable that Mao and his followers were actively engaged in ensuring that they had the electoral machinery for the Congress firmly under their control. Committees were set up to prepare for the Congress but, said Chu Teh, KMT military activities caused the date to be put back to November 7. Chu also asserted that during 1931 the soviets became efficient administrative organs for dealing with such problems as finance, communications, local armed forces, health and education. Their organization was pyramidal in form, reaching from the village to the province.¹⁷ This organization was to be formalized and extended at the Soviet Congress.

The Eleventh Plenum of the ECCI was held in Moscow in April 1931 and discussed the future program of the CCP.¹⁸ In a directive to the CCP two months later, the ECCI Presidium listed its conclusions on the Chinese revolution. The directive approved the changes made by the Fourth Plenum in liquidating the Li Li-san line and recitifying the Party line. It urged the formation of a soviet government which, the ECCI claimed, had been opposed by the anti-Leninist line of Li Li-san. Although the directive praised the leadership of the Returned Student group, it gave no indication of wanting to eliminate Mao's position in the soviet areas and, indeed, spoke highly of his experience there.¹⁹ Another

¹⁵ "Mu-ch'ien cheng-chih hsing-shih yü chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang ti chung-hsin jen-wu," (The Current Political Situation and the Central Tasks of the CCP), *Shih-hua* (True Words), 8 (February 2, 1931), p. 2.
¹⁶ "CC directive to Party Branches in the Red Army and local areas at all levels — on the current political situation and urgent tasks of the Party," approved by the Politburo in June 1931; quoted in Warren Kuo, "Chinese Communist 6th CC's 4th Plenum and Party Rift (Part 2)," *Issues and Studies*, III, 1, (October, 1966), p. 50.
¹⁷ Agnes Smedley, *The Great Road: the Life and Times of Chu Teh* (London: John Calder, 1958), p. 294.
¹⁸ "Kung-ch'an kuo-chi shih-i-tzu ch'uan-hui chueh-i-an" (Resolution of the ECCI Eleventh Plenum), dated April 1931, printed in *Kuo-chi Lu-hsien* (International Line), (December 1932), pp. 1-26; published by the Central Bureau of the Soviet Areas, SSC 14.
¹⁹ "Kung-ch'an kuo-chi chih-wei chu-hsi-t'uan kei chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang ti hsin" (A Letter of the ECCI Presidium to the CCP), dated July 1931, in *Pu-erh-se-wei-ke* (Bolshevik), 1 (July 1934), pp. 7, 9-10, 24-25, SSC 15.

Comintern directive a month later also urged that "a central soviet government should be formed in the shortest possible time, in the most secure area."²⁰

These Comintern instructions had duly to be relayed to the soviet districts. On September 1, the Party Central organs in Shanghai sent a major directive to their counterparts in the soviet areas.²¹ This explicitly criticized Mao's land policy of "drawing on the plentiful to make up for the scarce" and "drawing on the fat to make up for the lean." The Red Army was urged to occupy one or two comparatively large cities. However, the Red Army's organization was not suitable for large-scale war and the achieving of initial victories in one or more provinces. The concept of guerrilla warfare was criticized and the Red Army was told to "completely get rid of the tradition of guerrilla-ism" although Central did not advocate the abandoning of guerrilla techniques.

The letter complained that the soviet areas had not yet been unified and that a provisional central government had still not been set up. The Party Central realized that the war had caused great difficulties in choosing a suitable place to convene the National Soviet Congress. However, the important question was not whether the Congress could be convened for the whole of China, nor even whether it could be convened for all the soviet areas. "The important thing is that we must have a soviet government of the masses to lead the civil war to overthrow the rule of the imperialist KMT and to develop the land revolution."²²

The Center's directive stated that the soviet government would be produced by a National Congress that would convene on the anniversary of the October Revolution, and there were to be no more time extensions. Prior to the Congress, there was to be a new election movement in the central soviet area, which would ensure that "all landlord elements, rich peasants, merchants, employers, and corrupt elements" would be eliminated from the organs of soviet government and the revolutionary organizations, so that soviet delegates would truly elect members of the "worker and peasant laboring masses." This work, said Central, had in the past been put off, not carried out, or carried out poorly. Now it had to be carried out successfully, even if it meant that delegates from other soviet areas would not be able to come to the Congress on time.²³

It is clear that this letter represented an attack by the Returned Student leadership in Shanghai on the policies pursued by Mao in the central

²⁰ *Resolution of the ECCI Presidium on the tasks of the CCP* (August 26, 1931). Printed in Jane Degras (ed.), *The Communist International 1919-1943: documents* (Three Volumes, London: Oxford University Press, 1965), III, p. 174.

²¹ *Chung-yang tui su-ch'ü chih-shih-hsin* (A directive letter of Central to the soviet areas), (September 1, 1931), SSC 14.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

soviet district.²⁴ For example, in addition to attacking Mao's land policies, Central attacked the idea of guerrilla warfare (which Mao favored) and urged the occupation by the Red Army of large cities (which Mao opposed). Furthermore, Mao wanted the main emphasis of operations to be in the rural areas, rather than directed towards the cities.²⁵ The directive was accepted by the First Party Congress of the Soviet Areas, held in November 1931,²⁶ and indicates that the Maoists had been unable to withstand the onslaught of the Returned Students, who carried the mantle of the official Party leadership and were backed by the prestige of Moscow. Mao had thus lost control of the CCP machine in the central soviet districts.

Progress toward the soviet congress was aided by the Mukden Incident of September 18, when Japan occupied Manchuria and distracted Chiang Kai-shek's attention from the prosecution of his third "bandit encirclement campaign," which was making successful inroads into the soviet areas. For almost two years, until April 1933, the soviet areas were to be relatively free of KMT military encroachments, and to enjoy their greatest period of stability and development.

It was in this atmosphere that electoral preparations got underway for the First National Soviet Congress. Propaganda documents concerning the Congress asked the question: "why do we have to hold the National Congress?" The stated answer was that it was necessary to summarize the experience of land distribution and soviet organization of several years. Furthermore, it would establish a soviet government of workers, peasants, and soldiers to unite and centralize all organization and work; and it would discuss and decide important laws of the soviet government and future development plans.²⁷ If one added to this list the desire of the Returned Student group to centralize organization and work under their own control, and to implement their own policies, it would become an accurate summary of the main reasons for convening the Congress.

On August 1, 1931, the Revolutionary Military Council laid down the electoral rights and regulations for the selection of delegates to the Soviet Congress.²⁸ It was stated that all people had the right to vote and to be

²⁴ For a different viewpoint, which argues that contemporaneous documents reveal no dispute between Mao and the Returned Students, see William F. Dorrell, "Transfer of Legitimacy in the Chinese Communist Party: Origins of the Maoist Myth," *China Quarterly*, No. 36 (October-December, 1968), pp. 45-60.

²⁵ RCQHP, pp. 198-200.

²⁶ *Su-ch'ü tang ti-i-tz'u tai-piao ta-hui t'ung-kuo: cheng-chih chueh-i-an* (Political Resolution adopted by the First Congress of the Party in the Soviet Areas), Central Bureau, Soviet Areas (November 1931), SSC 15. [The actual date of the Party Congress was November 1 (Wang Chien-min, *shih-kaio*, p. 288).]

²⁷ *Kuan-yü ch'üan-kuo su-wei-ai tai-piao ta-hui ti wen-ta* (Questions and Answers on the National Soviet Congress), reprinted by the Hsingkuo *hsien* soviet government (June 21, 1931), SSC 10.

²⁸ Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 423-424.

elected—with the exception of landlords, gentry, capitalists, rich peasants, those preaching religion for a living, participants in counterrevolutionary organizations, and those deprived of their public rights by the soviet government. All who were not included in one of these categories, and who earned their living by labor, were given electoral rights, provided they were over 16 years of age, regardless of sex or nationality.²⁹ On this basis, the *hsiang* was taken as the initial electoral unit, and delegates were elected using the ratios of one to every five workers and hired peasants and one to every 50 poor and middle peasants and others. At the *ch'ü* delegate conferences, every 20 workers and hired peasants elected one delegate, as did every 200 poor and middle peasants. The *hsien* was the final unit, and sent its representatives direct to the National Soviet Congress, using the ratio of one delegate for every 3,000 people.³⁰

In an overall comparison between these electoral rules and those of the Li Li-san Congress of 1930, one is struck by a considerable difference in emphasis which reflected the transfer of the energies and outlook of the CCP from the urban to the rural areas. The 1930 Li Li-san regulations³¹ placed heavy emphasis on election of delegates from the cities under KMT control, and laid out detailed proposals for selecting these delegates.

The 1931 regulations, however, as the title indicates, were concerned mainly with the soviet areas, and there were few references in the literature to activity on behalf of the Soviet Congress in non-soviet areas. In listing the areas and organizations from which the delegates came, documents of the Congress record only that some trade unions were represented, together with representatives from partisan groups from places like Hainan Island. There was apparently no substantial body of delegates coming from the urban proletariat. In fact the soviet movement remained a movement of the villages alone, and the Red Army never controlled the large towns held by the KMT (such as Kiukiang, Nanchang, or Kanchow) which lay within the soviet territories. The Central Soviet Area in the summer of 1931 comprised, according to one communist source, some 31 *hsien*, and measured 400 *li* from north to south and 300 *li* from east to west.³²

However, with reference to the election campaign of the summer and autumn of 1931, there is evidence indicating that elections were either not conducted at all, or that they were carried out in a manner which bore little relationship to any formal system of organization.

²⁹ *Ibid.* (These categories were virtually the same as those of the Li Li-san period.)

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 424. Separate regulations were drawn up for the Red Army and the cities.

³¹ *HCJP*, 52 (October 8, 1930), p. 2; 53 (October 9, 1930), p. 2; and Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 89–93.

³² Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 423.

To begin with, a Central Executive Committee directive issued shortly after the First Congress said that soviet organization had, in the past, been very imperfect. The administrative areas had been too large and inconvenient, and there were too many levels of government for the efficient communication of instructions. The directive said that neither mass meetings, delegate meetings nor joint meetings of chairmen had been convened to elect the various levels of the government, and further complained that the work division and work methods inside the various levels of government were very unsuitable—all of which was neither in accordance with the constitution or with the provisions made by Central.³³

Reform was also necessary, it was said, in order to oppose bureaucracy, commandism, and the separation of the soviets from the masses. It was also required to clear out rich peasants, rascals (*liu-mang*) and all reactionaries, and replace them with workers, hired and poor peasants, middle peasants, coolies and laboring women.³⁴ Central's September 1 letter went on to say that the soviet election movement had so far had very little success, that the lower levels of the soviets had become "*pan-ch'ai*" (or "routine work") organs; that the participation of the masses' delegates in daily work was extremely defective, and that landlords, rich peasants and merchants still managed many soviets and mass organizations.³⁵

A later source reported that voters frequently had no contact with the *ts'un* or *hsiang* soviets, which were supposed to be the basic soviet organizations of the regime. Furthermore, not one city (*ch'eng-shih*) soviet had been established.³⁶

Writing at the time of the election campaign for the Second Congress, the Preparatory Committee noted that there were many defects in the campaign for the First Congress. Residents, the committee stated, were not clearly distinguished between those having electoral rights and those not, and furthermore, "many of the masses did not fully realize that the election was their own to administer, an important part of their life, and thus we did not achieve the participation of the majority of electors in the election."³⁷

Judging by the results of the First Congress—which confirmed the control of Mao and his supporters in the soviet government—it would

³³ "Su-wei-ai chien-she chung-yao ti hsun-ling," (Important Instructions concerning Soviet Construction), *Hung-se chung-hua* (Red China), 2 (December 18, 1931), p. 4 [All future references to *Hung-se chung-hua* will be abbreviated to *HSCH*.]

³⁴ *Kuan-yü ch'üan-kuo su-wei-ai tai-piao ta-hui ti wen-ta* (see n. 27 above).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.

³⁶ Hsiang Ying, "Ti-fang su-wei-ai ti chien-she wen-t'i" (The Problem of Local Soviet Construction), *HSCH* 2 (December 18, 1931), p. 1.

³⁷ "Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui hsun-ling" (Chinese Soviet Republic CEC Order), *Hsuan-chü yun-tung chou-pao* (Election Campaign Weekly), 1 (August 25, 1933), p. 2, SSC 10. [Hereafter *HCYT*.]

seem that Mao's machine kept a tight grip on the electoral machinery so as to ensure the election of delegates with views sympathetic to their own. The evidence cited above shows clearly enough that the election was not an affair that involved the large mass of the soviet population in an orderly procedure. More probably, the Maoists hindered the movement to reform and re-elect the soviet administrative organs and arranged for the selection of their own representatives to the National Congress.

Apparently, at some time prior to September 1, the workers' and peasants' revolutionary committees (or soviets)—which were the provisional organs of the regime before the establishment of a central government—were abolished, and a "military organization" had been substituted for them.³⁸ In addition, the electoral regulations in force at that time were laid down by the Revolutionary Military Council.³⁹ Since Mao almost certainly retained his position as head of the General Political Department of the Revolutionary Military Council up to November 1931, and this body was known to have been running the land reform program during the year,⁴⁰ it is reasonable to assume that it was also in charge of the election movement, arranging the production of a majority of Congress delegates with pro-Mao sympathies.

LAWS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE CONGRESS

The First National Soviet Congress convened at dawn in Juichin, Kiangsi on November 7, 1931 (the anniversary of the Russian Revolution) with a ceremonial parade. Some 610 delegates were in attendance, representing the Central Soviet Area, West Fukien, Hsiang-o-kan, Hsiang-kan, Hsiang-o-hsi, Northeast Honan, and Hainan Island. Delegates also came from the Red Army's First and Third Army Corps, the Second, Sixth and Sixteenth Armies, and various independent divisions. The National Labor Federation, the Seamens Union, and Korea were also represented.⁴¹ About one quarter of the delegates were women.

No delegations from O-yü-wan, Kan-min-wan, Min-yueh-kan, or the Kwangsi Left and Right River soviets were reported present. Kan-min-wan and Min-yueh-kan had undoubtedly suffered during Chiang Kai-shek's "bandit encirclement campaigns:" what was left of them had probably joined with the central soviet area. The Kwangsi soviets were

³⁸ *Chung-yang tui su-ch'ü chih-shih-hsin* (see n. 21 above), p. 4 & p. 19.

³⁹ Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 423.

⁴⁰ *Pu-tso tiao-ch'a mei-you fa-yen-ch'üan, put-tso cheng-ch'ueh ti tiao-ch'a t'ung-yang mei-you fa-yen-ch'üan* (If you have not made an investigation, then you have no right to speak, and if you have not made a correct investigation you have no right to speak). Notice of the General Political Department, Revolutionary Military Council, director Mao Tse-tung (April 2, 1931), SSC 6.

⁴¹ *Hung-ch'i chou-pao* (Red Flag Weekly), 24 (December, 1931), p. 2. [Hereafter HCCP.]

still in existence but probably did not send delegates because of their distance from Juichin.

O-yü-wan was the most important and stable soviet next to the central soviet district itself. Two important Central Committee members, Chang Kuo-t'ao and Shen Tse-min, had been sent there in April to implement the policies of the Fourth Plenum. According to Chang, delegates were not sent only because of the presence of KMT troops between the O-yü-wan soviet area and Kiangsi.⁴²

The main items on the agenda of the Congress were the formal establishment of the Chinese Soviet Republic and the election of a soviet government. The Congress was also to approve a political program, a constitution, a land law and a labor law, resolutions on the Red Army and economic policy, and other laws and decrees. None of these laws or resolutions passed by the assembled delegates had their origin at the Congress. They had all been basically decided on well beforehand, and most of them had their roots in Comintern directives or CCP policies of 1930 during the reign of Li Li-san, or stemmed back even earlier to the Sixth Congress of the CCP in Moscow in 1928.

A Russian source disclosed that the majority of the proposals put to the Congress were circulated in draft form as early as March 1931,⁴³ and some days before the Congress was due to convene, an article written by Lo Fu, a leader of the Returned Student group, announced all the major decisions of the Congress.⁴⁴

The First Congress did not adopt a full constitution, but only a constitutional outline introduced by the Central Committee.⁴⁵ Passed on November 7, 1931, this was shorter but similar in principle to that drawn up by Li Li-san's Central Preparatory Committee in 1930. It was not a law laid down for immediate implementation in the soviet areas; rather it was a statement of aims which were to be put into practice over the whole of China "after the defeat of the imperialists and the Kuomintang." Currently, a start was to be made in carrying out the constitutional pro-

⁴² Hsiao, Vol. I, p. 172.

⁴³ *Sovety v Kitae: sbornik material ov i dokumentov* (The Soviets in China: a collection of materials and documents), Moscow, 1933, p. 417. Quoted in Charles B. McLane, *Soviet Policy and the Chinese Communists, 1931-1946* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 38.

⁴⁴ Szu Mei (Chang Wen-t'ien), *Ch'ing-chu su-wei-ai ti-i-tz'u ch'üan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui* (Celebrate the First National Soviet Congress) Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 429-430. The draft resolutions and laws had in fact circulated in book form before the Congress so that Party members could discuss them and make suggestions for revision to the Central Bureau of the CCP. This comment, and the drafts, are in *Ch'üan-kuo su-wei-ai ti-i-tz'u tai-piao ta-hui ts'ao-an* (Draft Resolutions of the First National Soviet Congress), proposed by the CCP Central Committee; reprinted by the General Political Department, Third Army Corps, First Front Army, Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, n. d. SSC 16.

⁴⁵ "Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo hsien-fa ta-kang," (Constitutional Outline of the Chinese Soviet Republic), *HCCP*, 25 (December 1931), pp. 2-7.

visions in the CCP controlled areas. According to the outline, the state form of the Chinese Soviet Republic was to be a workers and peasants democratic dictatorship, a transitional form *en route* to a proletarian dictatorship. This was the identical form adopted by Lenin during the 1905 revolution in Russia, although circumstances were quite different. Lenin's formula was aimed at a coalition government of his Social Democrats with the Socialist Revolutionaries, in a provisional revolutionary government in which the peasants would be represented by *their own party*.⁴⁶ In China however, both the workers and the peasants were to be represented by one party—the Communist Party. Consequently, the Chinese Soviet Republic made no claim to being anything but a communist party dictatorship.

In the interval between Congresses, the constitution provided, there was to be a Central Executive Committee [CEC] which would be the supreme executive power. The CEC in turn was to appoint a Council of People's Commissars (*jen-min wei-yuan-hui*) [CPC] as the highest administrative organ of the state.

The soviet government pledged itself to free China from the "yoke of imperialism," and threatened to nationalize much of the property owned by the "imperialists." However, it was declared that foreign enterprises would be allowed to continue production for the present, provided that they complied with all the laws of the soviet government. As in the constitution of the Soviet Union, national minorities were given the right of self-determination. This meant, in theory, that they could either choose to join with the Chinese Soviet Republic or break away and set up their own state.

Freedom of speech, assembly, and the press were guaranteed to the worker and peasant laboring masses. It spoke in favor of democracy for the workers and peasants, and against the democracy of the landlords and bourgeoisie, who were to be deprived of all political freedom. In addition, the outline affirmed that the goal of the soviet regime was the liberation of women, asserted that it would introduce free and universal education for all the worker and peasant toiling masses—the progress of the class struggle permitting—and guaranteed "true" religious freedom, although priests, monks, and other clergy were deprived of the right to vote. Finally, in line with international communist policy after the Manchurian Incident, the soviet regime expressed its desire to form a revolutionary alignment with the world proletariat and oppressed nationalities, and proclaimed its loyalty to the Soviet Union.

The Political Program of the Chinese Soviet Republic, adopted by the Soviet Congress, was a general collection of basic principles, and was actually listed before the constitutional outline in the first proclamation

⁴⁶ Leonard Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1960), p. 78. Emphasis added.

of the CEC.⁴⁷ Unlike the constitutional outline, the political program differs considerably from its counterpart of the Li Li-san period. The major distinction between the two was on agrarian policy. The 1930 Li Li-san document prohibited the buying, selling, or leasing of land, as well as the mortgage system. It also urged the nationalization of land. This policy was denounced later by many Comintern directives.⁴⁸ The program passed by the 1931 Congress reflected the views of those directives and permitted what would have been forbidden by Li Li-san.⁴⁹

The Labor Law passed by the First National Soviet Congress⁵⁰ was in substance the same as the draft circulated earlier.⁵¹ The draft law itself was almost identical in its major provisions with those included in the Comintern directive of July 1931, and with those of the Labor Protection Law put forward in 1930 by Li Li-san.

The final Labor Law was fuller than its draft, and stipulated that it covered all wage earners in factories, workshops and other productive enterprises as well as governmental, co-operative and private institutions. The other provisions added to the draft law in general increased the benefits and advantages to the workers.

The Labor Law was clearly designed with an industrial proletariat in mind. It provided for trade unions, collective bargaining, an eight-hour working day (less for minors), two weeks' holiday per year on full pay, a minimum wage, and a social insurance fund contributed to only by the employer, which would provide sick benefits, old age pensions, etc. The final clause stated that the Labor Law did not apply to non-contiguous soviet areas, whose local governments could make their own labor laws.

Clearly this labor law could not be implemented in a backward economic area, made up largely of peasants, whose only "industry" was agriculture and whose only "workers" were handicraft workers and village artisans. No doubt it was passed in the hopes of soon capturing "one or more key administrative or industrial centers." As this never happened, its value must have remained purely on the level of propaganda.

As was seen in the discussion on the Political Program, the Land Law passed by the First Congress was the law that differed most from its predecessors of the Li Li-san period. The Provisional Land Law passed by the May 1930 conference of delegates from the soviet areas prohibited the buying, selling, and leasing of land; condemned the "mortgage"

⁴⁷ *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui pu-kao ti-i hao* (The First Proclamation of the CEC of the Chinese Soviet Republic), December 1, 1931; SSC 16.

⁴⁸ For example, the Comintern letter received by the CCP on November 16, 1930 (SSC 12), and the July 1931 letter of the ECCI Presidium to the CCP (SSC 15).

⁴⁹ *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo cheng-kang* (1931), article 6.

⁵⁰ *Lao-tung fa, CRBRD*, pp. 1341-56.

⁵¹ *Ch'üan-kuo su-wei-ai ti-i-tz'u tai-piao ta-hui ts'ao-an*, pp. 15-25. Some differences are discussed in Hsiao, Vol. I, pp. 181-2.

system; and advocated collectivization of land.⁵² These policies were condemned as premature in the Comintern directive of July 23, 1930.

The Land Law passed by the Congress spoke approvingly of the nationalization of land, but said the putting into practice of the measure would have to await the victory of the land revolution in important regions of China, and have the support of the peasants. However, said the Law, the soviet government at the present time should explain the advantages of land nationalization to the peasantry.⁵³

Following the anti-Li Li-san line, the Land Law also permitted the leasing, and buying and selling of land, but cautioned that the rich peasants and landlords were not to be allowed to buy back their confiscated land. The mortgage (*tien-ya*) system was abolished by article nine.

The aim of the Land Law was to correct the policy of land reform in the soviet areas during 1930 and 1931 which had proved to be ineffective. In many places, the landlords and rich peasants, by pretending to support soviet policies, managed either to retain control of their land, or to be in a position to control the implementation of the land reform policy, which meant that they either escaped expropriation completely or redistributed the best land to themselves. The poor peasants got no land or poor land, and their continued requests for land caused repeated redistributions, which resulted in reduced crops.⁵⁴

The 1931 Land Law therefore confiscated the land of all the landlords and rich gentry, without compensation—their land to be given to the poor, middle and hired peasants. The land belonging to ancestral shrines and temples was to be confiscated, but with the support of the peasants so as not to offend their religious feelings. The land of the rich peasant was also to be confiscated but, unlike the landlords and gentry, he was entitled to receive some “comparatively poor” land in the subsequent redistribution, providing that he cultivated it with his own labor. The confiscated land was to be distributed according to the principle of equal distribution, although the law protected the interests of the middle peasants by allowing them not to participate in the operation of this principle if the majority of them were unwilling. This clearly hit at the rich peasants, who sought

⁵² In *CRBRD*, pp. 918–921. “Mortgage” is the usual translation of the Chinese term “*tien-ya*.” In fact, the *tien* system, in which a peasant makes over the title deeds of his land to a landowner in return for a loan, differs considerably from the Western mortgage system, mainly in the rights of conditional ownership granted by the peasant to the landlord. A translation of this Land Law is in Hsiao Tso-liang, *The Land Revolution in China 1930–1934: The Basic Documents* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), pp. 127–130.

⁵³ *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo t'u-ti fa* (Land Law of the Chinese Soviet Republic), December 1, 1931, Article 12. SSC 18. Translated in Hsiao, *Land Revolution*, pp. 186–191.

⁵⁴ *Rätechina*, part III, *passim*, quoted in Brandt *et al. Documentary History*, p. 219. Also, Pavel Mif, *China's Struggle for Freedom* (London: Modern Books Ltd., n. d.), p. 76.

to have the land distributed according to the productive implements possessed—a measure that would have gained them land at the expense of the poorer peasants.

In comparing the draft land law introduced by the CC of the Party to the final Land Law passed by the Congress, it is clear that the final law protected the interests of the middle peasants more than the draft by allowing them to opt out of the land reform under the principle of equal distribution if a majority of them so desired.

The difference in articles 7 and 8 of the final law reflected differences in land reform with respect to the rich peasants. Both the draft and final laws were in agreement that the rich peasants' land should be confiscated, and that when it was distributed, he should receive a share, although not land of the best quality. With regard to the criteria for distribution however, the final law made more specific and concrete the discrimination against the rich peasants.

The principle of land distribution enunciated by Mao in his February 7 (1930) Land Law—"draw on the plentiful to make up for the scarce" and "draw on the fat to make up for the lean"—appears in neither the draft nor final 1931 Land Law. This principle was attacked as a "rich peasant line" by the Returned Students group in, for example, the September 1 directive letter, and at the First Congress of the Party in the Soviet Areas.

The resolution on the Red Army dealt essentially with questions of military administration, and did not concern itself with matters of strategy or tactics.⁵⁵ The resolution as passed was identical to the draft resolution proposed earlier by the Party, with the addition of a section dealing with special privileges to be granted to fighters in the Red Army.⁵⁶

Another resolution of importance passed by the Congress was that on economic policy.⁵⁷ Like most of the resolutions, it was virtually identical to its draft introduced earlier by the Party.⁵⁸ The draft, in turn, borrowed heavily from the Li Li-san Political Program passed at the May 1930 Conference of Delegates.

The resolution stated that the soviet government would nationalize all the key enterprises of the imperialists. Industries belonging to Chinese were not to be nationalized but were to be run by the workers—ownership remaining with the capitalist. Little was said about economic policy toward agriculture, presumably because this field was covered by the Land Law.

⁵⁵ *Hung-chün wen-t'i chueh-i-an* (Resolution on the Question of the Red Army), November 1931, SSC 16.

⁵⁶ *Ch'üan-kuo su-wei-ai ti-i-tz'u tai-piao ta-hui ts'ao-an*, pp. 1-7, SSC 16.

⁵⁷ *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo ching-chi cheng-ts'e* (Economic Policies of the Chinese Soviet Republic) (December 1, 1931), SSC 11.

⁵⁸ *Ching-chi cheng-ts'e ts'ao-an* (Draft Resolution on Economic Policy), printed in *Ch'üan-kuo su-wei-ai ti-i-tz'u tai-piao ta-hui ts'ao-an*, pp. 27-30, SSC 16.

A further resolution passed by the Congress was a series of regulations concerning the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate [WPI].⁵⁹ Of all the drafts introduced prior to the Congress by the Party CC, there was a greater difference between this draft and its final product than in any other law or resolution.⁶⁰ The organizational system of the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate as defined in the final resolution was more formalized than that of the draft. It provided for a system of WPI's from the central level down to *ch'ü* and *shih* soviets, each level under the control of the respective soviet Executive Committee, and at the same time receiving orders from higher level WPI organs.

Duties of the WPI included the supervision of state enterprises and organs, overseeing the implementation of the labor, land or other laws, supervising soviet organs and economic policy, and the referring of criminal acts such as bribery and corruption to the courts for action. These tasks were in substance the same as laid down in the draft resolution except that the draft specifically included the preparation and conduct of soviet elections.

The draft law had made explicit the close connection between the WPI (a government organ) and the Party. It specified close links between the WPI and the Party's inspection committee; and said that, although the two organs were completely independent, the Party's inspection committee personnel were all members of the WPI, and participated in its work. However, while this draft article was not included in the final resolution, there is no reason to suppose that close links between the Party and the WPI were not established after the latter's creation in November 1931, and that consequently the WPI became an organ for the Party supervision and control of soviet organs.⁶¹

At the first plenary session of the CEC, held on November 27, new regulations were announced concerning the demarcation of administrative areas, the organization of local soviet regimes, and electoral procedures. As these were a fairly complex series of regulations, they must have been under consideration for some time and were undoubtedly discussed at the Congress. These regulations were generally designed to rectify previous deficiencies, and to create a more permanent and organized administra-

⁵⁹ *Kung-nung chien-ch'a-pu tsu-chih t'iao-li* (Organizational Regulations of the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate), passed by the First National Congress of the Chinese Soviet Republic (November 1931), SSC 10.

⁶⁰ *Kung-nung chien-ch'a-ch'u ti tsu-chih hsi-t'ung yü jen-wu ts'ao-an* (Draft Resolution on the Organizational Structure and Tasks of the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate), in *Ch'üan-kuo su-wei-ai ti-i-tz'u tai-piao ta-hui ts'ao-an*, pp. 31-36, SSC 16.

⁶¹ Other laws and resolutions passed by the Congress included: *The Marriage Regulations*; *A Letter from the Chinese Soviet First National Congress to the Workers and Laboring Masses of China*; *Manifesto of the Provisional Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic*; and *The Resolution on the Question of National Minorities in China*. Several official telegrams were also dispatched.

five system so as to bring the regime into closer connection with the masses and facilitate control of the people in the soviet areas. As Hsiang Ying wrote in a *Red China* editorial, the various local soviet governments were not very well established. He went on to say: "If we do not have completely healthy local soviets, then we are not able to consolidate the basis of the Chinese Soviet Republic. If we do not have local regimes with a strong work capacity, then we are not able fully to put into practice all the political programs of the soviets to unite with the countless worker and peasant laboring masses, and will not be able to go and strive for the victory of the soviets over all China."⁶²

According to the new regulations, the old system of administrative areas in China was more suited to feudal rule than soviet democratic centralism. Also, because of wartime conditions, the soviets had developed unevenly, some occupying only part of a province, *hsien*, or *ch'ü*, and some straddling parts of several provinces. In addition, the original system of administrative areas demarcated by the soviets had proved to be too large for administrative convenience. Furthermore, there were too many levels of government so that the transmission of orders took a long time to reach the grass roots. A new system was therefore required.⁶³ Basically, the new regulations prescribed that the *hsien*, *ch'ü*, *shih*, and *hsiang* soviet areas were to be demarcated anew; that the *ts'un* and small group organizations were abolished; and that the *hsiang* and *shih* areas were to be the basic level soviets of the regime.⁶⁴

The sphere of jurisdiction of the provincial soviet was to be decided by the central government according to the military situation and the nature of the terrain. The jurisdiction of the *hsien* soviet depended on whether it was in mountainous territory or level land. In the case of mountain areas, the *hsien* was to command a maximum of 12 *ch'ü*, but this could be increased to 15 in the case of level land. If possible, the actual *hsien* soviet organization was to be established in a big market town. Similarly, in the case of the *ch'ü* and *hsiang* soviets, their areas of jurisdiction (or total population) could be larger in mountain areas than on level land. When redefining the jurisdiction of the *hsiang*, local soviets were warned to use the principle of "not changing the old field division units,"⁶⁵ "in order to avoid generating disputes among the masses."⁶⁶

The kind of soviet organization that was to be established on this administrative base was as follows: each lower level soviet sent delegates to form the next higher level soviet's delegate conference, from the *hsiang*

⁶² HSCH, 2, p. 1.

⁶³ *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo hua-fen hsing-cheng ch'ü-yü chan-hsing t'iao-li* (Temporary Regulations of the Chinese Soviet Republic for the Demarcation of Administrative Areas), printed in Wang Chien-min, *shih-kao*, pp. 328-9.

⁶⁴ Wang Chien-min, *shih-kao*, pp. 328-9.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ HSCH, 2, p. 1.

and *shih* up to the provincial and central levels. The organization of the provincial, *hsien*, and *ch'ü* level soviets were the same. Each of these three delegate conferences elected an Executive Committee [EC], which in turn elected a presidium and a chairman of the Presidium. Underneath the presidium were set up various departments for land, finance, labor, military affairs, culture, health, etc. In general, from higher to lower levels there was a progressive reduction in numbers of delegates, the plenums met more frequently, and the delegates had shorter periods of office.⁶⁷

The structure of the basic level soviet organizations, the *shih* and *hsiang* soviets, was simpler. The *shih* soviet had a presidium, which met once a week, but no EC. The *hsiang* soviet possessed neither an EC nor a presidium. Instead, the *hsiang* soviet itself was to be responsible for all affairs, with a plenary session convening once every 10 days, under the guidance of a chairman.

Finally, the first plenum of the CEC passed a set of electoral regulations.⁶⁸ The initial step in soviet elections was for the urban soviets or (in rural areas) district (*ch'ü*) executive committees to organize an electoral committee to manage the election for that area. The fact that the electoral committees were to be formed by the soviets, rather than elected by the general population, meant that from the start the election would be controlled by those having power over the soviet machinery. Once formed, the electoral committee had to compile a list of all those in its district who were eligible to vote. Then the total number of voters was to be announced, together with the number of delegates permitted by this figure. The list of names of those deprived of electoral rights was also to be made public.

The actual process of selecting delegates to attend the National Congress was a complicated one and, by its nature, virtually guaranteed that no one unacceptable to the Party could be a delegate. At the lowest level, election meetings were to be held in the urban areas on the basis of each "unit of production." In the countryside, meetings were organized with the village (*ts'un*), or groups of villages, as the basic unit.

The meeting was to begin as soon as half the total possible number of voters was present, and was to elect first the full delegates and then the alternates. Election was to be determined by a majority vote on a show of hands: the lack of any secret ballot thus facilitated official supervision.

Delegates to the *hsiang* soviet were allocated on a ratio of one to every fifty residents of the *hsiang*. The *hsiang* soviets then elected delegates to an all-*ch'ü* soviet conference (one delegate to four hundred residents).

⁶⁷ This and subsequent information on soviet organization, is drawn from *Ti-fang su-wei-ai cheng-fu chan-hsing tsu-chih t'iao-li* (Local Soviet Government Temporary Organization Regulations), in Wang Chien-min *shih-kao*, pp. 341-4.

⁶⁸ *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo ti hsuan-chü hsi-tse* (Detailed Electoral Regulations of the Chinese Soviet Republic), in *CRBRD*, pp. 814-823.

The *ch'ü* conference then sent delegates to the *hsien* (one to fifteen hundred residents).

The *hsien* conference duly elected delegates to the provincial conference (one delegate to twenty-five thousand rural residents). Finally, the provincial conference elected delegates to attend the National Soviet Congress (one to fifty thousand rural residents). In addition, candidate delegates were permitted at each level up to one-fifth the number of full delegates.⁶⁹

The local population of the soviet areas participated in only the very first of the series of elections—from then onward the elections were of delegates voting for other delegates, an indirect system which preserved soviet control over the end product while giving the appearance of democracy for all.

It is now appropriate to discuss the way the soviet leaders envisaged that this soviet organization would function—how soviet political processes would operate to produce personnel to man the soviet structure, and how the structure would operate as a two-way transmission belt, delivering orders from the higher levels to the masses, and reflecting information and public opinion back to the leadership.

In the past (i.e., throughout 1930–1931 up to the time of the First Congress) it appeared that many of the *hsiang* and *shih* soviets had existed in name only, and that few delegate meetings had been convened.⁷⁰ Hsiang Ying pointed out that “the previous reckless concept of re-election and reform must be discarded,” that these processes had to be carried out carefully in order to avoid having to repeat the process time and again. In the past, the masses had had little or no contact with the various sections and departments set up under the *ch'ü* or *hsien*, so now it had been decided to create the *hsiang* and *shih* soviets as the basic level organs of the regime, and to structure them as delegate conferences rather than have a committee system in order that all the soviet delegates at these two levels would be responsible directly for all the work to the whole body of voters within the area.⁷¹

The task of re-structuring was under the command of the various provincial governments. Initially, the provincial soviet was to call meetings of “responsible personnel” from the *hsien* and *ch'ü* levels, to be held at the seat of the provincial government. Meetings of responsible personnel from lower levels would follow, under the guidance of the provincial soviet. These meetings were to discuss in detail the task of soviet construction and how to put it into practice. Although the soviet organs were to be constructed from the bottom up, supervision and con-

⁶⁹ Separate ratios were established for urban residents.

⁷⁰ *HSCH*, 2, p. 4.

⁷¹ *HSCH*, 2, p. 1.

trol of this process proceeded from the top down, with the *hsien* commanding the *ch'ü*, and the *ch'ü* commanding the *hsiang*.

Following the discussion meetings, the process of electing soviet organs started with the *hsiang* and *shih* soviets. Some one to two months prior to the actual voting, electoral committees, composed of delegates from local Party branches, local government, and various people's organizations, were established to prepare for the election. This represented a significant intrusion by the Party into local soviet organization. These committees were the means by which the leadership controlled the elections and the resulting soviet apparatus. The preparatory work of the committees entailed compiling an electoral register which listed on a red poster those possessing electoral rights and those under sixteen years of age and therefore without electoral rights, and on a white poster the names of those deprived of electoral rights. These posters were to be made public in the areas where the elections were to be held, at the same time that propaganda for the elections was to be carried out by the committee.

The electoral committee was also in charge of the vital task of drawing up a list of candidates for election. The list of candidates for election at the basic levels of the *hsiang* and *shih* soviets was particularly important, since only at this level did the voting population of the soviet areas participate in electing government representatives, inasmuch as all the organs of the higher soviet levels were formed from delegates of lower level soviets, with no direct election by the people.

The candidate list had to contain at least twice the number of people to be elected, and to contain a sufficient number of worker and peasant delegates "to guarantee working-class leadership, and a strong foundation for the worker-peasant alliance." The list was then forwarded to meetings of the members of mass organizations, trade unions, poor peasant corps, mutual aid associations, anti-imperialist alliances, and female worker-peasant conferences. A major task of these meetings was to criticize candidates on the list who were known "to care only for their individual lives, who were inactive in work, or had a bureaucratic style of work." These people had a note made under their names, so that "the electors, before participating in the election meetings, have previous preparation as to whether they should or should not elect certain men." When the electoral meeting was convened, the electoral committee was to report on electoral work, then the responsible members of the *hsiang* and *shih* would report on government work, followed by statements from higher level government delegates, and finally the names on the candidates list would be voted on one at a time.

In this way the leaders of the regime hoped to absorb a large number of activists into local soviet work at all levels of the government. To summarize Hsiang Ying, this was the basic work of local soviet con-

struction; and soviet work personnel had to devote great effort and time to it to ensure understanding, enthusiastic support, and participation by the broad masses—for only then could the soviet base be really established to make possible the ensuing elections of the *ch'ü*, *hsien* and provincial soviets.⁷²

Having been established, the *hsiang* soviet became the basic unit of the administrative organization of the regime, through which all policies, laws, and decisions were transmitted to the people, and by which the people were mobilized to carry out these policies. Organizationally, in order to foster a close relationship between government and people, the *hsiang* soviet was divided up so that each soviet delegate was responsible for a neighborhood of 30–70 residents. These delegates were to work at the *ts'un* level: “paying attention and listening carefully to the criticisms of the masses, and suggestions concerning government work, without delay understanding the masses’ difficulties and demands, so as to guarantee the coordination of all work and the masses practical interests.”⁷³ At this level, therefore, the soviet representative would be in constant personal contact with the residents within his small area, able to draw them into political life, and to break down some of the localist barriers of loyalty to units lower than the state—such as family or village—that hampered the execution of soviet policies.

For every 3–7 delegates, there was elected one chief delegate, whose task it was to distribute work to the other delegates, and transmit to them the decisions of the *hsiang* soviet presidia. This exposition shows up the basic characteristics of the *hsiang* soviet as an important two-way transmission belt of the soviet regime, helping the leaders implement policy, and ascertaining the reactions of the population at the same time.

CREATION OF A SOVIET GOVERNMENT

Having passed all the aforementioned decrees, the delegates to the Congress set about electing the personnel of the soviet government. The first body elected was the Central Executive Committee composed of 63 members (see Table 1). There were no candidate members.

Among those elected to the Central Executive Committee were Mao Tse-tung, Hsiang Ying, Chang Kuo-t'ao, Wang Ming, Chou En-lai, Chu Teh, Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, Jen Pi-shih, Lin Piao, Liu Shao-ch'i, P'eng Teh-huai and Shen Tse-min.

The CEC was to be the highest political organ of the Chinese soviet government when the National Congress was not in session. On November 27 the CEC had its first meeting and elected Mao Tse-tung as Chair-

⁷² *HSCH*, 2, p. 1.

⁷³ Ho Chung-jen, “Ti-erh-tz'u kuo-nei ko-ming chan-cheng shih-ch'i ko-ming ken-chü-ti ti chi-ts'eng cheng-ch'üan chien-she” (Basic level construction of a political regime in the revolutionary bases during the second revolutionary civil war period), *Kuang-ming Jih-pao* (Bright Daily) (June 27, 1953), p. 5.

man. By virtue of this post, Mao became Chairman of the Chinese Soviet Republic, a post which he was to hold until the collapse of the Republic in October 1934. Hsiang Ying and Chang Kuo-t'ao were elected as Vice-Chairmen.

TABLE 1
ALPHABETICAL LIST OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEMBERS ELECTED AT THE FIRST NATIONAL SOVIET CONGRESS,
NOVEMBER 1931*

41	Chang Hua-hsien	15	Kuan Hsiang-ying
3	Chang Kuo-t'ao	16	K'ung Ho-ch'ung
8	Chang Ting-ch'eng	60	Li Tsung-po
49	Chang Yun-i	24	Lin Piao
31	Ch'en Cheng-jen	59	Liu Chien-chung
38	Ch'en Fu-yuan	56	Liu Kuang-wan
13	Ch'en Shao-yü (Wang Ming)	29	Liu Shao-ch'i
48	Ch'en I	61	Liu Sheng-yuan
25	Ch'en Yü	30	Liu Ta-ch'ao
4	Chou En-lai	47	Lo Ping-hui
50	Chou I-li	26	Lo Teng-hsien
6	Chu Teh	5	Lu Fu-t'an
7	Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai	51	Lu Teh-kuang
34	Ch'ü Teng-kao	1	Mao Tse-tung
12	Fan Lo-ch'un	37	P'eng Kuei
17	Fang Chih-min	14	P'eng Teh-huai
19	Ho Lung	54	Shao Shih-p'ing
42	Ho Shu-heng	20	Shen Tse-min
27	Hsia Hsi	21	T'an Chen-lin
2	Hsiang Ying	9	Teng Fa
46	Hsiao Heng-t'ai	28	Teng Tzu-hui
11	Hsu Hsi-ken	45	T'eng Tai-yuan
53	Hsu T'eh-li	23	Tseng Shan
52	Hu Chün-ho	33	Ts'ui Ch'i
44	Hu Hai	35	Tuan Teh-ch'ang
22	Huang P'ing	10	Wang Chia-hsiang
43	Huang Su	62	Wang Yung-sheng
55	Hung Tzu-ch'ing	40	Wei Pa-ch'ün
18	Jen Pi-shih	58	Wu Chih-min
63	Juan Hsiao-hsien	57	Yü Han-chao
36	Ko Yao-shan	32	Yuan Teh-sheng
39	Ku Ta-ts'un		

* This list is taken from an original copy of the *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui pu-kao, ti-i-hao* (Announcement 1 of the Central Executive Council of the Chinese Soviet Republic, SSC 16). Also printed in *HSCH*, 1 (December 11, 1931), p. 2. The numbers represent the order in which the names were listed in the announcement, and probably indicate the relative numbers of votes received.

On the same day, the CEC also elected a Council of People's Commissars [CPC] (or cabinet) as the central administrative organ of the Republic. Its membership composition was as follows: Wang Chia-hsiang, foreign affairs; Chu Teh, military affairs; Hsiang Ying, labor affairs; Teng Tzu-hui, financial affairs; Chang Ting-ch'eng, land; Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, education; Chou I-li, internal affairs; Chang Kuo-t'ao, judicial affairs.

As with the CEC, Mao was elected Chairman of the CPC, with Hsiang Ying and Chang Kuo-t'ao as Vice-Chairmen.

In addition to these eight commissariats, a Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate was created, which was not directly controlled by the CPC, although its head, Ho Shu-heng, was a commissar like the other heads of departments. Unlike the other commissariats, this was set up as the result of a draft resolution proposed by the Party's Central Committee, which was adopted by the Congress. Finally, under the CPC a State Political Security Bureau was established, with Teng Fa as its head.

In order to analyze the evidence provided by the proceedings of the First National Soviet Congress concerning the inner-Party struggle existing in the CCP at the time, it is necessary initially to return to the policies adopted by the Congress. The origins of these resolutions and laws can be traced back, in the main, to the 1928–1930 period between the Sixth Congress of the CCP and the fall of Li Li-san. Therefore the impact of the Fourth Plenum and the Returned Student leadership should not be over-estimated. However, a considerable divergence of opinion can be discerned between the Returned Students, and Mao and his followers in the soviet areas. Writing some years after the event, the Maoist leadership strongly criticized the leadership of the Returned Students for the period from the Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee (January 1931) to the Tsunyi Conference of January 1935, held on the Long March.⁷⁴

Mao's general thesis is that the Returned Students applied an "incorrect" line, particularly with respect to military policy and policy towards the peasants. In the military sphere, because the central leadership "greatly exaggerated both the current crisis of the Kuomintang regime and the growth of the revolutionary forces . . . it once again put forward many adventurist proposals, such as the seizure of key cities by the Red Army. . . ."⁷⁵ Furthermore, the Returned Student exponents of the "Third Left Line"⁷⁶ underestimated the importance of peasant guerrilla warfare and rural base areas, and "were forever dreaming that the struggle of the workers and the other masses in the cities would suddenly . . . erupt

⁷⁴ RCQHP, pp. 177–225.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁷⁶ A term used by the Maoist leadership to describe the policies of the Returned Student leadership during the latter's period of dominance. (The first two "Left Lines" were those of Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, 1927–8; and Li Li-san, 1930.)

into armed insurrections in key cities,” and “they did not realize that they had to adapt themselves to dispersed rural areas and to protracted guerrilla warfare.”⁷⁷

According to the account of a Mr. Chen Jan, who was reportedly present in the Kiangsi area during the period, the Central Committee favored a skilled Red Army capable of large-scale operations, the imitation of Soviet experience with political commissars, and reliance on mobile and positional warfare. Mao, who favored a peasant guerrilla force, opposed these ideas as “bookish Marxism-Leninism unsuitable for combat and Soviet military experiences unadaptable to China.”⁷⁸

Mao opposed “positional warfare and so-called regular warfare, which relied solely on the main forces,”⁷⁹ and wished to rely on peasant guerrilla warfare, which had served the Red Army well during the first three of Chiang Kai-shek’s “bandit encirclement” campaigns of 1930–1931. He consequently believed in a moderate agrarian policy that would win the support of the majority of peasants—support that was vital for a successful guerrilla policy. Mao’s initially extremely radical land policies that were implemented on Chingkangshan had not succeeded in producing this peasant support that was needed if the soviet areas were to survive.⁸⁰ The early policy of confiscating the land of all the peasants was ameliorated somewhat in April 1929,⁸¹ and by Mao’s land law of February 1930.⁸² These more moderate proposals, together with other “rightist errors,” were the basis of the “rich peasant line” which was attacked by the Returned Student leadership as being “the main danger in the Party at present.”⁸³

After the Fourth Plenum, which according to Mao “played no positive or constructive role,” the glaring contrast between the successes of Mao and the Red Army in the soviet areas and the waning influence of the Party in the cities naturally forced the new leadership to pay increasing attention to the situation in the countryside and to attempt to put their policies into practice there, which led to the clash with Mao and his supporters.

After the Fourth Plenum, the Returned Students sent representatives to all parts of the country to oppose Mao’s policies. However, before the

⁷⁷ RCQHP, pp. 199 and 200.

⁷⁸ Warren Kuo, *Issues and Studies*, III, 8, p. 45.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

⁸⁰ See Stuart Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (Harmondsworth: Pelican Books, 1966), pp. 130–131; *Selected Works*, I, p. 87. For details on the relationship between agrarian policies and mass mobilization, see Ilpyong J. Kim, “Mass Mobilization Policies and Techniques Developed in the Period of the Chinese Soviet Republic,” in A. Doak Barnett (ed.), *Chinese Communist Politics in Action* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), pp. 78–98.

⁸¹ Schram, *Mao Tse-tung*, p. 137.

⁸² *CRBRD*, pp. 912–918.

⁸³ RCQHP, pp. 186–187.

“erroneous line” of the new leadership could be implemented, the Red Army was victorious in smashing the two military campaigns of the Kuomintang (spring and summer 1931) because of “the correct leadership of Comrade Mao Tse-tung.”⁸⁴

According to Mao, his progressive loss of power was accelerated after the Returned Student leaders arrived in Juichin in January 1933, where they “elbowed aside Mao Tse-tung’s leadership, especially his leadership in the Red Army, and imposed and carried out their own wrong policies.”⁸⁵ Mao could well be wrong on the date of the move, but there is unfortunately little hard and fast evidence for the date of the transfer of the CC. Various observers have put it between the summer of 1931 and January 1934.

The probability is that a combination of dates is most accurate, based on the assumption that the CC travelled not as a body but, for the sake of safety, as individuals by differing routes over a substantial period of time. This is particularly likely as not all the CC went to the Central Soviet Area. In 1931, leading Party figures such as Chou En-lai, Hsiang Ying, and Jen Pi-shih, went to the Juichin area; Hsia Hsi went to Hsiang-o-hsi; and Chang Kuo-t’ao, Ch’en Ch’ang-hao and Shen Tse-min moved to O-yü-wan. A newly formed rump Central Bureau was left in Shanghai headed by Liu Shao-ch’i. In late 1932 or early 1933, Lo Fu, Po Ku, and Liu Shao-ch’i transferred to the Central Soviet Area. In early 1933 the CC formally began functioning in the soviet areas. However, while this corroborates Mao’s statements, it should be noted that large numbers of Returned Student supporters, and the bulk of the CC apparatus, moved prior to the establishment of the CC in the soviet areas.⁸⁶

In addition to the date of the transfer of the Central Committee from Shanghai, there are other problems in this retrospective interpretation of the period by the Maoist leadership. Difficulties in the analysis of the statement are compounded by conflicts between what Mao said at the time (in the 1930’s) and what he stated in 1945.⁸⁷ Some of these conflicts can be resolved on the assumption that Mao, as he progressively

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 187–189.

⁸⁵ “From the First to the Seventh National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party,” *People’s China*, 18 (September 16, 1956); printed in John W. Lewis (ed.), *Major Doctrines of Communist China* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1964), p. 27. Mao told Edgar Snow in 1936 that “from October 1932 . . . I myself devoted my time almost exclusively to work with the soviet government, leaving the military command to Chu Teh and others.” [Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China* (New York: Grove Press, 1961), p. 185.] These points will be dealt with more fully in the following chapter.

⁸⁶ For further detail, see Wang Chien-min *shih-kao*, p. 101; Warren Kuo, *Issues and Studies*, III, 10 (July, 1967), pp. 40–3; Hsiao, Vol. I, pp. 161–2; North, *Moscow and Chinese Communists*, pp. 157–9; John E. Rue, *Mao Tse-tung in Opposition, 1927–1935*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), p. 250 and p. 257.

⁸⁷ Discussion of some of these discrepancies, e.g., the “Lo Ming line,” and the question of the treatment of the Fukien rebels, will be left to the next chapter.

lost power in the soviet areas, found himself forced to speak under duress, so that his public pronouncements may not necessarily reflect his real opinions at the time.

However, whether or not Mao occasionally voiced agreement with the policies of the Returned Student group, it is clear that there was a genuine conflict of views between them. Mao's agrarian and military policies were condemned by the September 1 directive letter of Central to the Soviet Areas, and by the First Congress of the Party in the Soviet Areas, whose Political Resolution echoed the September 1 letter.⁸⁸ Even so, the laws and resolutions passed by the First Soviet Congress, although introduced by the Returned Student group, did not contain proposals to which Mao would have taken objection, except possibly in the Land Law. Even in the case of the Land Law, it is extremely difficult to classify its proposals from the point of view of the power struggle in the soviet areas. Consequently, it would appear that Mao and his supporters, at the time of the First Congress, *did not* have control over the Party in the soviet areas, but *did* command the government apparatus, a hypothesis which is substantiated by the following analysis of the structure and personnel of the government.

An inspection of the organs elected at the First Congress shows the pre-eminence of Mao and his supporters. The 63-man Central Executive Committee contained both "Maoists" and members of the Returned Student Group, but it is significant that two important members of the Party leadership—Po Ku and Lo Fu—failed to win places. Wang Ming, in Moscow at the time, was elected *in absentia*.

Although the CEC was theoretically the highest organ of the government when the National Congress was not in session, the fact that its membership was made up of men from widely separated soviets, plus representatives absent in Shanghai, meant that the actual responsibility of government was vested in the smaller Council of People's Commissars, the regime's top administrative body, whose members were largely drawn from those provinces adjacent to or making up the central soviet area.

In addition to Mao himself as Chairman of the CPC, Chu Teh, Teng Tzu-hui, Chang Ting-ch'eng, Ho Shu-heng, and Teng Fa could be counted as Maoists. Chu Teh had been with Mao since the early days on Chinggangshan from 1928, and together they had founded the Kiangsi soviet base. Teng Tzu-hui had been active in the central soviet district as chairman of a small soviet in west Fukien from 1930, and as a political officer in the Red Army. He worked with two other CPC members,

⁸⁸ See also the *Hung-chün wen-t'i chueh-i-an* (Resolution on the Question of the Red Army) adopted by the First Congress of the Party in the Soviet Areas; printed by Central Bureau, Soviet Areas; (October 1931). SSC 16. This attacks "guerrillaism" in the Red Army. Also see Mao's comments on the "correct" line being aligned by the Party Congress (RCQHP, p. 190).

Chang Ting-ch'eng and Teng Fa. Chang Ting-ch'eng was the founder of one of the first soviets in Fukien and was possibly the chairman of the Fukien Provincial Soviet in 1930. Teng Fa was secretary of the Fukien-Kwangtung-Kwangsi Party committee in 1930 as well as chairman of its military sub-committee. He was apparently summoned by Mao to Kiangsi to head the security apparatus, being selected for this job because of his loyalty to Mao. Ho Shu-heng had a long history of association with Mao, stemming back to 1918 when they met at the Hunan First Normal School in Changsha. In the same year, Ho joined the New People's Study Society that had been founded by Mao and Ts'ai Ho-sen. The two of them went to Shanghai in 1921 and were the two Hunan representatives at the founding of the CCP that year. Little is known about Chou I-li's factional sympathies. Possibly he was a Maoist, as he was appointed chief editor of the official government newspaper *Red China* in December 1931.⁸⁹ Presumably Mao, as head of the government, would have appointed someone loyal to himself.

Of the three remaining personalities, Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai cannot be classed as a Maoist, but neither can he be classed as a supporter of the Party leadership, since as an adherent of Li Li-san, he had been attacked by the Returned Student leaders at the Fourth Plenum and removed from the Politburo at that time.⁹⁰ Chang Kuo-t'ao would also have played little part in the power struggle in the central soviet area, as he was in the O-yü-wan soviet area or Szechuan during the whole period and never visited the central districts. Hsiang Ying, on the other hand, had been made secretary of the Central Bureau by the new Party leadership, and went to the soviet areas in the summer of 1931 to see that the policies of the Fourth Plenum were carried out. Wang Chia-hsiang was also a member of the Returned Student leadership who was in Kiangsi for the Congress. Nevertheless, it is clear that Mao and his supporters dominated the chief organ of the government, for out of a total of eleven members of the CPC, at least five (and probably six) members can be marked as being loyal to him, as opposed to two members of the official Party leadership.

The same situation prevailed during the actual proceedings of the Congress. The body responsible for guiding the major items on the agenda through the Congress was the Standing Committee of the Presidium, an *ad hoc* steering committee.⁹¹ Its seven-man membership was made up of Hsiang Ying, Chou I-li, Tseng Shan, Teng Fa, Chang Ting-ch'eng, Ch'en Cheng-jen, and Chu Teh.

The same analysis that applied to the CPC applies here. In addition

⁸⁹ *HSCH*, 2 (December 18, 1931), p. 4.

⁹⁰ In any case, Ch'ü was elected *in absentia*, for he remained in Shanghai until December 1933.

⁹¹ *HCCP*, 29 (January 15, 1932), pp. 71-72.

to the Mao supporters Chu Teh, Chang Ting-ch'eng, and Teng Fa (and probably Chou I-li) can be added Tseng Shan and Ch'en Cheng-jen, both of whom were old and trusted supporters of Mao in the Kiangsi area. Only Hsiang Ying remained to redress the balance.

Control over the organs of the new soviet government was therefore vested in the trusted supporters of Mao Tse-tung who had their roots in the soviet areas, rather than in the former Shanghai leadership of the Central Committee. Consequently Chang Kuo-t'ao must wrong when he told Robert North that Chou En-lai called the First National Soviet Congress and "squeezed Mao out."⁹²

A similar result is obtained if one applies the same analysis to those members of the CEC who were actually present at the First Congress and were operative in the central soviet district.⁹³ Of the 63 members (see Table 2), 28 were most probably present, 14 were not, and the

TABLE 2

<i>Present at Congress</i>	<i>Absent from Congress</i>	<i>Whereabouts Unknown</i>
Chang Hua-hsien	Chang Kuo-t'ao	Ch'en Fu-yuan
Chang Ting-ch'eng	Ch'en Shao-yü	Ch'ü Teng-kao
Chang Yun-i	Chou En-lai	Fan Lo-ch'un
Ch'en Cheng-jen	Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai	Hsiao Heng-t'ai
Ch'en Yi	Ho Lung	Hu Hai
Ch'en Yü	Hsia Hsi	Huang Su
Chou Yi-li	Hsu Hsi-ken	Hung Tzu-ch'ing
Chu Teh	Kuan Hsiang-ying	Juan Hsiao-hsien
Fang Chih-min	Liu Shao-ch'i	Ko Yao-shan
Ho Shu-heng	Lo Teng-hsien	K'ung Ho-ch'ung
Hsiang Ying	Lu Fu-t'an	Li Tsung-po
Hsu T'eh-li	Shen Tse-min	Liu Chien-chung
Hu Chün-ho	Tuan Teh-ch'ang	Liu Kuang-wan
Huang P'ing	Wei Pa-ch'ün	Liu Sheng-yuan
Jen Pi-shih		Liu Ta-ch'ao
Ku Ta-ts'un		Lu Teh-kuang
Lin Piao		Ts'ui Ch'i
Lo Ping-hui		Wang Yung-sheng
Mao Tse-tung		Wu Chih-min
P'eng Kuei		Yü Han-chao
P'eng Teh-huai		Yuan Teh-sheng
Shao Shih-p'ing		
T'an Chen-lin		
Teng Fa		
Teng Tzu-hui		
T'eng Tai-yuan		
Tseng Shan		
Wang Chia-hsiang		

⁹² North, *Moscow and Chinese Communists*, p. 158.

⁹³ This is determined by reports of the individual taking part in the proceedings

whereabouts at the time of the other 21 is unknown. Of these 21, in the vast majority of cases their factional loyalty is unknown, and it is interesting to note that 15 of them (or over 70 percent) were not re-elected to the CEC at the Second Congress in 1934, indicating that in general they can be considered relatively unimportant figures.

Of those presumed absent from the Congress, Chang Kuo-t'ao and Shen Tse-min were in the O-yü-wan soviet area; Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, Lu Fu-t'an and Liu Shao-ch'i were in Shanghai; Wang Ming was in Moscow; Lo Teng-hsien was in Manchuria; Wei Pa-ch'ün was active in Kwangsi; Chou En-lai was en route for Juichin; and the remainder, Ho Lung, Hsia Hsi, Hsü Hsi-ken, Kuan Hsiang-ying, and Tuan Teh-ch'ang were in the Hsiang-o-hsi soviet area (although one or more of them may perhaps have made the journey to Juichin). Of those present at the Congress, an absolute majority can be identified as being Maoists. Eighteen people fall into this category,⁹⁴ with only two definitely classed as representing the Returned Student leadership—Hsiang Ying and Wang Chia-hsiang. A further eight cannot be definitely classified with respect to their factional affiliations, if any.⁹⁵

The situation with regard to the organs of military command and their relationship to the Party and the government is complex, obscure, and outside the scope of this monograph. There were at least four overlapping military organs—the Central Revolutionary Military Council [RMC], the Military Affairs Commissariat, the Military Affairs Committee of the Party, and the General Political Department of the Red Army. In December 1931, the CEC appointed Chu Teh as Chairman of the Central Revolutionary Military Council, with Wang Chia-hsiang and P'eng Teh-huai as Vice Chairmen. Chu Teh was also appointed Military Affairs Commissar at the National Congress. Wang Chia-hsiang was also appointed by the CEC as head of the General Political Department—probably the highest position to be held at the time by a member of the Returned Student group.⁹⁶ The same conclusion—that Mao and his followers retained control at the First Congress—is reached if we examine the composition of the Revolutionary Military Council—the only military organ for which a complete membership list is available. Of those members active in the central soviet district or vicinity, six out

of the Congress, by his election to such bodies as the Steering Committee which functioned at the Congress, or by his known existence in the Juichin area or adjoining soviet at the time.

⁹⁴ Chang Ting-ch'eng, Chang Yun-i, Ch'en Cheng-jen, Ch'en I, Chou I-li, Chu Teh, Fang Chih-min, Ho Shu-heng, Hsu T'eh-li, Ku Ta-ts'un, Lin Piao, P'eng Teh-huai, Shao Shih-p'ing, T'an Chen-lin, Teng Fa, Teng Tzu-hui, Tseng Shan, and of course Mao himself.

⁹⁵ Chang Hua-hsien, Ch'en Yü, Hu Chün-ho, Huang P'ing, Jen Pi-shih, Lo Ping-hui, P'eng Kuei, and T'eng Tai-yuan.

⁹⁶ *HSCB*, 2 (December 18, 1931), p. 4.

of eleven were probably loyal to Mao (Chu Teh, P'eng Teh-huai, Lin Piao, T'an Chen-lin, Shao Shih-p'ing, and Mao himself). Ho Lung, another probable Maoist, was operating in the western Hunan-Hupeh (Hsiang-o-hsi) soviet district with Kuan Hsiang-ying, who, if he was not pro-Mao, at least had no liking for the Returned Student leadership who had dismissed him as a Li Li-san-ist from his place on the CC at the Fourth Plenum. Chang Kuo-t'ao of course was in the O-yü-wan soviet area during the entire 1931–1934 period, and never visited the central soviet area, a fact which also applies to another member, Hsü Hsiang-ch'ien. Little is known of Yeh Chien-ying's factional sympathies. He studied in Moscow at the same time as the Returned Student Group, but was not known to be particularly associated with them. Little is known about two others, K'ung Ho-ch'ung and Wang Sheng-jung, neither of whom were particularly prominent in the Kiangsi period, or after it. This leaves only two known supporters of the Party leadership, Wang Chia-hsiang and Chou En-lai, on the fifteen-man Revolutionary Military Council. However, the Returned Students were later to consolidate their command of the Party organization and weaken Mao's support in the military and governmental spheres, foreseeing that once having usurped Mao's military and governmental power, they would then be in a position to convene a Second Congress more favorable to themselves.

SUMMARY

The First National Soviet Congress accomplished the following ends:

1) It created a formal state, the Chinese Soviet Republic, which was of enormous value to the Communists in their claim to represent an "alternative way" for the Chinese people to that taken by the KMT. As the Comintern asserted, "[the laws and resolutions of the First and Second Soviet Congresses] have an immensely wider significance than that of mere guides to action in the areas already won by the soviets. *They are the program documents for the entire national revolutionary war in China and for the development of the agrarian revolution.*"⁹⁷

2) In addition, by the creation of a soviet government the Congress institutionalized the shift of the Party's efforts from the city to the countryside—where it was to remain for more than fifteen years. There, through the occupation by the CCP of parts of central-south China by the Red Army, the local population experienced a primitive form of "social mobilization."⁹⁸ The Red Army and the CCP conducted propaganda among the peasants, recruited them as soldiers and distributed

⁹⁷ *Programmnye dokumenty kitaiskikh sovetov* (Program Documents of the Chinese Soviets), Moscow, 1935, p. 3 of the Introduction, printed in McLane, *Soviet Policy*, p. 21. (Emphasis in original.)

⁹⁸ For a theoretical discussion of this term, see Karl W. Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," *American Political Science Review*, LV, 3 (September 1961), pp. 493–514.

to them the land which had been confiscated from the landlords and gentry. The Party and the Army held widespread literacy campaigns, organized trade unions and poor peasant associations. This marked increase in political and military activity brought about by the communists in turn generated demands from the peasants for administrative and economic services based on new experiences and expectations which needed a bureaucratic apparatus to provide them. As the communists had destroyed the traditional government in the area, they had to set up their own as a replacement.

3) This new bureaucratic apparatus had not been well-established by the time of the First Congress. Criticisms by the Returned Students in 1931–1933 concerning this pre-Congress period cannot be ignored: charges of guerrillaism in the Red Army, a feudal administrative structure, few soviet elections, a poor soviet apparatus infiltrated by “class alien elements,” and little mass participation. Other evidence points to the dominance of the military in the day-to-day running of the soviet base. It would appear that Mao and his supporters were operating in some ways more like warlords than communists, having made little attempt to organize a soviet administrative apparatus to convey policy to the masses, and to listen to and pass on the opinions of the masses to the soviet leaders. There is, in this pre-Congress period, virtually no evidence of Party organizational control over soviet elections at the local level. It is significant, in view of Mao’s declining authority after the First Congress, that the regulations on soviet construction, passed shortly after the Congress, specifically provided for Party participation in the crucial electoral committees, which drew up the candidates’ list, compiled the electoral register, and conducted the electoral meetings—all under the general directive of “guaranteeing working-class [i.e. Communist Party] leadership.”

4) The new government produced by the Congress represented a counterweight to the Party organization in the soviet areas. The Returned Student leaders clashed with Mao over the policies to be followed in the revolutionary base areas. This struggle deepened after the transfer of many of the Central Committee personnel from Shanghai to Juichin in the summer and autumn of 1931. Nevertheless, although the Returned Student group gained control over the Party in the soviet areas, Mao and his supporters, by controlling the machinery for electing delegates to the Congress, won command of the soviet government established by the Congress, and were sufficiently influential to ensure that the laws and resolutions passed at the Congress were favorable to their way of thinking. The analysis of the First Congress therefore confirms the assumption implicit in the Maoist interpretation of the events of this period (as set forth in the “Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of our Party”), that Mao and his followers, although under attack from the

Returned Students, nevertheless retained a substantial measure of authority in the soviet areas for some time after 1931.⁹⁹ In addition, Mao, as head of this embryo national government, must have had considerable prestige, and his personal stature in the local scene was far greater than that of the Party leaders, although this was offset to some extent by the fact that Moscow still dispatched its rather intermittent directives, not through Mao, but via the official Party leaders, mainly Po Ku.¹⁰⁰

5) The Congress, by the inclusion in the government of leaders from other soviet areas (for example Ho Lung from Hsiang-o-hsi, Chang Kuo-t'ao from O-yü-wan, Chang Ting-ch'eng and Fang Chih-min from Fukien, and P'eng Teh-huai from Hsiang-kan), also substantiated the claim of the new central government to represent all the soviet areas, and to be a potential national government.

⁹⁹ It is significant that the Resolution refers explicitly to loss of power in the Party and military spheres, but does *not* refer to the soviet government.

¹⁰⁰ Chang Kuo-t'ao interview with Robert C. North. (Hoover Library microfilm.)

IV

The Second National Soviet Congress

Once the government of the Chinese Soviet Republic had been formally established in November 1931, it increased its efforts to ensure that the other soviet areas accepted its jurisdiction and implemented the decrees and resolutions passed at the Congress. These aims appear to have met with considerable success. At the Soviet Congress of Fukien Province, which opened on March 18, 1932 (the 61st anniversary of the Paris Commune), the central government sent no less a figure than Jen Pi-shih (member of the CCP Politbureau and the Central Bureau) to give the political report to the Congress, and to make certain that the directive sent by the central government was adopted.¹ The Fukien Congress duly "accepted the laws and decrees of the All-Soviet Congress, and the directives of the central government."²

Because of communication problems, Juichin was not able to adopt the same procedure of sending a personal delegate when the Soviet Congress of the Hsiang-kan area convened in June 1932. Instead they radioed a directive.³ Perhaps this did not have the same effect as a personal visit by a high-ranking official, for in the following February the Council of People's Commissars found important errors in the work of the province. They did not have a clear class line, and were not actively expanding their soviet territory so as to unite with the central soviet area. Central resolved to send a further detailed directive pointing out these conservative errors and the remedial measures to be taken.⁴

As further examples of the extension of the power of the central government into the outlying soviet areas, one can cite the establishment in the Hsiang-o-hsi area of a provisional central government office headed by Kuan Hsiang-ying, a member of the Central Executive Committee and the Revolutionary Military Council.⁵ In March of 1932, the Hsiang-

¹ "Fu-chien sheng kung-nung-ping su-wei-ai tai-piao ta-hui sheng-k'uang," (The festive event of the Fukien Soviet Congress of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers), *HSCH*, 15 (March 23, 1932), pp. 5-6.

² *Ibid.*, p. 7. (The directive itself is pp. 1-2).

³ "Chung-yang cheng-fu kei Hsiang-Kan sheng kung-nung-ping tai-piao ta-hui tien," (Telegram of the Central Government to the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers Congress of Hunan-Kiangsi Province) *HSCH*, 22 (June 9, 1932), p. 1.

⁴ *HSCH*, 51 (February 10, 1933), p. 1.

⁵ *HSCH*, No. 30 (August 4, 1932), p. 4. It later transpired that sometime between the First Congress and August 1933, sub-bureaux of the CCP Central Bureau were established in O-yü-wan [in June 1931 (Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 461)], Hsiang-o-hsi [by November 1931 (Hsiao, Vol. I, pp. 196-7)] and Szechuan, Min-che-kan, Hsiang-o-kan, and Hsiang-kan [*HSCH*, 108 (September 6, 1933), p. 3].

o-hsi soviet had called the first meeting of its new Executive Committee to accept the decisions of the National Congress and the Communist Party.⁶ In 1931 an emissary, Liu Shui-shen, was sent by Juichin to the Hsiang-o-kan area to ensure correspondence of policy between the two.⁷ Finally, when the new soviet area of Min-che-kan was formed in December 1932, its leaders pledged themselves to accept the "correct leadership" of the CCP, the Central Government, and the Revolutionary Military Council, and to put into practice the laws and decrees of the government.⁸

As Chu Teh told Nym Wales: "Our most important work in 1932 was in 'reddening' the new areas, that is, in penetrating further and in consolidating and deepening the Soviet movement. We coordinated and connected the Soviet movement in all different districts, united the various armies and established schools, as well as doing much other work of this kind."⁹ However, Chu went on to say, the fact that the armies in the three provinces of Kiangsi, Hunan, and Hupeh were unable to establish close communication and coordination deprived the Red Army of even greater success.

Nevertheless, the period between the two National Soviet Congresses from November 1931 to January 1934, witnessed the high point of soviet power. The first three of Chiang Kai-shek's "bandit encirclement" campaigns had been defeated by October 1931, and the fourth campaign, which was begun in the late spring of 1932, was vanquished. In spite of the fourth campaign moreover, the Red Army was able to take the offensive on several occasions, and to increase its ranks substantially.

The discussion in the previous chapter showed that Mao's military policies had long been disputed by the leading organs of the Party. In the Central Soviet Area during 1931, Mao, in addition to waging a war of traditional guerrilla tactics, had used the Red Army as an all-purpose tool for a variety of non-military tasks. It was the Red Army in fact that "administered" the soviet areas, carrying out the land reform program, supervising elections, and operating fund-raising drives and mass movement work. According to a Central Bureau resolution of June 1932, this led to the development of a "backward peasant mentality."¹⁰ Little effort was made by Mao and his supporters to establish soviets: indeed,

⁶ *HSCH*, 14 (March 16, 1932), p. 2.

⁷ Nym Wales [Helen Foster Snow], *Red Dust: Autobiographies of Chinese Communists* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1952), p. 104.

⁸ "Min-che-kan hsin su-ch'ü," (The new soviet area of Min-che-kan), *HSCH*, 46 (January 7, 1933), p. 1.

⁹ Nym Wales (Helen Foster Snow), *New China* (Calcutta: Eagle Publishers, 1944), p. 63. This is a reprint of *Inside Red China* (New York: Doubleday, 1939).

¹⁰ Warren Kuo, "The CCP after Japanese Invasion of Manchuria (Part 2)," *Issues & Studies*, III, 7 (April 1967), p. 42.

military organs were substituted for the worker and peasant revolutionary committees.

However, from late 1931 onwards, the role of the military in the economy and administration declined rapidly, and these affairs came under the control of organs established by the new soviet government.

Militarily, the main objectives of the Red Army were to link the major soviet areas together, starting with initial victories in Kiangsi and neighboring provinces.¹¹ From February-March 1932, the Red Army attacked the city of Kanchow but was unable to occupy it. By the summer of 1932, the 100,000 troops deployed by the KMT had liquidated the Hunan-Hupeh soviet area under the command of Ho Lung; and O-yü-wan, the second largest soviet after the central base area, was hard pressed. In October, 1932, Chang Kuo-t'ao was forced to withdraw his troops from O-yü-wan and seek refuge in Szechuan.

In the face of these reverses, the Central Bureau convened a meeting at Ningtu, Kiangsi, in August 1932 to discuss military strategy. According to Mao, who attended the conference, it continued the erroneous policies decided at the Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee in January 1931.¹² Mao favored a policy of mobile guerrilla warfare, and the luring of the enemy deep into soviet territory before launching a surprise attack. These views had been ridiculed shortly before the conference in an article by Liu Po-ch'eng (a high-ranking military leader who was head of both the Red Army academy and of the Political Department of the 5th Army Corps), who attacked "guerrilla-ism and narrow empiricism," and criticized those who used the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* as guides to modern strategy and tactics.¹³

Apparently, Mao clashed at the Ningtu Conference with Chou En-lai. As Secretary of the Central Bureau, backed by the Central Committee and encouraged by the growth of the Red Army, Chou advocated positional warfare, capturing the cities, and taking the war into enemy territory.¹⁴ The views of Chou En-lai prevailed. Mao, according to his own testimony, devoted himself almost entirely to governmental work from

¹¹ "Chung-kung chung-yang kuan-yü cheng-ch'ü ko-ming tsai i-sheng yü shu-sheng shou-hsien sheng-li ti chueh-i," (Resolution of CCP Central concerning the achieving of initial victories for the revolution in one or more provinces), dated January 9, 1932; published in *Shih-hua*, (True Words), 3 (April 20, 1932), pp. 7-11, SSC 18.

¹² RCQHP, p. 190.

¹³ Liu Po-ch'eng, "Lun chan-shu chan-lueh ti shih-tai-hsing yü wo-men hung-chün mu-ch'ien tui-yü chan-shu chan-lueh jen-shih wen-t'i," (On the question of the timing of tactics and strategy and our Red Army's current knowledge of tactics and strategy), dated July 20, 1932; printed in *Ko-ming yü Chan-cheng* (Revolution and War) 1, (August 1, 1932), leaves 14-22. SSC 15.

¹⁴ Kung Ch'u, *Wo yü hung-chün*, (The Red Army and I), (Hong Kong: South Wind Publishing Co., 1954), pp. 310-314.

October 1932 onwards,¹⁵ while Chou later became political commissar over the Red Army.¹⁶ At the same time, Returned Student Po Ku, and his supporter Hsiang Ying became members of the Central Revolutionary Military Council with Hsiang as temporary acting chairman. This indicated not only a decline in Mao's military influence, but a similar reduction in the authority of Chu Teh, the formal chairman of the RMC.¹⁷

The fact that the new strategy proved successful against Chiang's fourth campaign reinforced the belief of the Party leaders that Mao's guerrilla tactics were obsolete. Mao was later to claim that the fourth campaign was defeated only because his influence in the Red Army had not been completely eradicated, and that the defeat inflicted on the Red Army by the fifth and final campaign, and the consequent loss of the Kiangsi base, were due in large part to the use of the incorrect strategy.¹⁸ This chronology allows Mao to reap the credit for the successes against the first four campaigns, while absolving himself from blame for the loss of the soviet areas. It also provides one possible explanation for Mao's statement that the CC transferred from Shanghai to Juichin in early 1933 rather than 1931–1932 as the available evidence suggests. Had Mao taken 1931 as the year of the move, it would have been difficult for him not to have given them some credit for the successes over the four defeated encirclement campaigns of Chiang Kai-shek. The probability remains, however, that due to inadequate local support, poor resources, and the blockhouse tactics of the KMT, the fifth campaign would have resulted in a defeat for the communists regardless of the strategy they adopted. After the summer of 1932, therefore, Mao's power in the military sphere declined and was negligible by the spring of 1933. With his military and political spheres of influence eclipsed by the Returned Student leadership, only the governmental structure remained to him as a power base.

To turn now from the military to the social and political environment, new decrees were published in the year following the First Congress concerning the division of soviet territory into administrative districts, and the establishing of a network of local government from provincial to village levels.¹⁹ These measures, and other reforms, were designed to win the approval of the local population, an approval which was necessary to the survival of the regime, dependent as it was on local production to feed the Red Army, to supply army recruits, and to function as a general support and intelligence network for military activities.

The deficiencies and shortcomings of the soviet governmental and

¹⁵ Snow, *Red Star*, p. 185.

¹⁶ *HSCH*, 78 (May 11, 1933), p. 1. *CRBRD*, pp. 449–50.

¹⁷ *HSCH*, *ibid.*

¹⁸ *RCQHP*, pp. 190–1.

¹⁹ For details, see Chapter 3.

administrative apparatus during 1931 have already been analyzed in some detail in the previous chapter. One month after the First Soviet Congress, instructions were issued to carry out a new election campaign to transform the soviet organs in the central soviet district. The Kiangsi and Fukien soviet areas (and the *hsien* directly under the control of Juichin) were given one hundred days between December 20, 1931 and March 31, 1932 to complete the task of soviet construction. These provincial soviets were ordered to draw up work plans immediately and to spend most of their time carrying out demarcation and elections at the *hsiang* level. Other provinces were to adopt a similar procedure.²⁰

A few days after the receipt of this directive, various levels of the soviet governments of Kiangsi, Fukien, and Juichin *hsien* called discussion meetings to decide how to put the election campaign into effect. Preliminary joint meetings of *hsien* and *ch'ü* soviet chairmen were held in west Fukien and Kiangsi, with Juichin holding a similar meeting composed of *ch'ü* and *hsiang* soviet chairmen. At all three meetings, delegates from Central were present to provide guidance. The meetings went on for three or four days, and investigated past work as well as deciding future election strategy.²¹

But in spite of this planning, the elections did not succeed as intended. In April, after the due date of March 31 for the completion of the elections, Hsiang Ying wrote that in spite of three months work, they were still not completed. Even in the majority of *hsiang* and *shih* soviets where an attempt to carry out elections had taken place, they had been undertaken incorrectly. Mass meetings were called, but the election went ahead even if few voters turned up, in spite of laws to the contrary, and a minority of local chairmen ran everything without concern for the wishes of the masses.²² Hsiang Ying reiterated that *hsiang* and *shih* soviets were the basic level organizations of the soviet regime, by which "the great majority of the worker and peasant masses are directly attracted to participate in the work of the regime," and that it was essential to consolidate the basis of the regime, otherwise it would stand little chance of victory. Hsiang ordered new elections in places where they had been performed incorrectly.

The case of Ningtu *hsien* (Kiangsi) soviet may be typical. Its first

²⁰ *HSCH*, 2 (December 18, 1931), p. 4.

²¹ "Min-hsi Chiang-hsi liang-sheng-su Jui-chin hsien-su k'ai-hui t'ao-lun chung-yang cheng-fu ko-chung hsun-ling," (The two provincial soviet areas of west Fukien and Kiangsi, and Juichin *hsien* soviet convene meetings to discuss the various instructions of the central government," *HSCH*, 3 (December 28, 1931), p. 4.

²² Hsiang Ying, "Ch'iang-ku ch'eng-hsiang su-wei-ai ti tsu-chih kung-tso," (Strengthen *ch'eng* and *hsiang* soviets organization and work), *HSCH*, 16 (April 6, 1932), p. 1.

soviet conference was held from April 10–13, 1932.²³ At the same time however, Liang Po-t'ai (a CEC member specializing in soviet construction work) listed a phenomenal number of shortcomings and deficiencies in the work of Ningtu. These included: a few *hsiang* soviets conspiring with bandits; *hsiang* and *shih* soviet executive committees and presidia not holding meetings; weak connections between the upper and lower levels of government; the smoking of opium by soviet work personnel; merchants acting as secretaries in the government. In some cases, the basic soviet organization of the *hsiang* and *shih* delegate conferences was nonexistent. In electoral work, Liang reported a general failure to mobilize the masses to take part in the election; some *ch'ü* had still not yet completed their elections; where elections had been held, representatives were sometimes elected even though voters did not register; in some areas no electoral organizations were formed at all; in one *ch'ü* all opium smokers were deprived of electoral rights, regardless of their class origin, and in another *ch'ü* all those over age 45 were similarly deprived. Liang ended by saying that the election would have to be repeated in some areas.²⁴

It would seem therefore that, although efforts were made in early 1932 to create a viable soviet organization from Central down to the grass roots level, this endeavor was largely unsuccessful, particularly at the lower levels. The idea that the masses themselves were in charge of the election and had the power to elect their candidates was still so far from reality that a member of the top Party leadership had to write an article stressing that there was in fact no difference between "soviet political power" and "mass political power." Many people, said Lo Fu, thought that soviet political power was what existed in the soviet areas, while mass political power was in the KMT areas. He pointed out that the slogan had been put forward precisely to show that the two were the same, that both were put into effect under the soviet regime, and that "mass political power" was designed to show the distinction between the soviet areas and the white areas—where only a minority had any rights.²⁵

In September 1932, the CEC decided that yet another attempt was to be made to mobilize the population in a new series of elections. In spite of earlier efforts, the directive noted, there still remained soviet governments with "class outsiders" in them, following an anti-class line in their

²³ "Ning-tu kung-nung-ping su-wei-ai ch'üan-hsien ti-i-tz'u ta-hui ti ching-kuo," (The experience of the first workers', peasants' and soldiers' soviet conference of Ningtu *hsien*), *HSCH*, 18 (April 21, 1932), p. 5.

²⁴ Liang Po-t'ai, "Ning-tu su-wei-ai kung-tso chih i-pan," (A section on Ningtu soviet work), *HSCH*, 18 (April 21, 1932), p. 6.

²⁵ Lo Fu, "Lun su-wei-ai cheng-ch'üan yü min-chung cheng-ch'üan," (Concerning soviet political power and mass political power), *HCCP*, 30 (February 15, 1932), pp. 20–23.

work. Rotten bureaucrats persisted in local soviets, and there was a serious problem of corruption. All this had led to an isolation of the government from the masses. The purpose of the new election campaign was to eliminate all "class outsiders, elements sabotaging revolutionary war work and corrupt, rotten bureaucratic elements," and to replace them with active cadres, so as to set up strong and capable soviet governments who could really carry out the task of leading the revolutionary war.²⁶

Since to hold all the elections at the same time would have the effect of causing the temporary cessation of the vital task of winning the war, it was decided that some *hsien* would undergo a total re-election and some only a partial re-election, and that these would be carried out one at a time.

During the election campaign, the masses were to be propagandized to participate, and to examine and criticize soviet work. Soviet governments were to pay attention to attracting worker activists to participate in the *ch'ü* and *hsien* Executive Committees, so as to strengthen the worker component at the various levels of the soviets.²⁷

At the same time, in an attempt to enforce Central directives, it was decided to set up a formal system for examining the work of the local soviets, and to establish training classes for soviet cadres.²⁸ However, an inspection carried out at the end of November revealed that little progress had been made in reforming local soviet governments.²⁹

By December it became clear that the campaign had proved a failure. Not one *hsien* had completed its election, the campaigns were all peaceful with no struggle to get the masses to participate, the electoral laws were not complied with, the elections that did take place were superficial and negative, and bureaucratism was still rampant.³⁰ The CEC ordered an immediate inspection of the election campaign. If the electoral law was found to have been violated, then the election would have to be repeated. Detailed instructions were issued, but the leadership must have realized that diminishing returns had set in, as no further electoral work was carried out until well into 1933.

²⁶ "Chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui ti shih-wu hao hsun-ling," (Fifteenth instruction of the CEC), *HSC*, 35 (September 27, 1932), p. 1.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ "Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo lin-shih chung-yang cheng-fu ch'eng-li chou-nien chi-nien shang ch'üan-t'i hsuan-min kung-tso pao-kao shu," (The provisional central government of the Chinese Soviet Republic makes a work report to the whole electorate on the first anniversary of its establishment), *HSC*, 39 (November 7, 1932), pp. 2-4.

²⁹ *HSC*, 42 (November 28, 1932), p. 6.

³⁰ "Chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui chueh-i kuan-yü ko-chi hsuan-chü yun-tung ti chien-ch'a," (CEC resolution concerning the inspection of the electoral movement at the various levels), *HSC*, 43 (December 5, 1932), p. 2.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE SECOND CONGRESS

It was with this general failure in mass organization and technique that the Chinese Soviet Republic entered 1933. The constitutional outline that had been passed by the First National Soviet Congress in 1931 did not mention at what intervals Congresses had to be called. The first hint of political activity directed towards elections in 1933 can be found in a decision of the Council of People's Commissars calling for work in preparation for a general election movement at the *shih* and *hsiang* levels, which was to be held in the Central Soviet Area prior to the autumn harvests.³¹ The first indication that this would culminate in a Second Congress came in a central government directive of June 1.³² This was soon followed by an official resolution of the CEC issued on June 8, 1933 calling for the Second National Soviet Congress to open on December 11, 1933, the anniversary of the Canton Commune and slightly over two years since the First Congress of November 1931. The Congress was to be held in the Central Soviet Area.³³

The resolution declared that the revolutionary war was entering a higher stage of development, and that in order to strengthen the leadership of the revolution, and to summarize the experiences of the soviet movement over the last two years, it had been decided to hold a Second Congress and to elect a new CEC.

The CEC decided that the summary of the experience of the soviet movement was the task of the Council of People's Commissars, which would deliver a work report to the Congress. Various electoral procedures were also decided: elections were to be carried out on the usual hierarchical basis, with delegates from lower administrative areas attending the conferences of higher areas up to the provincial level, the delegates from which would attend the National Congress. These elections in the central soviet district at *hsiang*, *ch'ü*, *hsien*, and *sheng* levels were ordered to be completed by November 15, and the delegates to the new Congress to be in place by December 5. In the case of other soviet areas, their elections had to be completed by October 31, and the delegates were requested to reach the central soviet area by November 30.

After the elections at each level had been completed, the electoral situation was to be reported to the next higher level. Before November 15, each provincial soviet was asked to send a report to the central soviet government summarizing its experiences of the last two years. All revolutionary mass organizations or individuals in the KMT areas, and in the

³¹ *HSCH*, 74 (April 29, 1933), p. 1.

³² *HSCH*, 85 (June 14, 1933), p. 3.

³³ "Su-wei-ai chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui kuan-yü chao-chi ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui ti chueh-i," (Resolution of the Soviet Central Executive Committee on the convening of the Second National Soviet Congress), *HSCH*, 86 (June 17, 1933), p. 2.

countries neighboring China, were invited either to send delegates to the Congress or to come themselves.³⁴

The fact that the call for a Second Congress was issued by the CEC in June 1933 is a significant indication that by this time the Returned Student leadership felt that it had sufficiently eroded the influence of the Maoists in the governmental machine to be able to go ahead and convene a Congress that would formally pass laws and resolutions proposed by them and replace the old government. Indeed, the evidence points to an enlargement of the sphere of control of the CCP leadership over the government organization by the summer of 1933—sufficient to insure the dominance of their authority in the running of the election campaign for the Second Congress.

In June, 1933, T'an Chen-lin, a prominent Maoist and CEC member, was attacked on the basis of associating with the "Lo Ming line."³⁵ For a similar offense, Teng Tzu-hui was replaced as head of the Commissariats of Finance and National Economy in August 1933.³⁶ In addition, Chou I-li lost control of the Internal Affairs Department in January 1933 to Ho Shu-heng (another Maoist) who was in turn replaced by Liang Po-t'ai (a probable member of the Returned Student group) by the time of the election campaign.³⁷ Ho Shu-heng was criticized for "bureaucratism" in September.³⁸ In addition, Chang Ting-ch'eng, Commissar for Land, was accused of "right opportunism" in November 1933.³⁹ The majority of those who found themselves under fire were Maoists.

Sometime after the CEC resolution, the provisional Central Government issued a formal declaration on the convocation of the Second Congress. The declaration stated that the Congress was being convened to centralize the leadership of the soviet movement throughout China, to develop and consolidate the soviet regime, and to sum up the experiences of the period since the first Congress. It was also announced that the Congress would be held, as before, in Juichin, Kiangsi, the soviet capital.⁴⁰

The CEC set up a Preparatory Committee to make the necessary ar-

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Lo Ming was acting Secretary of the Fukien Provincial Committee of the CCP. He was attacked by the Returned Student leaders for employing mobile and guerrilla warfare in opposition to the "correct" line of the Party. See Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 669–670.

³⁶ *HSCH*, 105 (August 25, 1933), p. 1.

³⁷ *HSCH*, 46 (January 7, 1933), p. 4. Since most of the attacks on the Maoists were printed in *HSCH*, Chou I-li must have lost the position of chief editor that he had held since November 1931.

³⁸ *HSCH*, 107 (September 3, 1933), p. 5.

³⁹ *HSCH*, 125 (November 14, 1933), p. 4.

⁴⁰ "Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo lin-shih chung-yang cheng-fu chao-chi ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-kuo su-wei-ai tai-piao ta-hui hsu-an-yen," (Declaration of the Provisional Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic convening the Second National Soviet Congress), *HSCH*, 101 (August 13, 1933), p. 2.

rangements for the Second Congress.⁴¹ This committee held its first meeting on June 9. With reference to preparatory work in the central soviet area, the committee decided that during July and August the area should be re-demarcated, at the same time carrying out the field investigation movement (*ch'a-t'ien yün-tung*), and investigating the effect of the new Labor Law. It has hoped that *hsiang*, *ch'ü*, and *hsien* level soviets would complete their election work during September and October, and that the whole province would be ready by November.⁴²

Additional organizational measures were taken by the committee. The heads of Internal Affairs Departments of Kiangsi, Fukien, and Min-kan, and Juichin *hsien* were summoned to hold a joint meeting to discuss the execution of the election work. Similarly, the central bodies of every mass organization, and press organs were ordered to hold a joint meeting to discuss preparatory work. It was decided that there should be a continuous stream of radio reports, as well as press coverage of the elections in *Red China* and other papers. Various problems of the Congress budget, the hall for the Congress, and the lodging of delegates, were also brought up.

With reference to the re-demarcation of the administrative areas in the summer of 1933, prior to the election campaign, the basic reasons behind the regulations can be reduced to one: the need to facilitate organization, propaganda, and control over the population by decreasing the size of the administrative unit, particularly at the basic levels of the *hsiang* and *shih* soviets. For all practical purposes, consideration of the *shih* soviets can be omitted, as city (*shih*) soviets were virtually non-existent in the soviet areas. Indeed an order of the CPC, issued on July 22 (the day after the promulgation of the resolution on re-demarcation), spoke only of the need to accomplish the elections to the Second Congress from *hsiang*, *ch'ü*, *hsien* and *sheng* soviets, and made no reference to soviets at the *shih* level.⁴³

Responsibility for the correct demarcation of the *hsiang* rested with the *ch'ü* soviet, although decisions had to be reported to the *hsien* committee for investigation and approval. Similarly, demarcation of the *ch'ü* was the responsibility of the *hsien* committee, which was obliged to report to the provincial committee. The provincial committees in turn reported to the Central Internal Affairs Commissariat. The Internal Affairs Commissariat was responsible for general guidance of the whole demarcation

⁴¹ HCYT, 1 (August 25, 1933), p. 8. SSC 10. The names of the Committee members were not specified.

⁴² "Chun-pei ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui ti kung-tso chi-hua," (Working plan of preparations for the Second Congress), *HSCH*, 88 (June 23, 1933), p. 1.

⁴³ *Kuan-yü chih-hsing chung-hsin hua-fen hsing-cheng ch'ü-yü ti chueh-i* (Concerning the carrying out of the decision to re-demarcate the administrative areas), Order No. 46 of the CPC (July 22, 1933) SSC 10.

and sent personnel to various places to inspect the execution of the work. Once it was finished the elections could begin.⁴⁴

An article in *Red China* during July gave some more details about the election timetable. From September 25 to October 10, there were to take place the elections in the *hsiang* and *shih* soviets. Following this, from October 10–20 the *ch'ü* soviet conferences were to be held. *Hsien* soviet conferences were allocated October 20–30, and finally November 1–15 for the provincial conferences which were to elect the delegates to the All-China Congress.⁴⁵ This timetable indicates that the schedule laid down by the original CEC resolution of June 8 was still being adhered to.

Meetings of the preparatory committee continued to be held regularly, and work to mobilize the population to take part in the Congress went on apace. At its third meeting on July 5, the committee requested the trade unions to send special deputies to help with the preparatory work. At the fourth meeting on July 20, a budget for the Congress of over 56,800 *yüan* was put forward and sent to the CPC for approval. And at the fifth meeting on July 26, the draft of the election law was examined and sent to the CEC to be promulgated after it had been inspected.⁴⁶

This new Election Law⁴⁷ took effect from August 15, 1933, at which time it superseded the “Detailed Electoral Regulations of the Chinese Soviet Republic” which had been passed by the First Congress.

The new election law differed little, in essence, from the 1931 law. All residents of the soviet areas over 16 years of age had the right to vote, regardless of religion, sex or nationality, provided that they were hired laborers, poor or middle peasants, workers, members of the sea, land or air forces of the Chinese Soviet Republic, or a dependent of a man falling into one of these categories. Likewise, as in 1931, those deprived of their electoral rights included those who lived off the labor of others or from profit or rent; rich peasants, capitalists, landlords, compradors; “those who rely on the propagation of religious superstition for a living”; KMT police, and spies, lunatics, and criminals.

The hierarchy of delegate conferences which were finally to select the delegates who would actually attend the National Soviet Congress were treated in a little more detail in 1933 than in 1931, but the administrative units were basically the same. The 1933 law, however, did make explicit, in its Preamble, that the workers enjoyed “superior rights,” which were in fact guaranteed by the Constitution. Also, fewer residents (urban or rural) were needed in order to name one delegate than in 1931, reflecting

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ “Erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui ti kung-tso pu-chih,” (Arrangements for the work of the Second National Soviet Congress), *HSCH*, 90 (July 2, 1933), p. 6.

⁴⁶ *HCYT*, 1, p. 8.

⁴⁷ *Su-wei-ai chan-hsing hsuan-ch'ü-fa*, (Soviet Temporary Election Law), dated August 9, 1933. SSC 10.

the growth of soviet administration, and the desire to have a larger and more representative All-China Congress.

Only at the very lowest level did the population as a whole play a direct part in sending their representatives to the Second National Congress. Above this level, matters were in the hands of delegate conferences. With each step up the hierarchy, the elections became progressively divorced from the mass of the people, and more closely controlled by the CCP through its network of Electoral Committees.⁴⁸

Initially, workers were to hold electoral meetings taking the place of production, or the trade union organization, as the basic unit. Peasants did the same with the "small village" (*hsiao ts'un-tzu*) as the basic unit. At this, the basic level of the soviet elections, one delegate was elected to the *hsiang* conference for every 13 worker residents, and one delegate for every 50 peasants and other classes of residents. In a small *hsiang* this ratio could be reduced to 1:8 for workers and 1:32 for other classes. The electoral process at this level will be discussed in detail later.

At the *hsiang* conference, the law of 1933 stated that delegates from this body to the *ch'ü* conference should be elected on the basis of one formal delegate for every two hundred rural (*hsiang-ts'un*) residents.

Delegates elected from the *hsiang* conference then joined delegates elected from *shih* soviets to form the *ch'ü* conference, which was to elect delegates to attend the *hsien* conference. Here a distinction between urban and rural dwellers was made. At the *ch'ü* conference, one formal delegate was sent to the *hsien* conference for every four hundred market (*shih-ch'ang*) residents and only one for every sixteen hundred village residents.

The delegates elected by the *ch'ü* conference then joined those elected from soviets of towns directly responsible to the *hsien*, to form the *hsien* conference, the task of which was to elect delegates to attend the provincial conference. Market dwellers were permitted one formal delegate for every fifteen hundred people, and rural dwellers one delegate for every six thousand people.

The penultimate step in the procedure of electing a government came when delegates from the *hsien* conference joined soviet delegates from *shih* directly under the jurisdiction of the province, to form the provincial (*sheng*) conference, which was to elect the delegates who would have the privilege of being present at the National Soviet Congress. The ratio of delegates to residents was the same as that for the previous level of soviet elections. In addition, delegates were also elected directly to the National

⁴⁸ It was the job of the Electoral Committee to manage the election on its particular level. It was composed of delegates from the government and the mass organizations. They performed the tasks of voter registration, posting up lists of voters and candidates for election, deciding the place for the election meeting and the agenda. (Articles 45-55).

Soviet Congress from town soviets directly belonging to the Central. These regulations in general required a much lower ratio of voters to delegates than 1931, and insisted on a stricter bias towards worker delegates, reflecting the views of the CCP leadership.

In addition to the numbers of formal delegates that were permitted, candidate (or alternate) delegates could be elected in the ratio of one to every five formal delegates. These candidate delegates had the right to speak but not to vote. Special provisions were made, as in 1931, for Red Army men to be integrated into the election.

In addition to the election of delegates, the conferences at every level were to elect an Executive Committee which would be the supreme governmental organ of administration in that area. Maximum numbers of members on these committees were laid down as follows: *ch'ü* executive committee, 35; *hsien* executive committee, 55; and provincial executive committee, 95. The national Congress was to elect a central executive committee which was not to exceed 581.

Not surprisingly, a reading of the press following the publication of this electoral law shows that not all soviet citizens fully understood its requirements. A high soviet government official admitted that some people did not even know the difference between the voters' list and the candidates' list. He also had to point out that it was only those people who derived their living from the propagation of religion who were deprived of the vote, and *not* all those who possessed religious beliefs.⁴⁹

In October, the Internal Affairs Commissariat, which was responsible for organizing the election, admitted that it had received constant requests for clarification of the law, especially with respect to provisions concerning electoral rights.⁵⁰ Consequently, it can reasonably be doubted whether the extremely complex provisions of many sections of the election law were ever put into practice in the way the government intended them to be.

In addition to writing an election law that virtually insured the production of delegations to the Second Congress having similar views to their own, the Party stressed that, if possible, there should be set up within each delegation a Party corps (*tang-t'uan*) or fraction, "to guarantee the leadership work of the Party."⁵¹ The major policy decisions for the Congress were taken just prior to the Congress, at the Fifth Plenum of the CCP Central Committee, and were transmitted from the Fifth

⁴⁹ Liang Po-t'ai, "Kuan-yü hsuan-chü-fa shang chi-ke t'i-wen ti chieh-shih," (Explanation of some questions posed by the Electoral Law), *HSCH*, 116 (October 6, 1933), p. 3.

⁵⁰ *Tui-yü su-wei-ai chan-hsing hsuan-chü-fa t'iao-wen ti chieh-shih*, (Explanation of the Provisions of the Soviet Temporary Electoral Law), signed by Liang Po-t'ai; dated October 29, 1933. SSC. 10.

⁵¹ "Chung-yang kuan-yü chao-chi su-ta-hui ti t'ung-chih," (Notice of Central convening the Second Congress), *HCCP*, 59 (August, 1933), p. 8.

Plenum to the Party Corps, thus ensuring synonymy of policy between the CCP and the resolutions and decrees expressed by the soviet government during the Congress.⁵²

THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

On a theoretical plane, the Returned Student leader Lo Fu explained the significance of the campaign:

The revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants above all relies on force for the seizure and maintenance of its power. It relies on force to carry out the cruel and protracted civil war with external enemies, imperialism and the armed forces of the KMT. It also relies upon force to suppress landlord remnants within the soviet areas, and capitalist and rich peasant counter-revolutionary activity. But when it comes down to it, what are the prerequisites this force is dependent on? Lenin clearly answered this question thus: "Rely on the masses."⁵³

Reliance on the masses implied winning the support of the people by bringing them into the political life of society, and making them feel that they played their part, however little, in the decision making process, a concept that was quite absent from the traditional life of the Chinese peasant. Lo Fu went on to say: "Since our soviet regime is the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants, under the leadership of the vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party, therefore the central task of soviet democracy is to bring in the broad masses of workers and peasants to participate in political power and to teach them to administer their own state."⁵⁴

In practice, of course, the idea of participation had to be linked during the campaign to the current political tasks. The major aims of the CCP, it was stated, were to create a healthy soviet organization, to build upon the experience of two years management of the soviet regime, to discuss new policies, to strengthen the leadership, and to prepare to defeat Chiang Kai-shek's fifth "encirclement campaign," which was then in preparation and actually commenced in October 1933.⁵⁵ It was felt that in addition to the military advantage, the defeat of Chiang's Fifth Campaign would

⁵² "Chung-kung wu-chung ch'üan-hui kei erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui tang-t'uan ti chih-ling," (Instructions of the CCP Fifth Plenum to the Party Corps at the Second National Soviet Congress), *Tou-cheng*, (Struggle), 47, (February 16, 1934), pp. 16-20. SSC 18. [Hereafter *TC*]

⁵³ Lo Fu, "Erh-tz'u su-ta-hui ti kai-hsuan yun-tung yü su-wei-ai ti teh-mo-k'o-la-hsi," (The new election campaign of the Second National Soviet Congress and soviet democracy), *TC*, 21 (August 20, 1933), p. 9.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁵ "Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui hsun-ling; ti nien-erh hao," (Order No. 22 of the CEC of the Chinese Soviet Republic; Directive on the Election Campaign), *HCYT*, 1 (August 25, 1933), p. 2. SSC 10.

give a tremendous psychological boost to the activities of the Second Congress, and the central government often spoke of "presenting" the victory to the Second Congress.

Soviet propaganda tended to slight the impact of the fifth campaign and compared the situation for the Second Congress favorably with the First. As compared with the First Congress, it was stated that domestically there was a nation-wide anti-KMT and anti-imperialist upsurge, the soviet areas had been extended, and internationally the world was heading towards a new revolutionary stage.⁵⁶

In an attempt to whip up nationalist sentiment among the peasants, Mao spoke at election meetings of the links between the KMT's anti-communist crusades and the desires of the imperialists to carve out spheres of influence in China. Manchuria he said, had been annexed by Japan; in the south the British were trying to use the Tibetan lamas to establish a Tibetan "nation"; the French imperialists were after Yunnan and Kweichow; and in central China, the Americans planned to rule over several provinces along the Yangtze. "The Kuomintang," said Mao, "serves as an accomplice to the imperialist plots."⁵⁷

Therefore, Mao went on to say, the soviets under the leadership of the CCP, were the leaders in a big revolutionary war, and it was essential to crush the Fifth Campaign that was just starting against them. In order to wage the war successfully, the election must produce powerful soviets, especially as the year 1933 was no ordinary election year but the year of the Second National Congress and the re-election of the soviet government. Furthermore, in order to achieve a satisfactory election, "a great number of the most progressive, most class-conscious, and most positive individuals must be elected to the soviets . . . and the old useless number in them must be eliminated."

Mao pointed out, with reference to previous election campaigns, that "the function of soviet powers and the importance of soviet elections have not been clearly understood by most people." He then commented that "one who does not realize the importance of the election cannot be expected to participate in the election in the most positive manner; and, likewise, soviet officials who do not understand the significance cannot lead the movement satisfactorily."

The CEC, in its directive on the election campaign, said that although electoral procedures in 1932 were a great improvement on those for the First Congress, the importance of fully mobilizing the masses had still not been fully understood during 1932 by the chairmen of local soviet govern-

⁵⁶ *Kuan-yü yung-hu ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui: cheng-chih k'o ts'ai-liao*, (Concerning Support for the Second All-Soviet Congress: Political Lesson Materials), Red Army Political Department, September 30, 1933. SSC 4.

⁵⁷ "Significance of this year's soviet election: Speech given by President Mao Tsak Tung (*sic*) in the election meeting of the Southern Eighteen Districts in Kiangsi," in *Chinese Workers Correspondence*, (Peking: n.d.), 1, p. 5.

ments.⁵⁸ Nor, the directive continued, had they seen the importance of leadership, or stimulative propaganda work, with the result that in many places only a minority of voters had participated in the elections.

Mass mobilization had suffered because in many soviet departments, from the *hsiang* level right up to the center, a few people were entrusted with everything, with the activists and delegates from the masses not being brought into the work.⁵⁹ Yet at the same time, complained Lo Fu, there were comrades in these departments who nevertheless claimed that the soviet was short of working staff.

A further consequence of the lack of mass mobilization during previous elections was that some areas had had "completely peaceful campaigns," with none of the "ardent criticism and struggle" that the Party considered essential to win the support of the people.⁶⁰ The masses had played little part in the discussion of the draft proposals, and there had been little change from the past. The result was that "negative, slothful, corrupt elements and 'class outsiders' had not been fully investigated, and were able to worm their way into the soviet regime." Other shortcomings in electoral work included insufficient workers put up for election, and lack of female participation. At times, it was said, taking the *hsiang* as the electoral unit had created too big a unit, so that many could not travel the distance needed to get to the electoral meeting; and, even if they did get there, often the resolution on the list of candidates was apparently passed before the list was discussed. Finally, it was reported that in a minority of districts the responsible officials had simply ignored the election law, had not called voters' meetings, and had merely nominated their own delegates.

The management of the election at the grass-roots level was largely the responsibility of specially appointed election committees. These were to be organized at the *shih* and *ch'ü* levels, although in practice, owing to the absence of urban areas in soviet territory, only the *ch'ü* committees were operative. The *ch'ü* committee was composed of 9–13 people. Nine people would be sufficient for a small *ch'ü*, made up of the heads of the following departments: internal affairs, labor, land, education, and the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate. The committee was also to include a member of the CCP and Youth League *ch'ü* committees, and two trade union members. In the case of a large *ch'ü*, this membership could be expanded to 11 or 13 by the addition of members from the Anti-Imperialist Alliance and poor peasant corps. One female member was also to be appointed. The committee was to be chaired by the head of the *ch'ü* Internal Affairs Department. All the committee members were to be chosen by a meeting of the *ch'ü* Executive Committee presidium, and

⁵⁸ HCYT, 1, p. 3.

⁵⁹ TC, 21, p. 12.

⁶⁰ HCYT, 1, p. 3.

approved by the *hsien* EC presidium. Electoral subcommittees were established in each *hsiang*, organized from one representative of the *hsiang* soviet, one from the trade unions, two from the poor peasant corps, one from the female delegates conference, and one each from the Party and Youth League committees. The director of the electoral sub-committee was to be elected by this group.⁶¹ The CEC directed that the electoral committees were not to be all name and no substance, as in the past.⁶²

The primary initial task of the electoral committees was to mobilize the masses in the soviet areas to become aware of and participate in the election campaign. The *hsiang* electoral subcommittees organized propaganda teams of 9–11 members, which received training at the hands of the *ch'ü* election committee.⁶³ Joint meetings to discuss the electoral law and electoral work were held between mass organizations at the *ch'ü* and *hsiang* levels, as well as meetings of individual mass organizations. In this way, the trade unions, poor peasant corps, and female worker and peasant delegate meetings were mobilized.⁶⁴

Hung-se Chung-hua printed a two-part article about one particular *ch'ü* which was considered to be a model of its kind. Ts'aihsi *ch'ü* in Fukien convened expanded meetings of the Party, Youth League committees, and the *ch'ü* soviet to discuss electoral work, organize an electoral committee, and elect sub-committees. Discussion of the electoral work was also undertaken by the trade unions, poor peasant corps and female delegate meetings. Every *hsiang* and *ts'un* organized propaganda teams which carried out propaganda family by family, in addition to putting on plays and delivering speeches. In this way "they mobilized the broad worker and peasant masses of Ts'aihsi *ch'ü* to enthusiastically support and participate in the election."⁶⁵

The main target of the propaganda campaign was to register voters to cast ballots at election time. The first step was to decide who, under the provisions of the electoral law, was entitled to enjoy electoral rights. Voters organized into trade unions or poor peasant corps were registered through their organizations. The others were catered for by the registrar from the *hsiang* electoral committee.⁶⁶ Soviet workers were enjoined not to let landlords and rich peasants steal the election rights of the workers

⁶¹ "Wei chin-hsing hsuan-chü tui Chiang-hsi i-feng chih-shih-hsin," (A directive letter to Kiangsi on carrying out the election campaign), *HCYT*, 2 (September 10, 1933), p. 6.

⁶² *HCYT*, 1, p. 5.

⁶³ *HCYT*, 2, p. 7.

⁶⁴ *HCYT*, 1, p. 5.

⁶⁵ Chang Ting-ch'eng, "Hsuan-chü yun-tung ti hao mo-fan," (A Good Example of an Election Campaign), *HSCH*, 126 (November 17, 1933), p. 3 & 127 (November 20, 1933), p. 3.

⁶⁶ *HCYT*, 2, p. 8.

and peasants.⁶⁷ Those who were given electoral rights had their names listed on red paper, and those who had been deprived of electoral rights were listed on white paper. In the case of those with electoral rights, their work capacities and "struggle history" had also to be listed.⁶⁸ In the case of Tinglung *ch'ü* in Hsingkuo *hsien*, it turned out that 6,094 (68 percent) out of a total of 8,920 had the right of election, with 2,826 (32 percent) deprived of electoral rights.⁶⁹ An example was given of a member of the Fukien provincial soviet work personnel, one Kuan Ch'ü-wu, who although he was a rich peasant, was listed on the red paper during voter registration in Ts'aihsi *ch'ü*. According to the source, the people of the *hsiang* immediately went to the *hsiang* soviet and "struggled" with the electoral committee, "and they did not allow his name to be written on the red paper." From this, said the article, it could be clearly seen that in Ts'aihsi *ch'ü* "the worker and peasant masses supported and respected their own electoral rights, and paid very cautious attention to inspecting for class enemies."⁷⁰ After voter registration came the even more important task of selecting a candidates list for the election of delegates to attend the *hsiang* soviet conferences, which would send representatives to the *ch'ü* conference, until a few would eventually reach the National Soviet Congress. Initially, at the lowest levels of the hierarchy, the *ch'ü* electoral committee directed the *hsiang* electoral sub-committee to mobilize all the mass organizations to propose candidates. The lists of candidates from the trade unions, poor peasant corps, mutual aid societies, etc., were then collected and distributed among the electoral units in the *hsiang*, each electoral unit only having a proportion of the total list, so that they would be able to give their candidates careful consideration and examination.⁷¹

This examination was designed not only to ensure the production of "good" delegates to the Second Congress, but also to weed out from *hsiang*, *ch'ü*, *hsien*, "and even up to the provincial and central levels," those people who were "corrupt, passive, not actively struggling against the warlords and rich peasants, or who oppressed the workers and peasants."⁷² Those not suitable for candidacy also included "all landlords, capitalists, compromising elements, those with corrupt behavior or commandist work methods."

⁶⁷ Kuan-yü *hsuan-chü yun-tung ti chih-shih* (Directive on the election campaign), issued by the Internal Affairs Department of the Kiangsi Soviet Government, September 13, 1933. SSC 10.

⁶⁸ *HSCH*, 126 (November 17, 1933), p. 3.

⁶⁹ "Mo-fan-ch'ü ti *hsuan-chü yun-tung*," (An example of a *ch'ü* election campaign), *HSCH*, 113 (September 27, 1933), p. 1.

⁷⁰ *HSCH*, 126, p. 3.

⁷¹ *HCT*, 2, p. 7.

⁷² *Yung-hu ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui hsuan-ch'üan ta-kang*, (Propaganda Outline for the Support of the Second All-Soviet Congress), published by the Central Bureau Propaganda Department, September 1, (1933). SSC 15.

In addition to class background, political behavior was clearly an important criterion for election. Attention was paid to those "who work industriously for the revolution, especially those elements who can really represent our worker and peasant masses in speech and action." However, ability to work had also to be considered, for apparently in the past "in several places we only looked at class origins, not at ability, and elements weak in ability were admitted into the government."⁷³ The people were therefore encouraged to "raise opinions to oppose bad elements, for if we do not raise our own opinions during the election period, this would be to abandon our own rights."⁷⁴ In this way the soviet authorities hoped "to know who is good and who is bad, so that we can elect the good but not the bad."⁷⁵

A concrete example of this was provided by the case of Ts'aihsi *ch'ü* where it was claimed that the process had obtained great success.⁷⁶ The candidates' name list was submitted by all the Party and Youth League branches, poor peasant corps, and female delegate meetings. The list received immediate criticism by the masses in some places. For example, in Shanghang, one Wang Pao-tzu who had collected taxes before the arrival of the communists, appeared on the candidates list, was criticized by the masses, and removed. He was also deprived of his electoral rights. Another man, Lan Kuang-fa, was discovered to be a Red Army deserter and was not allowed to be a delegate. A woman was similarly removed, for it was found that although she came from a poor peasant family, she had lived in a landlord and bad gentry family for a long time.

In the case of T'unghsien *hsiang* (in Ts'aihsi *chü*), however, no one offered criticism of the candidates list, and the *hsiang* electoral committee had to mobilize the people to action. As a result of the ensuing criticism, the secretary of the Party branch was discovered to have stolen good land for himself during the field investigation movement, and the chairman of the *hsiang* soviet was found to have embezzled soviet funds, "so that he ate good food, better than others." Neither of these two people were elected as delegates.⁷⁷ Ts'aihsi *ch'ü* was probably not typical of the average soviet electoral unit, but it is illustrative of the kind of model the soviet leaders wished the election to follow.

The overall responsibility for the election rested with the Internal Affairs Commissariat of the CPC, headed by Liang Po-t'ai, a man who had specialized in "soviet construction work" since early 1932.⁷⁸ In September 1933 the Internal Affairs Commissariat requested the soviet

⁷³ *HCYT*, 1, p. 5.

⁷⁴ *Yung-hu ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui hsuan-ch'uan ta-kang*, see n. 72.

⁷⁵ "Tsen-yang chun-pei hou-hsuan ming-tan," (How to prepare electoral candidates' names list), *HCYT*, 2, p. 7.

⁷⁶ *HSCH*, 126, p. 3.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ See *HSCH*, 9 (February 10, 1932), p. 8.

presidia at all levels of the government to transfer work personnel to the local internal affairs departments, so as to strengthen these departments and improve their guidance of the election campaign.⁷⁹ The mass organizations in the soviet areas had first to mobilize the masses within their own organizations, and to discuss with them in detail the work for the Second Congress.⁸⁰ Then the masses had to be brought to inspect and criticize the work of the government, collect material on how the decrees of the government were being carried out, and forward these, at the end of August, to the Preparatory Committee for the Second Congress.

In addition, the mass organizations had the task of encouraging "young comrades" to take part in the work of the electoral committees, and of inducing "capable worker comrades to strengthen proletarian leadership at the electoral conferences."⁸¹ The masses were also to examine soviet work over the previous two years, and to send reports to the delegate conferences for discussion.⁸²

The reports of the soviet government to the voters on how the work of the government had progressed were an important part of pre-election propaganda. One of the defects of past work was that they had often been omitted. Their main purpose was to inform the people of the government's policies and get their criticism in return. Initially, one week before the *hsiang* election, voters meetings would be convened, taking the house or village as the unit. Here the experiences of the government would be put forward, and the opinions of the voters welcomed. Similarly, progressing up the administrative ladder, the *ch'ü* government sent delegates to report on its work to the *hsiang* and *shih* conferences, as did the *hsien* to the *ch'ü* and so on. Simultaneously, the Executive Committee at each level made a report to its own conference. The opinions of the voters and delegates were to be transmitted up to the central government "so that they will understand the masses' situation and needs."⁸³

In the case of Ts'aihsi *ch'ü*, their report dwelt on the land problem, labor protection, the task of mobilizing for the war, expanding the Red Army, economic mobilization, etc. The successes and defects were pointed out, mass criticism was launched, "and the Ts'aihsi masses firmly struggled against the incorrect tendencies, and criticized the soviet."⁸⁴ The central government made a report to the whole soviet area

⁷⁹ *Kuan-yü hsuan-chü yun-tung ti chih-shih*, see n. 67.

⁸⁰ "Su-ch'ü ch'ün-chung t'uan-t'i chin-hsing yung-hu ch'üan-su ta-hui kung-tso," (Soviet areas mass organizations carry out work of supporting the All-Soviet Congress), *HSCH*, 101 (August 13, 1933), p. 2.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² "Chung-kung chung-yang tsu-chih-chü kuan-yü ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui chun-pei kung-tso ti chueh-ting," (Resolution of the CCP Central Organization Bureau concerning preparatory work for the Second All-Soviet Congress), *HSCH*, 108 (September 6, 1933), p. 3.

⁸³ *HCYT*, 1, p. 7.

⁸⁴ *HSCH*, 126, p. 3.

on November 13 in which it summarized the work situation of the last year. With a rather optimistic view, the report spoke of the great strengthening and expansion of the Red Army, the victories won in the Fourth and Fifth Campaigns, and the expansion and consolidation of the soviet areas.⁸⁵ However, the report went on to say, even further expansion of the Red Army was needed to defeat the Fifth Campaign; the new soviet areas needed to be more speedily developed and consolidated than they had been; and the field investigation movement should be further developed.

On top of these multifarious activities, the propaganda outline issued by the Central Bureau laid down that "the election movement must be coordinated with the current main work,"⁸⁶ such as the field investigation and class investigation movement, and the tasks of actively expanding the Red Army, resisting the attacks of the capitalists, selling economic construction bonds, and joining the cooperatives.

With reference to the field investigation movement, the mass organizations were instructed to "penetrate deeply" (*shen-ju*) during the election campaign. Indeed, said the Party, it was impossible to separate the two,⁸⁷ since the field investigation campaign would discover hidden landlords and *kulaks* (rich peasants) who had hitherto stolen election rights to which they were not entitled, and would deprive them and other corrupt elements of the rights they had illegally usurped and cleanse them from the soviet organs.⁸⁸ The field investigation movement also had the task of ensuring that the poor and middle peasants received and exercised the rights to which they were entitled under the election law.⁸⁹

Although it had overall responsibility, the Internal Affairs Commissariat was not the only government department to be involved. The Education Commissariat was concerned with propaganda work, and the Land Commissariat with the field investigation movement. In addition, the Judicial Commissariat issued orders to the adjudgment departments (*ts'ai-p'an-pu*) at all levels, to ensure that those people who had been deprived unjustly of their electoral rights in the past should not be excluded this time.⁹⁰

The Labor Commissariat was ordered to guide the labor departments at the various levels of government in investigating how well the Labor Law was being implemented. The Labor Commissariat was also required "to develop the struggle between the workers and the capitalists, protect

⁸⁵ *Ch'ih-fei wen-chien hui-pien*, (Red Bandit Collected Documents), Vol. 7, p. 325, SSC 20.

⁸⁶ *Yung-hu ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui hsuan-ch'uan ta-kang*, *op. cit.*

⁸⁷ *HSCH*, 108 (September 6, 1933), p. 3.

⁸⁸ Mao Tse-tung, "Significance of this year's soviet election," *Chinese Workers Correspondence*, 1, pp. 5-6.

⁸⁹ *HCYT*, 1, p. 4.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

the daily interests of the workers, mobilize the workers to actively participate in the election, and perform a leadership function during the election campaign."

The Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate was required to launch a self-criticism movement to oppose corruption and passivity in carrying out the field investigation and Labor Law implementation movements and commandism in electoral work.

Other tasks of the election campaign included encouraging people to join the Red Army, getting deserters to return to the ranks, giving preferential treatment to Red Army dependents, selling economic construction bonds, and developing cooperative societies.

With reference to the actual timing of the elections, Liang Po-t'ai summoned an election campaign conference of internal affairs department heads of *ch'ü* level and above to meet at Posheng *hsien*, Kiangsi, on August 26.⁹¹ On September 5 a similar group was to assemble in Juichin, drawn from the Kwangtung-Kiangsi area, Fukien, and the *hsien* directly controlled by Juichin. In both cases they were to discuss electoral work, the organization of the Internal Affairs Departments, and in particular, the "shattering of the enemy's Fifth Encirclement Campaign." At the latter meeting, which lasted for four days and drew officials from 17 *hsien*, Mao Tse-tung spoke on the KMT's fifth campaign, and Liang Po-t'ai reported on the election law and the work of the internal affairs departments.⁹²

In a directive letter probably written on the basis of the experience gained at the two meetings of local officials, Liang decided that all the electoral preparatory work in Kiangsi should be completed by September 25, that the election itself could then begin, and that the election at the *shih* and *hsiang* levels could be completed by October 5.⁹³

However, probably because of the lack of understanding of the electoral law caused by its complexity, plus the lack of competent personnel and other shortcomings previously described, the central government issued a directive at the end of September 1933 to all levels announcing that the date of the elections was to be postponed by one month. Up to this time all delegate conferences up to provincial level were to have been completed by November 15, but the new completion date was

⁹¹ "Chiang-hsi ch'üan-sheng ch'ü i-shang nei-wu pu-chang hsuan-chü yün-tung ta-hui ti tsung-chieh," (Summary of the election campaign conference of heads of Internal Affairs Departments of *ch'ü* and above in Kiangsi province), in *HCYT*, 2, (September 10, 1933), p. 4.

⁹² "Fu-chien Yueh-kan liang-sheng chi Jui-chin chih-shu hsien ch'ü i-shang nei-wu pu-chang hsuan-chü yün-tung ta-hui k'ai-mu," (The opening of the electoral movement meeting of the heads of Internal Affairs Departments from the *ch'ü* and above levels of Fukien, Yueh-kan, and the *hsien* under the direct jurisdiction of Juichin), *HCYT*, 2, p. 5.

⁹³ *HCYT*, 2, p. 6.

December 15.⁹⁴ The official explanation for the delay was that the work of demarcating the administrative areas had not been finished on time. This no doubt was a major factor in the decision, although the apathy at the grass roots level meant that elections could not adequately be run from September 25, as was originally planned.⁹⁵

Red China published a report by Liang Po-t'ai dated September 20 which said that the work of re-demarcation, scheduled for completion at the end of August, had still not been finished. Liang stated that this was an obstacle to soviet work, and that the demarcation should be concluded by the end of September.⁹⁶

The new schedule laid down that preparatory work should be carried out between September 20 and October 15. During this time, the administrative regions would be completely demarcated, electoral committees organized, and a voter list drawn up. The actual elections (at the *hsiang* level) were re-scheduled for October 16–25. Following these, the *ch'ü* conferences were arranged for October 26–November 10, the *hsien* conferences from November 11–30, and the provincial conferences from December 1–15.⁹⁷ In the case of the Red Army, the General Political Department announced that they were held from December 1–10.⁹⁸

To facilitate voter participation, it was clearly essential that the size of the electoral unit at the *hsiang* level be kept small, and this was the basic idea behind the re-demarcation of the administrative areas in the summer of 1933. One article, for example, said that a distance of 10 *li* was too far to travel to the election meeting, and certainly meant that voters would not be able to attend with their whole families.⁹⁹ Repeating the election law, the article stated that peasants should take their village (or groups of villages) as the unit. Workers in the cities were to use their place of production or trade union organization as a unit: if this was inapplicable, they could use one or two streets.

Five days before the *hsiang* election, the electoral committee published the lists of voters, those deprived of the vote, and the candidates lists. Voters in each area were to be informed of the place and time of the meeting three days in advance. The meeting was convened by first sounding a gong and then setting off firecrackers, and the registrar took the

⁹⁴ "Kuan-yü hsuian-chü ti jih-ch'i," (Concerning the election date), *HSCH*, 113 (September 27, 1933), p. 1.

⁹⁵ *HSCH*, 90, p. 6.

⁹⁶ *Kuan-yü hua-fen hsing-cheng ch'ü-yü fa-chan ching-chi chien-she yü she-li chen-liao-suo wen-t'i*, (Concerning the problems of demarcating the administrative areas, developing economic construction and establishing clinics), Notice No. 5 of the Internal Affairs Commissariat, dated September 20, 1933. SSC 10.

⁹⁷ *HSCH*, 113, p. 1.

⁹⁸ "Chung-yang-chün hsuian-chü yun-tung chung ti p'ien-tuan," (An episode in the central army electoral movement), *Hung-hsing*, (Red Star), 22 (December 31, 1933), p. 3. [Hereafter *HH*].

⁹⁹ *HSCH*, 116, p. 3.

names of the voters as they entered the meeting hall. The electoral meeting was in the hands of a presidium of three, two of whom were elected by the meeting, the third being the representative of the electoral committee, who was to be the chairman.¹⁰⁰ He was trained beforehand for the post, "so as to avoid an uneasy attitude at the meeting which would cause bad guidance."¹⁰¹

The meeting could only begin if the number of voters present was over 50 percent of the total possible. If less than 50 percent were present, the meeting was to be convened again at a later date. If at the second meeting, a quorum was still not present, the election was nevertheless to go ahead. The first item on the agenda was for the chairman to announce the number of voters present, and whether there was a quorum or not. Then followed the election of soviet delegates, first the formal and then the candidate delegates. These were to be voted on separately, and not as batches.¹⁰² The names were to be proposed one at a time for discussion, and the voters were encouraged to give their opinions on the candidates "so as to cause the revolutionary democratic spirit to be fully manifested."¹⁰³ Voting was by a show of hands, "for only in this way can we select the delegates . . . who are supported by the real majority of the people."¹⁰⁴ If it appeared that the majority of the voters opposed one of the candidates, then he was to be removed and another suitable candidate proposed. Following the election of delegates to the *hsiang* soviet, the final item on the agenda was the passing of the voters' proposals. The draft proposals, concerned with the economic situation, the politics of the government, and the war, had been prepared well beforehand, and the opinions of the electorate had also been sounded.¹⁰⁵ After the close of the meeting, the records were signed by the presidium and the secretary, and sent for inspection to higher level soviets.¹⁰⁶

In the case of the *hsiang* electoral meetings of Ts'aihsi *ch'ü*, it was reported that there was usually a more than 90 percent attendance, with only the aged and ill being absent. Female representatives often constituted more than 30 percent of the delegates, but worker representation was frequently too low, because they did not announce the total number of people in their families, on which basis their allowable number of delegates was to be calculated. Nevertheless, it was said that Ts'aihsi

¹⁰⁰ *Su-wei-ai chan-hsing hsuan-chü-fa*.

¹⁰¹ *Kuei-ting ko-chi cheng-fu hsuan-chü jih-ch'i ti chih-shih-shu*, (A directive stipulating the election dates at the various levels of the government), n.d. SSC 10.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *HCYT*, 1, p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ *HSCH*, 116, p. 3.

¹⁰⁵ *HCYT*, 1, pp. 5-6.

¹⁰⁶ *Su-wei-ai chan-hsing hsuan-chü-fa*, articles 19-20.

ch'ü is "our model for an election. We want every *ch'ü*, *hsiang* and *hsien* to learn from this."¹⁰⁷

On the completion of the election of *hsiang* soviet delegates, a plenary session of the new *hsiang* soviet was convened. This selected a chairman and vice-chairmen, and elected delegates to attend the *ch'ü* soviet conference.¹⁰⁸ Conferences at the *ch'ü*, *hsien*, and provincial levels were convened by their respective Executive Committees and followed a pattern similar to their lower-level counterparts, with the agenda announced two weeks beforehand. Careful investigation was to be made of those people elected to the new EC's as well as those elected as delegates to higher level soviets.

It is clear that each level's conference was organized and controlled by the level immediately superior to it. Thus the provincial soviet was ordered to designate capable people to attend the *hsien* conference and direct its work. *Hsien* conferences were held in groups of 7–10 *hsien* to speed up the process, and the provincial soviets were warned to make sure that these conferences were not all held at the same time, which would risk the chance that they could not send men to supervise them all. The *hsien* soviet officials, in their turn, were to do the same for the *ch'ü* conferences, and the *ch'ü* officials for the *hsiang* conferences, thus ensuring Party control over the final result—the delegates and resolutions forwarded to the Second Congress.¹⁰⁹

Since the elections had been postponed, it was inevitable that the date originally set for the Second Congress, December 11, 1933, would have to be set forward. In October, it was announced that it would now convene on January 1, 1934.¹¹⁰ In the last few weeks before the Congress, meetings of mass organizations were to be held to discuss the event, and oral propaganda and wall newspaper propaganda teams were to be organized.

Great efforts were also made on behalf of the election campaign in the other soviet districts apart from the central soviet area. This effort, in conjunction with work in the KMT areas, was designed primarily to get the other soviet areas and non-soviet territory to hold elections for the sending of delegates to the Second Congress so that it might in reality become a congress representing all China. In the case of soviet areas outside the central soviet district, the Central sub-bureaus and provincial committees of O-yü-wan, Hsiang-o-hsi, Szechuan, Min-chekan, Hsiang-o-kan, and Hsiang-kan were instructed to lead the electoral movement in their areas. In addition, the central government decided to

¹⁰⁷ *HSCH*, 127, p. 3.

¹⁰⁸ *HCYT*, 1, p. 6.

¹⁰⁹ *HSCH*, 113, p. 1.

¹¹⁰ "Erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui tsai hung-chün chung tsen-yang chin-hsing hsuanchü," (How the election for the Second National Soviet Congress will be carried out in the Red Army), *HH*, 12 (October 22, 1933), p. 3.

send delegations or observer corps to Min-che-kan, Hsiang-o-kan, and Hsiang-kan "to help this movement."¹¹¹

Mao Tse-tung, speaking at an election meeting in September 1933, announced that "in the crushing of (the) enemies' fourth offensive, the soviet dominion has been greatly extended, and we are seeing this year that the soviet election takes place in ten provincial units."¹¹² The question then arises as to whether these ten soviet areas existed as anything other than names on paper; and, if so, whether they did in fact bestir themselves to send representatives to the Second Congress, providing of course that the military situation and communication problems allowed them to do so.

In the case of the O-yü-wan soviet, it is most unlikely that there was any organized electoral activity. Chiang Kai-shek's encirclement campaign of August 1932 forced Chang Kuo-t'ao and the Red Army's Fourth Front Army under Hsü Hsiang-ch'ien to flee to Szechuan, which they reached in December 1932. Some troops were left behind, where they remained until September 1934, but it is unlikely that their guerrilla operations permitted elections to be held.

There was, however, one representative of the O-yü-wan soviet present at the Congress. The name of Ch'eng Fang-wu appears in the list of delegates elected to the Presidium of the Congress coupled with the information that he was from O-yü-wan.¹¹³ Ch'eng was also elected to the Central Executive Committee. It is possible that Ch'eng was not a delegate from O-yü-wan at all, but was deputed to be their representative, possibly because he might have had some contact with the area in the past. A communist source, listing the areas sending delegates, makes no mention of any from O-yü-wan either having arrived or being awaited.¹¹⁴

The same encirclement campaign (Chiang Kai-shek's fourth), destroyed Ho Lung's soviet base on the (western) Hupeh-Hunan border, whence they were driven to the borders of Hupeh, Hunan, Szechuan, and Kweichow. Although it is most unlikely that there were elections in the area, two representatives were elected to the presidium of the Congress: one, Chang Hsing, from the Hupeh-Honan border; and the other, Wang Mu, from Honan. Neither appear to have played a major role in the Congress proceedings.

After the collapse of the O-yü-wan base, the Fourth Front Army headed for Szechuan, where they arrived in December 1932. According to the commander of the Fourth Front Army, Hsü Hsiang-ch'ien, a soviet delegates conference was held in May 1933 at Pa-chou, where

¹¹¹ *HSCH*, 108, p. 3.

¹¹² Mao Tse-tung, *Chinese Workers Correspondence*, 1, pp. 5-6.

¹¹³ *CRBRD*, p. 652.

¹¹⁴ "Tsai ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui ch'ien-mien," (Before the Second National Soviet Congress), *HSCH*, 145 (January 19, 1934), p. 2.

3,000 delegates gathered—representing one million people living in the fourteen *hsien* which made up the new Szechuan-Shensi soviet area.¹¹⁵ There are no records of this conference, which was in any case held too early to be aware of the forthcoming Second Congress. Both Hsü Hsiang-ch'ien and Chang Kuo-t'ao were elected to the Central Executive Committee, but neither were actually present at the Congress. One delegate, Miu K'un, allegedly from Szechuan, was elected to the presidium of the Congress.¹¹⁶

The Yüeh-kan soviet area was set up in the summer of 1933 on the basis of a decision taken at the 48th meeting of the Council of People's Commissars on August 16.¹¹⁷ The area held its first Party Congress in November 1933 and, although mention is made of the soviet election movement taking place, no details are available.¹¹⁸ Two sources however refer to delegates from "the East River of Kwangtung,"¹¹⁹ and the presidium of the Congress has six men listed as representing Yüeh-kan.¹²⁰

The Min-che-kan soviet area held its third Congress in November 1933, at which it was proposed to elect delegates to attend the National Congress.¹²¹ A delegation from the area did arrive in the central soviet district, and Min-che-kan had three representatives on the Congress Presidium one of whom, Wang Chin-hsiang, was later elected to the Central Executive Committee.¹²²

The Min-kan soviet area held its first workers, peasants, and soldiers delegate conference in December 1933.¹²³ Very limited information is available concerning this meeting, but it is probable that arrangements were made to have the soviet represented at the National Congress. Chu Wei-yuan, who was elected to the formal presidium of the Min-kan Conference, was also elected to the Presidium of the National Congress, together with two other delegates from Min-kan, Ku Tso-lin and Hu Te-lan.¹²⁴

On October 30, 1933 there was convened the third delegate conference of the Hsiang-o-kan soviet area.¹²⁵ The record of the proceedings

¹¹⁵ Wales, *Red Dust*, p. 158.

¹¹⁶ *CRBRD*, p. 652.

¹¹⁷ *HSCH*, 106 (August 31, 1933), p. 5.

¹¹⁸ Lo Mai, "Tsai Yueh-Kan sheng ti-i-tz'u tang tai-piao hui-i ti ch'ien-mien," (Before the First Party Congress of Yueh-Kan Province), *TC*, 34 (November 12, 1933), pp. 1-5.

¹¹⁹ *HSCH*, 145, p. 2; *CRBRD*, p. 652.

¹²⁰ *CRBRD*, p. 651. The six were: Lo Mai, Ch'en Yun, Liu Kuo-chu, Fu Ts'ai-hsiu, Chou I-k'ai and Chung Shih-pin.

¹²¹ *HSCH*, 127 (November 20, 1933), p. 3.

¹²² *CRBRD*, p. 651.

¹²³ *Ta-hui T'e-k'an*, (Special Publication of the Congress), 2 (December 14, 1933), p. 1, SSC 9.

¹²⁴ *CRBRD*, p. 651.

¹²⁵ *HSCH*, 128 (November 23, 1933), p. 1.

does not refer to the election of delegates to attend the National Congress in Juichin, but this probably took place. Chang Chin-lou, one of the two vice-chairmen of the Hsiang-o-kan presidium set up at the conference, was subsequently elected to the Presidium of the Second Congress. Four members of the Hsiang-o-kan presidium, including the chairman, Ho Chen-wu, and the two vice-chairmen, Chang Chin-lou and K'ung Ho-ch'ung, were made members of the CEC at the Second Congress.¹²⁶ The Hsiang-kan soviet is known to have sent a delegation to the Second Congress,¹²⁷ and to have carried out an election campaign within its territory.¹²⁸ T'an Yü-pao represented the area on the Congress Presidium, and was later elevated to the CEC.¹²⁹

Fukien was represented on the Presidium of the Second Congress by a very strong delegation, six in all, who were all elected to the CEC.¹³⁰ The six included Lo Fu and Teng Fa, both CCP Politburo members.

From Kiangsi came the strongest delegation of all, which might be expected as the province housed the soviet capital and was the most secure of all the communist controlled territories. Two hundred and fifty delegates were sent to Juichin to attend the Second Congress.¹³¹ They were elected at the Second Conference of the Kiangsi Provincial Soviet, held in December 1933.¹³²

The Presidium of the Second Congress had its largest delegation from Kiangsi—sixteen in all, including the Chairman of the Kiangsi Provincial soviet, Liu Ch'i-yao, and the vice-chairman, Tseng Shan. Mao Tse-tung, head of the soviet government was included, as well as one of the vice-chairmen Hsiang Ying, and a leader of the "Russian Returned Student" group, Po Ku.¹³³ Of the sixteen, no less than twelve were to find their way onto the CEC.

In addition to its own delegation from Kiangsi, the central soviet area was strengthened by a separate body of delegates elected from the soviet capital itself. Juichin *hsien* held its fifth workers, peasants, and soldiers representative conference just prior to the Second Congress, to which it sent seventy delegates.¹³⁴ It had a membership of eight on the Congress Presidium, all of whom were made members of the CEC.

One can therefore conclude that in their efforts to make the Second

¹²⁶ *HSCH*, 128, p. 1.

¹²⁷ *HSCH*, 145, p. 2.

¹²⁸ *Hung-se Hsiang-Kan*, (Red Hunan-Kiangsi), 21 (November 13, 1933), p. 6.

¹²⁹ *CRBRD*, pp. 651–652. T'an was the Chairman of the soviet.

¹³⁰ *CRBRD*, p. 651.

¹³¹ "Chiang-hsi ti-erh-tz'u sheng-su ta-hui chan-tou ti ch'eng-kung-le," (The Fighting Success of the Second Kiangsi Provincial Soviet Congress), *HSCH*, 140 (January 4, 1934), p. 3.

¹³² *Chiang-hsi sheng su-wei-ai chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui pu-kao ti-i-hao*, (Announcement No. 1 of the Kiangsi Provincial Soviet Executive Committee), February 5, 1934. SSC 16.

¹³³ *CRBRD*, p. 651.

¹³⁴ *HSCH*, 143 (January 13, 1934), p. 3.

Congress representative of all the soviet areas, the CCP and the soviet government met with some measure of success. All the soviet areas mentioned by Mao in his election speech were represented at the Congress. This fact must be tempered, however, by the knowledge that the overwhelming weight of soviet area delegates came from the central soviet Kiangsi/Fukien area. One report says that over seven hundred delegates arrived,¹³⁵ although apparently provisions were made for more than two thousand. Of the seven hundred no fewer than 320 were known to have come from Kiangsi or Juichin, and this does not include those from Fukien or from the Red Army operating in the central area.

The same argument applies, *a fortiori*, to the Presidium of the Congress. The delegates from the Red Army were mainly active in the central soviet district, and together with those from Kiangsi, Fukien, and Juichin, they gave the men from the central area an absolute majority on the Presidium.¹³⁶

The Communist Party, in addition to seeking representation from all the soviet areas, sought to establish the Chinese Soviet Republic as an alternative state to the Kuomintang regime, and, therefore exerted considerable efforts to encourage delegates to come to the Second Congress from the KMT-controlled parts of the country—particularly from the industrial centers. The CCP ordered its members to convene mass meetings “especially among workers in large factories”¹³⁷ so that they might send delegates to Juichin.

Party branches were required to send production workers from all the centers of production—Kiangsu, Hopeh, Wuhan, and Manchuria.¹³⁸ Particular attention was paid to Shanghai, where the Party members were told to work with the trade unions in sabotaging and confiscating imported munitions.¹³⁹ Anti-imperialist organizations in the city were to spread propaganda concerning the Congress. The CCP made some headway in Shanghai, for it was later reported that on November 6 the dockers had carried out some propaganda activities by holding meetings, passing out leaflets, hanging up red flags and the like, and that they had also elected some 25 peasants and 24 dock workers to attend the Second Congress.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ *CRBRD*, p. 651.

¹³⁶ The Presidium was a form of steering committee for the Congress, and it can be assumed that its members were present at the time, unlike those nominated to the Honorary Presidium. For a complete listing of all areas represented on the Congress Presidium, see *CRBRD*, p. 651.

¹³⁷ *HSCH*, 108, p. 3.

¹³⁸ *HCCP*, 59, p. 7.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 10

¹⁴⁰ “Shang-hai kung-nung tsai fan-fa-hsi-szu tou-cheng chung hsuan-chü ch’u-hsi erh-su ta-hui tai-piao,” (Shanghai workers and peasants in the anti-fascist struggle elect delegates to the Second National Soviet Congress), *HSCH*, 128 (November 23, 1933), p. 1.

Apart from the soviet areas, and the industrial and commercial centers in the KMT districts, the CCP leaders had a third main target in creating propaganda and dissaffection in the White (KMT) armies. Party members were told to use any methods to infiltrate into enemy units taking part in the encirclement campaign, and to incite the soldiers to insurrection.¹⁴¹ This was particularly important in view of the KMT's economic blockade, which was having a severe effect on the soviet economy. Guerrilla districts in the White areas were also instructed to elect and send delegates to the Second Congress.

Overall, it is clear that the Party made much greater efforts to secure representation from outside the soviet areas than they did in the case of the First Congress of 1931. Delegates to the Second Congress reportedly came from areas such as Manchuria, Shensi, Amoy and Shantung, as well as farther places like Hong Kong, Korea, Java, Annam, and Taiwan.

Immediately prior to the opening of the Congress, the Fifth Plenum of the Central Committee of the CCP convened in Juichin. In addition to members and alternate members of the CC being present, there were also representatives from the provincial committees.¹⁴² Whether Mao actually attended the Plenum is unknown; but if he did, he certainly was not chosen to deliver any one of the three major reports adopted by the Plenum. In fact, he was apparently attacked by Po Ku for his "country-side" policy.¹⁴³ It was Po Ku who reported on the current situation and the Party's tasks,¹⁴⁴ followed by Ch'en Yun on the economic struggle in the KMT areas,¹⁴⁵ and Lo Fu on the soviet movement.¹⁴⁶ Lo Fu's report—later to be termed the "Instructions of the Fifth Plenum to the Party Corps at the Second National Soviet Congress"—laid down the line the Central Committee wished the Congress to follow.¹⁴⁷ In general terms, this was that from the time of the Fourth Plenum the Chinese soviet regime had been greatly consolidated and developed, soviet territory had been expanded, a strong Red Army created, and centralized leadership of the soviet government established, so that the regime was now

¹⁴¹ *HCCP*, 59, pp. 9–10.

¹⁴² "Chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang chung-yang cheng-chih-chü t'ung-chih," (Notice of the CCP Central Politburo), *TC*, 47 (February 16, 1934), p. 1. SSC 18.

¹⁴³ R. C. North interview with Chang Kuo-t'ao. (Hoover Library Microfilm.)

¹⁴⁴ "Mu-ch'ien ti hsing-shih yü tang ti jen-wu chueh-i," (Resolution on the current situation and the tasks of the Party), adopted by the Fifth Plenum on January 18, 1934, *TC*, 47 (February 16, 1934), pp. 1–16. SSC 18.

¹⁴⁵ "Wu-chung chüan-hui kuan-yü pai-se ch'ü-yü chung ching-chi tou-cheng yü kung-hui kung-tso ti chueh-i," (Resolution of the Fifth Plenum on economic struggle and trade union work in the white areas), *TC*, 50 (March 11, 1934), pp. 1–12. SSC 18.

¹⁴⁶ *TC*, 47, p. 1.

¹⁴⁷ "Wu-chung ch'üan-hui kei erh-tz'u ch'üan-su ta-hui tang-t'uan ti chih-ling," printed in *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui wen-hsien*, (Collected Documents of the Second National Soviet Congress of the Chinese Soviet Republic), pp. 9–21, SSC 16.

a major factor in China's revolutionary situation. Since the immediate aim of the regime was to achieve initial victories in one or more provinces, the Second Congress had to strengthen political and military leadership over the soviet areas and join them together. Furthermore, it must build up the Red Army to one million men, and establish the absolute leadership of the Party over the Red Army to wipe out the tradition of guerrillaism. Within the soviet areas, the solving of the land problem and the improving of economic conditions was a guarantee of victory in the war; and the task now was to take the field investigation movement from the advanced to the backward soviet areas. In line with Comintern instructions, Lo Fu's report condemned the nationalization of land as mistaken at the current time. The Party was instructed to strengthen its leadership function in the soviet areas so that all personnel would have "a deep understanding that the soviet regime is only consolidated and developed under the leadership of the Party, and that the Party carries absolute responsibility for all the work of the soviet government. The strengthening of proletarian leadership in the soviet regime provides the necessary conditions and guarantee for the future change of the soviet revolution into socialism."¹⁴⁸ These general principles and sentiments were all followed and made more concrete at the various speeches presented to the Second Congress.

Many of the proposals and resolutions of the Plenum were later attacked by Mao, although he agreed with them at the time. Writing in 1945, Mao condemned the Fifth Plenum as marking "the peak of the development of the third 'Left' line,"¹⁴⁹ under the leadership of the Returned Students Wang Ming, Lo Fu, and Po Ku.¹⁵⁰ The conclusions of the Fifth Plenum diagnosed the existence of a revolutionary situation in China.¹⁵¹ This was in harmony with the so-called "forward and offensive line" which had been the policy of the Returned Student group since late 1931. Over-optimistic in their vision of the revolutionary prospects for China, the Returned Student leaders urged positional warfare against Chiang Kai-shek rather than reliance on Mao's guerrilla methods. The "forward and offensive line" was reinforced by the Twelfth Plenum of the ECCI, which affirmed the existence of a revolutionary situation in China.¹⁵² Mao later condemned this line,¹⁵³ but voiced his agreement

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁴⁹ RCQHP, p. 191.

¹⁵⁰ Wang Ming was in Moscow at the time. Po Ku was re-elected Secretary-General. He and Lo Fu, Chou En-lai, Hsiang Ying, and Ch'en Yun formed the new Standing Committee of the Politburo. *Issues and Studies*, IV, 1 (October 1967), p. 38.

¹⁵¹ Po Ku, "Chung-kuo kung-ch'an-tang chung-yang wei-yuan-hui ti-wu-tz'u ch'üan-hui tsung-chieh," (Conclusions of the Fifth Plenum of the CCP Central Committee), *TC*, 48 (February 23, 1934), p. 3. SSC 18.

¹⁵² Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 652; Degras, *Communist International*, III, p. 222.

¹⁵³ RCQHP, p. 203.

with it at the time.¹⁵⁴ In 1945, he also commented that “the Fifth Plenary Session blindly concluded that ‘the revolutionary crisis in China has reached a new acute stage’ . . . ,” and that this was just to repeat the views of the Li Li-san line.¹⁵⁵

The Returned Students, having supervised the electoral campaign from start to finish, having organized a network of Party fractions in each delegation, and having re-affirmed their line at the Fifth Plenum, were now ready to go ahead with the Second Congress and formally establish their control over the organs of soviet government.¹⁵⁶

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONGRESS

The Second National Soviet Congress officially opened on January 22, 1934, and lasted for eleven days.¹⁵⁷ In the afternoon of January 22,¹⁵⁸ following a salute of three rounds of gunfire,¹⁵⁹ Mao Tse-tung, as chairman of the soviet government, formally proclaimed the Congress open.¹⁶⁰ This proclamation was followed by thunderous applause, and a “magnificent military march was struck up.” The Congress was held in a new auditorium seating 1,000 people. It was bedecked with red and green flags, which had written on them slogans such as “Only the Soviets can save China” and “Develop and consolidate the Soviet Areas.”

¹⁵⁴ See for example his “Fen-sui wu-tz’u ‘wei-chiao’ yü su-wei-ai ching-chi chien-she jen-wu, (Smashing the Fifth “Encirclement Campaign” and the tasks of the soviet economic construction), *HSCH*, 102 (August 16, 1933), pp. 2–4.

¹⁵⁵ RCQHP, p. 191. In addition to these points, Mao may also have been at odds with the Politburo over the question of the “Fukien revolt,” which refers to the rebellion of the KMT’s Nineteenth Route Army in November 1933, occurring after a preliminary agreement with the CCP. The Politburo, however, gave little support to the rebels and refused to aid them militarily, with the result that they were crushed by Chiang Kai-shek in January 1934. Mao later denounced this policy as erroneous, and said that the CCP should have allied themselves with the rebels. (Snow, *Red Star*, p. 186). The question arises as to what was Mao’s position on the Fukien rebels at the time. All the indications are that he opposed collaboration with them. See Mao’s denunciation of the Fukien government in his report to the Second Congress, pp. 40–41. [See also Schram, *Mao Tse-tung*, pp. 172–175. For a survey of the documents, see Hsiao, Vol. I, pp. 248–260; and Vol. II, pp. 676–688. For differing viewpoints, see Rue, *Mao in Opposition*, pp. 260–261; and William F. Dorrell, “The Fukien Rebellion and the CCP: A Case of Maoist Revisionism,” *China Quarterly*, No. 37, (January-March, 1969), pp. 31–53].

¹⁵⁶ The Party corps, or fractions (*tang-t’uan*), were groups of Party members within non-Party organizations, who had the responsibility of ensuring that these organizations conformed to Party policy. For an outline of their activities, see Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 189.

¹⁵⁷ *HSCH*, Special Edition 2 (January 24, 1934), p. 2.

¹⁵⁸ Before the formal opening of the Congress, however, Mao, Chu Teh, and Ts’ai Ch’ang had reviewed troops early that morning.

¹⁵⁹ The gunfire was followed by firecrackers, and “the sounds of the gunfire and firecrackers shook the colonies of the East.” (*HSCH*, Special Edition 2, *loc. cit.*)

¹⁶⁰ Mao made a brief and formal speech which did not add anything of substance to the *HSCH* opening editorial of that date. See “Mao chu-hsi Chiang-tz’u ti su-hsieh,” (Shortland Copy of the Speech of Chairman Mao), *HSCH*, Special Edition 2, p. 1.

Delegates to the Congress came from the various soviet areas then functioning within China, from many provinces in the White areas, and from neighboring countries. The official list gives a total of 693 full delegates and 83 alternates, plus approximately 1,500 observers. The breakdown in terms of numbers and origin is given in Table 3. The table refers to the 776 full and alternate delegates.

TABLE 3
DELEGATES TO THE SECOND NATIONAL SOVIET CONGRESS*

<i>Delegation</i>	<i>Full</i>	<i>Alternate</i>
Hsiang-kan	43	0
Local armed forces	13	9
Red Army	117	28
Min-kan	37	0
Yüeh-kan	63	12
Fukien	79	8
Kiangsi	196	26
Central Level	48	0
National Minorities	3	0
White Areas	17	0
Szechuan	1	0
O-yü-wan	1	0
Hsiang-o-kan	30	0
Min-che-kan	45	0
TOTAL	693	83

* "Tao-hui tai-piao t'ung-chi," (Statistics of those attending Congress), *HH*, 26 (January 28, 1934), p. 1. These figures are not always in agreement with those cited earlier. For example, the Second Congress of the Kiangsi Provincial Soviet was reported to have sent 250 delegates to the National Congress, not 222 as listed. Nor is there any mention of the 70 delegates from Juichin.

A subsequent edition of *Red Star* carried a breakdown of the delegates into their Party membership and class origin,¹⁶¹ which was as follows: Youth League members, 116; Party members, 628; others, 64; small merchants, 4; middle peasants, 25; poor peasants, 303; hired peasants, 122; shopworkers, 12; coolies, 53; handicraft workers, 244, and industrial workers, 8. The total numbers (1,579) so much exceed the total number of delegates (776) that it can only be assumed that observers were included in the figures. It is surprising that the soviet government published figures showing only a tiny number of eight men out of 1,579 drawn from the ranks of the industrial workers, since they usually took pains to emphasize the predominance of the proletariat. No breakdown is given of the class membership of the Party and Youth League members, probably because they themselves were mainly peasants or handicraft workers. However, they made up nearly 50 percent of the total.

¹⁶¹ "Tai-piao ch'eng-fen tiao-ch'a piao," (Delegate Component Investigation Chart), *HSCH*, Special Edition 7, (February 3, 1934), p. 4.

According to an editorial published on the front page of the first special edition of *Red China* celebrating the Second Congress, the Congress was to perform the following functions:¹⁶²

1) In the two years since the First Congress, the Chinese soviet movement, under the correct leadership of the CCP, with the support of the workers and the peasants, and the struggle of the Red Army, had been greatly developed and consolidated. All forces had been centralized to smash four of Chiang Kai-shek's encirclement campaigns. The soviet regime was now the only leader and organizer in China of the anti-Japanese, anti-imperialist movement. The Second Congress had therefore been convened to sum up the rich experiences of the last two years, and to plan the future struggle against Japan and imperialism.

2) The Second Congress was being held at a time when the Fifth Encirclement Campaign was being launched, and also at a time of transition in the great world revolutionary struggle. It was a time of crisis in the battle between the soviet road and the colonial road, and the soviet regime was on the eve of a great revolutionary victory. The Second Congress was therefore of great historical significance.

3) During the Congress, the Party must insure that the regime fulfill the slogan of building a Red Army of one million men, mobilize the masses, seize key cities, and win initial victories in one or more provinces.¹⁶³

4) The editorial pointed out that although there had been achievements in economic work, these still did not meet requirements. The Congress was therefore to discuss measures for raising the level of trade and agricultural and industrial production. In pursuit of this aim, it was necessary to carry out a fierce class struggle, to attack the feudal remnants, the reactionary plots of the rich peasants and capitalists and, in the new and border areas, to liquidate the landlords, oppose (*fan-tui*) the rich peasants, ally with the poor peasant, and link up with the middle peasant. It would also be necessary to weed out from soviet organs all counter-revolutionary elements who attempted to sabotage soviet work and the Red Army.

5) It was pointed out that the weakest link in current work was the consolidation of the new areas and the border areas, that the land question in these areas needed to be speedily resolved, together with the suppression of reactionary armed forces.

6) Weaknesses were also reported in the work of the provincial soviets

¹⁶² "Ying-chieh chung-kuo su-wei-ai sheng-li ti ta ko-ming," (Welcome the Great Revolution of the Chinese Soviet Victory), *HSCCH*, Special Edition 1 (January 22, 1934), p. 1.

¹⁶³ It is clear from the above points that the Congress was dutifully echoing the line of the Fifth Plenum.

of Kiangsi and Fukien. Leading comrades had become bureaucratic and divorced from the masses.

On the same opening day of January 22, after Mao had declared the Congress open, there were brief opening speeches by Po Ku, Liu Shao-ch'i, K'ai Feng, and Chu Teh. Chu Teh claimed that the Red Army had smashed half of the Fifth Encirclement Campaign, and was confident of dealing similarly with the other half. In the main, however, none of these brief remarks added anything to the opening editorial of *Red China*.

Following the opening speeches, the Congress, acting on a proposal by Ts'ai Ch'ang, a delegate from Kiangsi, elected a 75-man presidium. This body was in the nature of a steering committee and no doubt dealt with the order of the agenda and financial arrangements. Po Ku proposed that an Honorary Presidium should be elected. This was approved, and the Honorary Presidium consisted of Stalin, Kalinin, Molotov, Thälmann, and Okano.¹⁶⁴ Further preliminary business followed the election of the two presidia. The assembled delegates first elected six committees, and chose Liang Po-t'ai as Secretary General.¹⁶⁵ The six committees were as follows: Credentials, Resolution on the Work Report of the CEC; Resolution on Red Army Construction; Resolution on Economic Construction; Resolution on Soviet Construction; and Laws and Decrees.

The delegates then approved a Congress agenda which consisted of the following six items: report on the last two years' work of the CEC (to be delivered by Mao Tse-tung); resolution on Red Army construction (Chu Teh); resolution on Soviet construction (Wu Liang-p'ing); resolution on economic construction (Lin Po-ch'ü); adoption of a constitution and other laws; and the election of a new CEC.¹⁶⁶

On the day after the opening of the Congress, there were no meetings. On the afternoon of January 24, Mao began his summary of the achievements in soviet work since the First National Soviet Congress.¹⁶⁷ He continued his speech to its conclusion on the morning of January 25. Overall, Mao's report followed the lines laid down by the Fifth Plenum of the CCP Central Committee. Echoing the ECCI's Twelfth Plenum, he stated

¹⁶⁴ *HSCH*, Special Edition 2, p. 2.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.* That evening there was a torchlight procession, and a party organized by the Drama Society. Li K'o-nung, who was active in the Political Security Bureau, played the part of a local bully (*t'u-hao*) in one of the Society's productions.

¹⁶⁶ *HH*, 26 (January 28, 1934), p. 1. This agenda had been under discussion for some time, at least since August 12, 1933, when the Congress Preparatory Committee met to draft an agenda. The six items were decided on at the 48th meeting of the CPC held on August 16, 1933. [*HSCH*, 106 (August 31, 1933), p. 5.]

¹⁶⁷ Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui yü jen-min wei-yuan-hui tui ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-kuo su-wei-ai tai-piao ta-hui ti pao-kao, (Report of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Chinese Soviet Republic to the Second National Soviet Congress), printed in *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui wen-hsien*, pp. 22-124. [Henceforth referred to as *CEC Report*.]

that the Chinese revolution had taken a more acute turn,¹⁶⁸ and that China was now in a decisive historical stage of struggle between revolution and counter-revolution, between the soviet regime and the KMT regime.¹⁶⁹ This struggle would be decided by the victory or defeat of the latest "encirclement campaign" of Chiang Kai-shek. Mao went on to describe the great victories of the Red Army over the fourth campaign in the first half of 1933,¹⁷⁰ which led to the expansion of soviet territory in Szechuan, northwest Fukien, east Kiangsi, and the new Min-kan soviet. These territorial acquisitions expanded the population of the soviet areas by nearly one million people.¹⁷¹ Mao made a brief reference to the appearance in Fukien of a People's Government but again echoed the line of the Fifth Plenum in denouncing them.¹⁷² With reference to the work of the government in the soviet areas, the report enthused on the mobilization of the masses under the soviet regime, and went into some detail on the workings of soviet democracy. Mao stated that because the soviet regime depended on the people "its enormous strength is not able to be compared with any other state form in history;" and that, although it used strong power to deal with "class enemies," towards its own class basis (workers and peasants) "it employs no force but demonstrates only the broadest democracy."

Mao said that soviet democracy was first of all manifested in its own elections. He summarized electoral procedures and stated that the electors now realized the connection between the elections and their own lives, so that in the 1932-3 elections, in many places more than 80 per cent of those eligible voted. Great success had been obtained, reported Mao, in putting forward women as soviet delegates, so that in Ts'aihsi *hsiang*, about 60 per cent of the delegates were female. The report then summarized soviet organization at the grass roots level and discussed the work of the *hsiang* committees, by which "soviet work is organized into a complete network in which the broad masses can directly participate."

¹⁶⁸ *CEC Report*, p. 23. With reference to the Chinese revolution "taking a more acute turn," Mao was later to denounce the Fifth Plenum for "blindly concluding" that this was the case. (See RCQHP, p. 191).

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26. Mao later claimed to have opposed this idea. (RCQHP, p. 200).

¹⁷⁰ In his report, Mao attributed the defeat of the KMT's fourth campaign as being due to the Party's "forward and offensive line," which had in fact been used for the first time instead of Mao's traditional guerrilla tactics. In 1945, however, he claimed that victory was due to the use of his own tactics, and denounced the "forward and offensive line." (RCQHP, p. 190)

¹⁷¹ *CEC Report*, p. 37. According to one communist source, the central revolutionary base area had a population of three million at this time. [Kung Yung-kang, "The Revolutionary Bases in the Countryside, 1928-1933," *People's China*, 8 (April 16, 1957), p. 36.] The total area of the Republic was alleged to be 1,348,180 sq. kms., of which 681,255 sq. kms. represented stable districts. (Wang Ming and K'ang Sheng, *Revolutionary China Today* (London: Modern Books Ltd., n.d.), p. 10.)

¹⁷² *CEC Report*, pp. 40-41.

Government work personnel, said Mao, were all appointed by election and, if they were incompetent, they could be recalled by public opinion, so that the solution of all problems was based on public opinion. The democratic nature of the soviets was further manifested by the rights of speech, assembly, association, publication, and strike, for which facilities such as meeting places, paper and print shops existed, by contrast to their suppression in the White areas by "KMT fascist terror."¹⁷³

Mao also spoke of the Labor Law, which was the only major law passed by the First Congress that had been superseded by a revised law prior to the Second Congress.¹⁷⁴ The new Labor Law, said Mao, was being implemented everywhere, and had resulted in a better standard of living. Mao also gave figures for the number of workers belonging to trade unions in the soviet areas, and claimed that in the central soviet district over 95 per cent belonged.¹⁷⁵ On agrarian policy, the report reiterated the class line of annihilating the landlords, relying on the hired farm hands and poor peasants, and allying with the middle peasant, which was the line of the editorial of the first Special Edition of *Red China*, and of the Fifth Plenum. In the case of the rich peasant, however, Mao's report was more moderate in its language towards them than either the *Red China* editorial or the Fifth Plenum, both of which used the term "to oppose" (*fan-tui*)¹⁷⁶ the rich peasants, while Mao employed "exploit" or "squeeze" (*po-hsüeh*).¹⁷⁷

Mao then spoke of the land investigation movement. He emphasized that redistribution was to be carried out quickly and, once complete, was not to be carried out all over again for fear of alienating the peasants. The report noted that, after redistribution, agricultural output usually increased over what it had been before, so that in some soviet areas production was 15–20 per cent higher in 1933 than 1932. Having discussed the progress of the educational system in the soviet areas, and the effectiveness of the Marriage Laws passed in 1931, Mao turned to the question of the Red Army. Most of his comments were concentrated on the need to expand the Red Army, under the slogan of creating "a one-million-strong iron Red Army," and the need to raise the level of political education of Red Army soldiers.

In order to raise economic, and particularly agricultural production, Mao spoke of organizing mutual-aid societies and ploughing teams, which was to be carried out by the Commissariat for National Economy. The work of the Grain Commissariat was also to be linked with this, so as to maintain the supply of grain to the masses and to the Red Army. Mao

¹⁷³ For above details see *CEC Report*, pp. 52–57.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 64–74. The new Labor Law was passed in October 1933. It can be found in *Su-wei-ai fa-tien*, (The Soviet Code), Vol. 2, pp. 3–40. SSC 16.

¹⁷⁵ *CEC Report*, p. 72.

¹⁷⁶ Hsiao, Vol. II, p. 699 and p. 697.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 716.

also urged the development of cooperatives, and the possibility of setting up state-owned enterprises in certain cases. He concluded this section of his speech on economic construction by pleading for the smashing of the enemy's economic blockade, and the development of external trade.

In his discussion of soviet work, Mao said that although it had achieved glorious successes, it could still be improved. The work of the CEC and the CPC should be differentiated, and there must be an increase in the number of work personnel in the local people's commissariats. Soviet workers should struggle against bureaucratism and commandism, which led to a gulf being created between the soviets and the masses. Finally, Mao called on the soviets to strengthen their leadership of the anti-imperialist struggle, to call on the masses to fight for the independence of China, and to defeat the KMT and Japanese imperialism.¹⁷⁸

On January 26 and 27, the delegates divided themselves into groups to discuss Chairman Mao's report.¹⁷⁹ The summary of their discussions in *Red China* disclosed only that they were all in agreement with Mao's report, and that the groups tended to concentrate their discussion on the parts of the report containing problems particularly relevant to their own areas. Some criticisms of individual delegates appeared: "for only repeating what Chairman Mao said," and for "not understanding the false revolution of the Fukien people's government." In addition, Fukien delegates violently criticized "the work style of aimless-talk-ism and bureaucratism in the Fukien provincial soviet," and the Min-che-kan delegate raised the problem of whether opium smokers should be allowed to join the guerrilla forces, although no decision on this question was reported.

Red China, in reproducing a selection of the speeches made by delegates during discussion, also noted that no one revealed any opinions contrary to those expressed in the Report. Kiangsi and Fukien delegates, Liu Ch'i-yao and Fan Lo-ch'un, both accepted Mao's criticisms of bureaucratic errors in the soviet work of their areas, and said that measures were being taken to struggle against bureaucratism. Liu also referred to the fact that the struggle against opportunists such as Ku Po and Hsieh Wei-chün had not been started as soon as it should have been. This is interesting because Ku and Hsieh were both allied with Mao's brother Mao Tse-t'an as followers of the "Lo Ming line," alleged by the Returned Student leadership to be pessimistic and defeatist. Although Liu did not mention Mao's brother personally as an opportunist, this was a thinly disguised attack on the Chairman.

¹⁷⁸ See *CEC Report*, pp. 77-123 *passim*, for details.

¹⁷⁹ "Fen-tsu t'ao-lun su-wei-ai kung-tso pao-kao ti ching-kuo," (Dividing into Groups to Discuss the Soviet Work Report), *HSCH*, Special Edition 4 (January 28, 1934), p. 3.

The Min-che-kan delegate Wang Chin-hsiang admitted the error of conservatism in the work of his area, and also the existence of opportunism which had caused some personnel to take difficulties of supply as a pretext for abandoning recruitment for the Red Army. The Hsiang-kan delegate also spoke of opportunism in his area as manifested by poor performance in expanding the Red Army, and the lack of contact between the soviets and the masses. Problems with the Red Army were also referred to by Lin Jung-k'un, the representative of Juichin, where there was apparently a serious problem with deserters.¹⁸⁰

Another major focus of attention in the speeches was the work being carried out in the soviet border areas. Liu Ch'i-yao acknowledged that the Kiangsi provincial soviet had been remiss in this respect. Kiangsi had neglected the work of the Red Guards and Young Pioneers in these areas; had not sent them good cadres from the central area; and the work of eliminating "counter-revolutionaries" was weak, so that "Chiang Kai-shek spies" had penetrated into Hsingkuo *hsien*. Furthermore, it transpired that "some comrades" were confiscating the land and houses of those peasants who had been forced to follow the gentry and landlords to the White areas and were now in the soviet border areas. In future, said Liu, they should not be treated as traitors. Tseng Ch'ao-sheng, a Red Army delegate, also emphasized that in the new and border areas the work of Red Army recruitment was weak, and that some "opportunist elements" simply said that "the border areas are unable to mobilize." These viewpoints, said Tseng, should be given "merciless blows."¹⁸¹

The connection between the soviet organs and the people was another major area of concern to delegates. Chou Tseng-ts'ai, speaking for Hsingkuo *hsien*, was enthusiastic about the close relationship in his area between the soviets and the mass organizations. In one *hsiang*, he reported, more than 30 committees had been formed, all the people had been organized, meetings were held three times a month, and each delegate supervised 30-50 people, so that, generally speaking their work met with success. The female delegate from Kiangsi, Hsieh P'ei-lan, spoke about the role of women in encouraging mass participation in soviet work, especially with regard to Red Army recruitment and morale. However, she said that some women wavered on this last point by preventing their husbands from joining the Red Army. This was to be opposed as sabotaging the expansion of the Red Army.¹⁸²

After the delegates' discussion was completed on January 27, Mao made some concluding remarks. He began by correcting "some comrades" whom he said had included incorrect views in their speeches. These included those who believed that the fifth encirclement cam-

¹⁸⁰ *HSCB*, Special Edition 5, pp. 3-4.

¹⁸¹ *HSCB*, Special Edition 5, p. 3.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

paign had already been shattered and those who said that the Red Army was barely in the process of destroying it. The former view, said Mao, was "an exaggerated estimation of our own victory," while the latter "disregarded the serious attacks launched by the Red Army against the enemy," in which the Red Army had already achieved the first stage of victory. Mao went on to dismiss the opinion of "one comrade who said that the Fukien People's Revolutionary Government was not completely counter-revolutionary in nature." "Another comrade," (possibly Fan Lo-ch'un), was ridiculed for claiming that "all the work personnel in Fukien were opportunists." Mao admitted the existence of some opportunist elements, "but as for what the comrade says, it is a slander directed at the soviet."

In a move designed to bolster Red Army morale, Mao declared that divorce was not available to wives of Red Army men unless they had the consent of their husbands, or unless they had not heard from their husbands for two years. Mao refused to accept proposals put forward by some delegates that the minimum marriage age (twenty for men, eighteen for women) should be lowered.

Mao then switched to economic policy and urged the local soviets to improve the living of the masses, and not just concentrate on expanding the Red Army. By feeding and clothing the masses, observed Mao, the Red Army would thereby win their support, and encourage peasants to join. Mao spoke highly of the movement to expand the Red Army in Juichin, "under the direct leadership of the Central Bureau and the Central Revolutionary Military Committee." Mao completed his remarks by pointing out weaknesses in the soviet work of most of the soviet areas, and advising them to become like the model *hsien* of Hsingkuo (Kiangsi).¹⁸³

Immediately following Mao's speech, the Congress passed a resolution approving his report.¹⁸⁴ The resolution summarized and approved the main points of Mao's report, and concentrated on the need to smash the Fifth Encirclement Campaign. Credit for victory over the Fourth Campaign was given to "the correct leadership of the Central Committee of the CCP and the central government," as well as to the masses and the Red Army. The resolution stated that the soviets were now "situated in the protracted decisive struggle of shattering the Fifth Encirclement Campaign. We are at the crisis point in grasping the soviet road of victory over the whole country." The new CEC and CPC to be elected at the Congress would be expected to implement these tasks. To these ends, a

¹⁸³ "Kuan-yü chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui pao-kao ti chieh-lun," (Conclusion Concerning the Report of the CEC), *HSCH*, Special Edition 5 (January 31, 1934), pp. 1-2.

¹⁸⁴ "Kuan-yü chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui pao-kao ti chueh-i," (Resolution on the Report of the CEC), in *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo ti-erk-tz'u ch'üan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui wen-hsien*, pp. 140-143.

one-million-strong Red Army was to be created, and local guerrilla forces were to act in a complementary way to the main force of the Red Army. Mao was opposed to this placing of guerrilla warfare in a subordinate role. He later referred to the "serious mistakes (of meeting) the vastly superior Nanking forces in positional warfare, at which the Red Army was neither technically nor spiritually at its best."¹⁸⁵ The resolution concluded by saying that "the Second National Soviet Congress believes that by following the correct Bolshevik line of the Central Committee of the CCP and the soviet central government . . . the soviets . . . will overturn the rule of imperialism and the KMT so that the acute revolutionary situation which exists in China will turn into a victorious revolution. Moreover, . . . the leadership of the proletariat will be strengthened, so that the democratic revolution of the Chinese workers and peasants will become a future socialist revolution."¹⁸⁶

On the following day, January 28, Chu Teh reported to the Congress on the progress in Red Army construction.¹⁸⁷ Chu spoke on the intensification of the revolutionary situation in China, the successes of the Red armies in the Central Soviet Area and elsewhere in their smashing of the Fourth Encirclement campaign, and the need to crush the Fifth Campaign. He continued by stressing the need to expand the Red Army into a one-million-strong force, to strengthen its political work, and insure the absolute leadership of the Party in the Red Army. His report added details to Mao's CEC Report to the Congress, but did not differ in principle. On the evening of the 28th, and the morning of the 29th, several delegates such as Lo Mai (Li Wei-han), Ho Ch'ang-kung, and Fang Wen-ping made speeches concerning the Report.¹⁸⁸

The Report on Soviet Economic Construction was given by Lin Po-ch'ü on the morning of January 29.¹⁸⁹ Lin referred to the economic depression and the fall in industrial and agricultural production (combined with rising unemployment) in the KMT areas of China. Lin then contrasted this picture with his own estimate of the rising production of the soviet areas, the development of external trade, and of a flourishing internal market. Rice production was reported to have been greatly increased (by more than 200 per cent in the Min-che-kan area); more than 200,000 *piculs* had been produced on reclaimed swamp land; and such

¹⁸⁵ Snow, *Red Star*, p. 186. Wang Ming, however, opposed the conversion of regular Red Army units into "small partisan detachments" (Wang Ming & K'ang Sheng, *Revolutionary China*, p. 64).

¹⁸⁶ *Kuan-yü chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui pao-kao ti chüeh-i*, pp. 142-143. ¹⁸⁷ *HH*, 27, p. 1.

¹⁸⁸ "San-ko chung-yao pao-kao: t'ao-lun yü chieh-lun," (Three Important Reports: Discussion and Conclusions), *HSCH*, Special Edition 6 (February 1, 1934), p. 2.

¹⁸⁹ "Kuan-yü su-wei-ai ching-chi chien-she ti chueh-i," (Resolution on Soviet Economic Construction), printed in *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui wen-hsien*, pp. 176-187.

industries as iron, lime, paper, coal, and tungsten had been revived. The cooperative movement was also reported to be developing widely, with over 500,000 members, and 50 per cent of the population joining in some areas. In general, said Lin, a planned economy was now initiated in the soviet areas following the inauguration of a Commissariat for National Economy.

However, said the resolution, which was based on the report, further increases in production were necessary, particularly in agriculture. Peasant cooperatives were to be encouraged, and trade was to be developed. The solution to the grain problem was to be found by the establishment of a new Grain Commissariat, which would tackle the food shortages of 1933 by means of cooperatives. The resolution called on the CPC and the CEC Presidium to strengthen their leadership over the National Economy, Finance, and Grain Commissariats, and the State Bank. They were urged to train new cadres so as to strengthen the leadership of the proletariat in economic construction, and draw on laboring women to work on the economic front. However, the economic difficulties of the soviet areas could only be overcome by military victory against the KMT and the occupation of key cities, and economic construction therefore had to be subordinated for the present to the needs of the war.

Overall, the resolution painted far too rosy a picture of the soviet economy, which was being severely affected by the war and Chiang Kai-shek's use of blockhouses in his economic blockade. Many essential goods, including salt, were in very short supply. Wang Ming, speaking in Moscow to the ECCI's Thirteenth Plenum, admitted that soviet economic policy had encountered difficulties because of the scattering and backwardness of the soviet districts, and because of the continuous and lengthy war.¹⁹⁰ The measures that Lin advocated became soviet economic policy as carried out in the communist-controlled areas during 1934.

Lin Po-ch'ü's report was discussed by the delegates on the afternoon of January 29 and, in general, they completely agreed with his analysis and recommendations. When time ran out, discussion was continued on the next day, after which Lin Po-ch'ü summed up: "bringing out to all the comrades who had spoken, points on which they were not clear, . . . and certain errors by delegates in their speeches."¹⁹¹

At this stage during the proceedings it became known that the Congress was about to come to an abrupt end. Lin Po-ch'ü's report had been cut short by the Congress presidium the previous afternoon (January 29) so that Mao could make an emergency announcement.¹⁹² Mao reported that news had been received from the front that Chiang Kai-shek had

¹⁹⁰ Wang Ming and K'ang Sheng, *Revolutionary China*, p. 45 *passim*.

¹⁹¹ *HSCH*, Special Edition 6, p. 2.

¹⁹² "Kuan-yü chin-chi tung-yuan ti pao-kao," (Report Concerning Urgent Mobilization), *HSCH*, Special Edition 6 (February 1, 1934), p. 1.

defeated the Fukien People's Government and was now preparing to attack the soviet areas in force, from three directions. Mao urged immediate mass mobilization, the suppression of counter-revolutionary landlords and rich peasants who might take advantage of the enemy's attack, and the implementation of measures to ensure the supply of grain to the Red Army. By opposing the errors of "left" and "right" opportunism, said Mao, the enemy's three-pronged attack could be defeated. After Mao's speech, it was proposed that the Congress finish five days earlier than planned, so as to close on February 1. The work of the Congress would be intensified so as to complete it within a shorter space of time. This would allow the delegates to return to their districts a little sooner to mobilize the masses against the expected attack. This proposal was accepted unanimously by the delegates.¹⁹³

On the afternoon of January 30, following Lin Po-ch'ü's Report on Economic Construction, Wu Liang-p'ing delivered his Report on Soviet Construction.¹⁹⁴ The report initially dwelt on the successful development of soviet organization since the time of the First Congress, and quoted examples of the increased number of "worker and peasant activist elements" being drawn in to participate in soviet work. Wu claimed that basic soviet work at the *hsiang* and *shih* levels had greatly improved, and that the field investigation movement had produced many new cadres who had been raised to leadership positions in soviet organs. It was also claimed that on the average, more than 85 per cent of the electorate participated in the elections, and in some places this reached 95 per cent. However, Wu went on to say, in spite of these successes a large number of defects and shortcomings still existed, and he spent far more time discussing these than he did discussing the good points.

First of all, said the report, the work was progressing unevenly. In Hsingkuo, Juichin, Shengli, and other *hsien* in the Central Soviet area, and in parts of some *hsien* in Min-che-kan and Hsiang-kan, great progress had been made. But in the majority of places in Yüeh-kan, Min-kan, and Hsiang-o-kan little success had been achieved in drawing the population into political life, few women participated, the right of recall of representatives was seldom invoked, and bureaucratism existed in the soviet organs.

Wu then outlined several measures necessary for carrying out the central task of winning the war. First, to improve the work of the central government, the division of responsibility between the CEC and the CPC had to be clearly demarcated. Wu did not elaborate on this, but it would seem to indicate that the CPC, although theoretically under the

¹⁹³ "Ta-hui t'i-ch'ien pi-mu," (Congress Closure Brought Forward), *HSCH*, Special Edition 6 (February 1, 1934), p. 1.

¹⁹⁴ "Su-wei-ai chien-she chueh-i-an," (Resolution on Soviet Construction), printed in *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui wen-hsien*, pp. 188-198.

jurisdiction of the unwieldy 63-man CEC, had become in practice the dominant organ of the central government because of its compact size. This situation was rectified at the Second Congress by the creation of an inner Presidium of the CEC. The central government was also instructed to increase its supervision of the provincial soviets, especially the key levels of the provincial soviet's Executive Committees, which with their presidia were responsible for all the work of the *hsien* soviets. The report specifically singled out Min-che-kan, Hsiang-o-kan and Hsiang-kan as provinces over which the central government should intensify its leadership, and instructed the central government to make connection with O-yü-wan, Hsiang-o-hsi, and Szechuan-Shensi provinces.

From the province and *hsien* level, the report moved down to discuss *hsiang* and *shih* level work. It was pointed out that these were the basic level organs of the soviet regime, through which all laws and directives were transmitted to the people. They were therefore to draw in as many "worker and peasant activist elements" as possible to participate in soviet work.

Turning to the work of the new and border areas, Wu urged that strong Revolutionary Committees should be established to intensify the arming of the workers and peasants, organize guerrilla forces, and set up "strong committees to liquidate the counter-revolutionaries so as to eliminate any kind of counter-revolutionary behavior." He added that in the new and border areas, the land problem should be quickly solved and that the property of the landlords and "counter-revolutionary cliques" should be confiscated, the larger part of it to be distributed among the "local masses." However, the "indiscriminate beating" of the local gentry by guerrilla troops had to be stopped, as this tended to alienate many of the local populace. Finally, in order to assist work in the new and border areas, and to help them make the transition to formal soviets, the central government was instructed to send them experienced cadres.

In order to strengthen the mass base of the soviets, there was to be an increase in voter participation in elections, and more use of the right of recall to remove unsuitable soviet delegates. Soviet organs were instructed to awaken the masses to take part in political life, and it was directed that more frequent work reports should be made to the electorate, that criticism by the electorate was to be encouraged and that soviet personnel should pay close attention to the criticism, opinions and problems of the people, so as to enlist their support.

From the report, it appeared that the main shortcoming in soviet organization was the existence of bureaucratism, which was directly linked to the non-involvement of the people in the political affairs of the soviets. This non-involvement caused a separation of the soviets from the people, and an ignorance on the part of soviet personnel about the living conditions of the people, and their problems. These problems, it

was concluded, were largely the result of "class alien elements" infiltrating into the soviet organs, using "groundless talk and hollow cries," and getting orders obeyed by force. These bad influences were to be weeded out by the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate. The soviet organs were also instructed to develop closer relations with the mass organizations, particularly the trade unions from which many cadres were recruited.

The report concluded with a general statement on the relationship between the Party and the soviets, and the future form of the soviet regime. It was made clear that "proletarian leadership"—Party control over the soviets—was essential. The soviets therefore must "resolutely support the leadership of the proletarian political party, the Communist Party, and guarantee Party control over soviet elections, for only in this way could the soviets complete the democratic revolution and prepare for the transformation to a socialist revolution." The delegates discussed the report that evening, and again the following morning. Wu Liang-p'ing then summed up.¹⁹⁵

On the afternoon of January 31, Hsiang Ying reported on the constitution.¹⁹⁶ After his report, the constitution was agreed to by the delegates, who then passed it over to the CEC for discussion and promulgation.¹⁹⁷ The constitution as passed by the Second Congress differed only in a few minor respects from that passed by the First Congress in 1931. In his report, Hsiang Ying said that "the experience of two years of soviet work has proved that the simple constitution of the First National Soviet Congress is basically correct." Hsiang went on to say that nevertheless it was not felt to be 100 per cent appropriate, and therefore the Central Committee of the CCP had prepared another constitution, which however, had not been received owing to "reasons of communication." The actual report given by Hsiang was, according to the *précis* of his speech in *Red China*, nothing but a summary of the provisions of the old constitution.¹⁹⁸

During its final session on the morning of February 1, the Congress elected a new government, following which Mao made a closing speech and declared that the Congress had been completely successful. He announced that the Congress had decided the policies and plans for the victory of the revolution over the whole country, and that the task was now to go and put these policies and plans into effect. Mao concluded by painting for the delegates a vision not only of the proletarian dictatorship towards which he said China was moving, but of China's future com-

¹⁹⁵ *HSCH*, Special Edition 6, p. 2.

¹⁹⁶ "Hsiang Ying t'ung-chih kuan-yü hsien-fa ti pao-kao," (The Report of Comrade Hsiang Ying on the Constitution), *HSCH*, Special Edition 7, (February 3, 1934), p. 3.

¹⁹⁷ "Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo hsien-fa ta-kang," (Constitutional Outline of the Chinese Soviet Republic), *HSCH*, 149 (February 14, 1934), p. 2.

¹⁹⁸ *HSCH*, Special Edition 7, p. 3.

munist society.¹⁹⁹ The assembled delegates then sang the "Internationale" amid the sound of firecrackers.

In summary, it is clear that Mao played a very conspicuous role at the Second Congress, and was, in terms of speeches made to the delegates, the dominant individual present. He was also conspicuous for voicing agreement with the line adopted by the Returned Student leadership and the Fifth Plenum. This can be explained on the assumption that Mao, in return for a leading role in the soviet government, agreed not to oppose the Party leadership publicly. An analysis of the new government shows, however, that his real power was considerably diminished compared with the situation immediately following the First Congress.

At 9 o'clock in the morning of February 1, 1934, the last day of the Second Congress, Lo Mai proposed that the delegates consider the last item on their agenda, which was the election of a new Central Executive Committee (CEC) to replace the CEC elected by the First Congress over two years earlier. According to the Central Soviet Organization Law, which was enacted in accordance with the principles of the Constitution, the National Congress was the highest organ of the soviet regime and had the power to elect the CEC.²⁰⁰

The organizing of the new CEC membership had been under way for several months under the guidance of a committee set up in August 1933 by the CPC. The Committee had fifteen members: Wang Chia-hsiang, Liu Po-ch'eng, Lo Fu, P'an Han-nien, Mao Tse-tung, Hu Hai, Wu Liang-p'ing, Sha K'o-fu, Liu Shao-ch'i, Ch'en Yun, K'ai Feng, Liang Po-t'ai (who headed the Committee), Teng Fa, Kao Tzu-li, and Lin Po-ch'ü.²⁰¹ The Returned Students almost certainly controlled this Committee as six of its members were definitely associated with them,²⁰² another three possibly supported them,²⁰³ while Mao had only one supporter.²⁰⁴

The Congress presidium proposed the list of candidates for election to the CEC, names having been previously handed in by each of the delegations. There were 175 formal members on the list, and the names of 35 alternate, or candidate, members. Lo Mai then announced the name of each candidate up for election, plus his place of residence, social origin, sex, Party Corps organization, nationality, and present occupation. Five

¹⁹⁹ "Ta-hui pi-mu tz'u," (Closing Speech of the Congress), *HSCH*, Special Edition 7, p. 1.

²⁰⁰ "Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo chung-yang su-wei-ai tsu-chih fa," (Organization Law of the Central Soviet of the Chinese Soviet Republic), dated February 17, 1934; printed in *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo ti-erh-tz'u ch'üan-kuo tai-piao ta-hui wen-hsien*, pp. 152-166. [Henceforth referred to as *Tsu-chih Fa*.]

²⁰¹ *HSCH*, 106 (August 31, 1933), p. 5.

²⁰² Wang Chia-hsiang, Lo Fu, Wu Liang-p'ing, Ch'en Yun, K'ai Feng, Liang Po-t'ai.

²⁰³ Liu Po-ch'eng, Liu Shao-ch'i, Teng Fa.

²⁰⁴ Lin Po-ch'ü. The factional loyalties of P'an Han-nien, Hu Hai, Sha K'o-fu, and Kao Tzu-li are uncertain.

TABLE 4

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF ALL FULL AND ALTERNATE MEMBERS
OF THE CEC ELECTED AT THE SECOND NATIONAL SOVIET
CONGRESS, FEBRUARY, 1934*

79	Chan I-chin	30	Chou En-lai
	Chang Ai-p'ing (18)	140	Chou Kuang-k'un
31	Chang Chi-chih		Chou Kuei-hsiang (33)
130	Chang Chin-lou	52	Chou K'un
69	Chang Ch'in-ch'iu	131	Chou Shao-wen
175	Chang Ch'un-ch'ing	106	Chou I-k'ai
74	Chang Jan-ho	9	Chou Yueh-lin
86	Chang Kuan-i	94	Chu Chao-hsiang
59	Chang Kuo-t'ao	78	Chu Ch'i
121	Chang Ta-ho	66	Chu Jui
92	Chang Teh-san		Chu Jung-sheng (13)
123	Chang Ting-ch'eng	29	Chu Teh
117	Chang Wen-t'ien (Lo Fu)	165	Chu Ti-yuan
120	Chang Yun-hsien	93	Chu Wei-yuan
61	Ch'en A-chin	8	Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai
58	Ch'en Ch'ang-hao	23	Chung Ch'ang-t'ao
109	Ch'en Hsiang-sheng	25	Chung Hsün-jen
55	Ch'en Hung-shih	108	Chung Kuei-hsin
49	Ch'en Kuang	19	Chung Pao-yuan
2	Ch'en Shao-yü (Wang Ming)	105	Chung Shih-pin
133	Ch'en Shou-ch'ang		Chung I-chin (26)
128	Ch'en T'an-ch'iu	112	Fan Lo-ch'un
151	Ch'en Tzu-ch'ien		Fang Chen-hua (28)
54	Ch'en I	161	Fang Chih-min
126	Ch'en Yun		Fang Ching-ho (24)
87	Cheng Chen-fen		Feng Hsueh-feng (15)
89	Cheng Wei-san	96	Fu Ts'ai-hsiu
90	Ch'eng Fang-wu	34	Ho Ch'ang
	Chia Yuan (14)	35	Ho Ch'ang-kung
76	Chiang A-san	132	Ho Chen-wu
10	Chin Wei-ying	60	Ho Lung
1	Ch'in Pang-hsien (Po Ku)	157	Ho Shu-heng
116	Ch'iu Hsien-ying	148	Ho Wei
	Ch'iu Shih-feng (3)	71	Hsia Hsi
51	Chou Chien-p'ing	6	Hsiang Ying

* This list is taken from an original copy of the *Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yuan-hui pu-kao, ti-i-hao* (Announcement 1 of the Central Executive Council of the Chinese Soviet Republic), SSC 16. Also printed in *HSCH*, 148 (February 12, 1934), p. 1. The two copies list the membership in a slightly different order. The numbering above represents the order of listing of CEC members in the original announcement. The numbering of full members is on the left, from 1-175; alternate members are on the right, in parentheses, from 1-36. A cumulative list of all 1931 and 1934 CEC members can also be found in Donald W. Klein and Anne B. Clark, *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism, 1921-1965*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), vol. 2, pp. 1075-77.

TABLE 4—Continued

65	Hsiao K'o	13	Li Fu-ch'un
15	Hsiao Shih-pang	139	Li Hsien-nien
	Hsieh Chen-fu (2)		Li K'o-nung (17)
28	Hsieh Hsien-szu		Li Mei-ch'ün (7)
14	Hsieh Ming-jen		Li Tz'u-fan (20)
	Hsieh Ping-huang (25)	138	Li Wei-hai
12	Hsieh Yü-ch'in	99	Li Wei-han (Lo Mai)
107	Hsiung Hsien-pi		Li I-mang (16)
137	Hsiung Kuo-ping	158	Liang Po-t'ai
68	Hsu Hsiang-ch'ien		Liao Han-hua (30)
	Hsu Ming-fu (10)	16	Lin Kuo-sung
	Hsu Shun-yüan (9)	44	Lin Piao
21	Hsu Ta-chih	100	Lin Po-ch'ü
168	Hsu T'eh-li	24	Liu Ch'i-yao
67	Hsu Yen-kang	57	Liu Ch'ou-hsi
40	Hsun Huai-chou	110	Liu Ch'ün-hsien
111	Hu Hai	95	Liu Hsiao
	Hua Hsin-hsiang (32)	27	Liu Kuang-ch'en
17	Huang Ch'ang-chiao	98	Liu Kuo-chu
129	Huang Chia-kao	97	Liu Ming-hui
11	Huang Fa-kuei	33	Liu Po-ch'eng
	Huang Fu-wu (27)	46	Liu Po-chien
141	Huang Kuang-pao	4	Liu Shao-ch'i
37	Huang Su	143	Liu Shih-chieh
103	Huang Tao		Liu Yen-yü (23)
162	Huang Wan-sheng		Liu I (6)
122	Huang I-chang	50	Lo Jui-ch'ing
82	Hung Shui		Lo Jung-huan (19)
145	Jen Pi-shih	81	Lo Ping-hui
159	Juan Hsiao-hsien	172	Lo Tzu-ming
3	K'ai Feng (Ho K'o-ch'üan)	20	Lou Meng-hsia
	K'ang K'o-ch'ing (36)		Lung Ch'un-shan (31)
170	K'ang Sheng (Chao Yun)	5	Mao Tse-tung
88	Kao Chün-ting	38	Nieh Hung-chün
167	Kao Tzu-li	45	Nieh Jung-chen
77	Ku Ta-ts'un	119	P'an Han-nien
101	Ku Tso-lin	85	P'an Shih-chung
164	Kuan Ch'un-hsiang	135	P'eng Jen-ch'ang
70	Kuan Hsiang-ying	42	Peng Teh-huai
163	Kuan Ying	64	Pi Shih-t'i
	K'uang Chu-ch'üan (34)	102	Shao Shih-p'ing
144	K'uang Piao	72	Sung Pai-min
56	K'ung Ho-ch'ung	142	T'an Yü-pao
104	K'ung Shu-an	166	Teng Chen-hsun
91	Kuo Shu-shen	118	Teng Fa
174	Lai Mei-yü		Teng P'ing (35)
150	Li Ch'eng-chia		Teng Tzu-hui (12)
124	Li Chien-chen		Teng Yao-sheng (4)
26	Li Cho-jan	169	Teng Ying-ch'ao

TABLE 4—Continued

41	T'eng Tai-yuan	73	Wang Wei-chou
18	Ts'ai Ch'ang	115	Wu Lan-fu
83	Ts'ai Kan	7	Wu Liang-p'ing
47	Ts'ai Shu-fan	125	Wu Pi-hsien
113	Tseng Hung-i	136	Wu Teh-feng
149	Tseng Kuang-lan	114	Wu Tzu-yüan
22	Tseng Shan	155	Wu Yü-chang
	Tsou Chung-ts'ai (8)	156	Yang Ch'i-hsin
	Tsou Tun-hou (29)		Yang Ping-lung (1)
	Tung Ch'ang-sheng (5)	43	Yang Shang-k'un
36	Tung Chen-t'ang	173	Yang Shih-chu
160	Tung Pi-wu	63	Yeh Chien-ying
39	Wan Yung-ch'eng		Yeh Teh-kuei (11)
134	Wang Chen		Yen Li-chi (21)
32	Wang Chia-hsiang		Yin Jen-kuei (22)
153	Wang Chin-hsiang	154	Yü Chen-nung
80	Wang Feng-ming	152	Yü Han-chao
171	Wang Hsien-hsuan	84	Yü Hung-wen
146	Wang Hsiu-chang	147	Yü Hung-yüan
48	Wang Ju-ch'ih	62	Yuan Kuo-p'ing
127	Wang Sheng-jung	53	Yueh Shao-hua
75	Wang Shih-t'ai		

of the candidates put forward underwent examination by the delegates, one of whom was rejected "because his work history was not clear." The vacancy was filled and the Congress unanimously passed the list of the 175 full members of the CEC. The number of names put forward for alternate membership was raised from 35 to 36 (possibly to accommodate the delegate who was refused full membership), and these were passed by the Congress one by one. The Congress then elected a 35-man Workers and Peasants Inspectorate.²⁰⁵

The new CEC held its first plenary session on February 3, 1934.²⁰⁶ According to the Organization Law, the CEC was the highest organ of the soviet regime when the National Congress was not in session, its numbers were not to exceed 585, and under normal circumstances plenary sessions were to be convened by the CEC Presidium every six months. The CEC was responsible to the National Soviet Congress; but while the National Congress was not in session the CEC could itself promulgate a wide variety of laws and decrees, including decisions on major issues of domestic or foreign policy, enacting legislation for the soviet regime,

²⁰⁵ *HSCH*, Special Edition 7, p. 1.

²⁰⁶ "Chung-hua su-wei-ai kung-ho-kuo chung-yang chih-hsing wei-yüan-hui pu-kao, ti-i-hao," (Announcement No. 1 of the Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Soviet Republic), reprinted in *HSCH*, 148 (February 12, 1934), p. 1.

organizing the judicial system, demarcating administrative areas, and creating or dissolving subordinate organs of local government.

At the first meeting of the new CEC only 79 full and alternate members were present, out of a possible total of 211. This was no doubt due to the military situation having called a substantial number of delegates back to the front or to their home areas as soon as the Congress concluded. The meeting went ahead however, because "according to the power given to them by the Second Congress, when over one-third of the committee members attend, then there is a quorum."²⁰⁷

The members first of all elected a provisional presidium of three: Mao Tse-tung, Hsiang Ying, and Chang Kuo-t'ao. They must have been chosen because they were the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen, respectively, of the soviet government. Chang Kuo-t'ao was in Szechuan at the time and was never present for any of the deliberations of the Second Congress. The meeting then proceeded according to the agenda, and Mao Tse-tung reported that the first item was the ratification of the Central Soviet Organization Law. Liang Po-t'ai spoke of the important principles of the law, with which the meeting agreed in general, and the detailed clauses were handed over to the CEC Presidium for editing. The CEC then unanimously elected the following 17-man Presidium of the CEC: Mao Tse-tung (Chairman), Hsiang Ying (Vice-Chairman), Chang Kuo-t'ao (Vice-Chairman), Lo Fu, Chu Teh, Po Ku, Chou En-lai, Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, Liu Shao-ch'i, Ch'en Yun, Lin Po-ch'ü, Teng Chen-hsun, Chu Ti-yuan, Teng Fa, Fang Chih-min, Lo Mai, and Chou Yueh-lin.

Mao was elected chairman of the new Presidium, with Hsiang Ying and Chang Kuo-t'ao as his two vice-chairmen. This was in accordance with the Organization Law, which stated that the CEC was to elect a Presidium of not more than 35 members, including a chairman and two to four vice-chairmen. The Presidium was the most important of all governmental organs, for it took charge of affairs when the CEC itself was not in session. Since the majority of CEC members were rarely, if ever, able to get together in one place at one time, the Presidium, or those members of it present in Juichin, was the *de facto* government, even though in theory the Presidium was responsible to the CEC, which had the right to veto and amend its decisions. The tasks of the Presidium included the supervision of the Constitution and of the execution of the laws and decrees of the National Congress and the CEC. It also had the right to promulgate various laws and decrees of its own. Having decided on a Presidium, the CEC then elected a Council of People's Commissars (CPC),²⁰⁸ composed of the following commissariats: Wang Chia-hsiang, Foreign Affairs; Chu Teh, Military Affairs; Teng Chen-hsün, Labor

²⁰⁷ HSCH, 146, p. 1.

²⁰⁸ HSCH, 146, p. 1.

Affairs; Kao Tzu-li, Land; Lin Po-ch'ü, Finance; Wu Liang-p'ing, National Economy; Ch'en T'an-ch'iu, Food; Liang Po-t'ai, Judicial Affairs; Tseng Shan, Internal Affairs; and Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai, Education.

Lo Fu was elected Chairman of the CPC. The CPC was the highest administrative organ of the regime, and its membership included the heads of the various commissariats under its command, plus its Chairman, and the Chairman of the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate, who was Hsiang Ying at that time. The major task of the CPC was that "within the scope laid down by the CEC, it should promulgate all laws and decrees . . . , and must adopt appropriate administrative measures to guarantee their speedy and orderly execution."²⁰⁹

Decisions of the CPC on major policies, however, had to be given to the CEC or its Presidium for examination and approval, although the CPC could decide on emergency matters and report later. In general, the CPC was responsible to the CEC (or its Presidium), and the CEC had the power to elect or dismiss from office the personnel and the Chairman of the CPC and to coopt new men onto its membership. The Organization Law required all those elected to membership of the CPC to be members of the CEC, though it is not clear whether this applied to coopted members. Certainly all the heads of the various commissariats were on the CEC. Furthermore, the CEC had the power to veto or amend the decisions of the CPC and its constituent commissariats. In addition, under the CPC, there was elected a Central Revolutionary Military Committee, with Chu Teh as Chairman and Chou En-lai and Wang Chia-hsiang as Vice-Chairmen.²¹⁰ Also, there was elected a Central Auditing (*shen-chi*) Committee, with Juan Hsiao-hsien as its head. The responsibilities of this body were to investigate the state's annual income and expenditure, and to supervise the implementation of the national budget. Finally, Tung Pi-wu was made temporary chairman of the Supreme Court, the job of which was to guarantee the "revolutionary law of the Chinese Soviet Republic." It had the power to investigate all violations of the law by members of the highest organs of the regime—except that cases involving CEC members were to be "settled separately by the CEC or by its Presidium." The first plenary session of the new CEC was then adjourned.

ANALYSIS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

As compared with the CEC elected at the First Congress in 1931, which had 63 members, the new CEC numbered 211, of whom 175 were full members and 36 were alternates. The creation of alternate or candidate members was an innovation of the Second Congress. Of the original

²⁰⁹ *Tsu-chih Fa*, article 28.

²¹⁰ *HSCH*, 148, p. 1.

63-man CEC, only 32 were re-elected in 1934.²¹¹ Of those who were not re-elected, five are known to have died before the Second Congress: Lo Teng-hsien, P'eng Kuei, Shen Tse-min, Tuan Teh-ch'ang, and Wei Pa-ch'ün. A further three, Hsu Hsi-ken, Hu Chün-ho, and Huang P'ing, were condemned as traitors in 1933. T'an Chen-lin was also not re-elected. He became linked with Lo Ming in 1933, when the Party leadership was attacking the "Lo Ming line." Teng Tzu-hui also became identified with the Lo Ming line, and was demoted from full to alternate membership. Lu Teh-kuang absconded to Hong Kong with Party funds. Of the remaining 20 members of the 1931 CEC who did not re-appear on the 1934 listing, little is known. The names of the majority of them do not occur again in the history of the Chinese communist movement, and the probability is that most of them lost their lives in battle against one or other of Chiang Kai-shek's "bandit encirclement" campaigns.

Of the 175 full members of the new CEC, 143 had not been elected in 1931. Of the 36 candidate members, none had been seated on the 1931 body, with the exception of Teng Tzu-hui. Among the group of newcomers to full membership of the CEC were several important members of the Returned Student leadership, and their supporters, including Lo Fu, Ch'en Ch'ang-hao, Po Ku, Chu Jui, and Wu Liang-p'ing. Reflecting the impact of the Returned Student leadership, there was also an increase in the incidence of men who had been in the Soviet Union, either for educational or political purposes (or a combination of both), before going to the soviet areas. Whereas it can be estimated that of the original 1931 CEC, 18 had some experience of the Soviet Union, an additional 26 of the new full members of the 1934 CEC qualified in this way.

The great numerical expansion of the CEC reflected the growth of the administrative infrastructure since 1931, and the increased scope of government activities, particularly in the most secure area around the capital. Taking the CEC newcomers as a whole (including the alternate members), it can be estimated that at least 20 per cent came from the area of the Central Soviet District.

In order to analyze the changes in political power that occurred since the First Congress, it is necessary to examine not the entire CEC, but rather the smaller and more powerful organs of the CEC Presidium and the CPC. No Presidium of the CEC was set up in 1931, but obviously with the great expansion of membership, most of which could not be present for meetings, there was a need for a smaller body to take control; and the 17-man Presidium was therefore formally established at the Second Congress. There is evidence that such a body had been functioning, at least informally, prior to the Congress for in Mao's report

²¹¹ This figure does not include Teng Tzu-hui, who was only re-elected to alternate membership in 1934.

to the Congress he referred to the need "to perfect the organization and work of the CEC Presidium."²¹²

All the members of the Presidium, with the exception of Chang Kuo-t'ao, were present at the Second Congress and were probably able to attend meetings following the Congress.²¹³ In addition to Mao himself, three members of the Presidium can be counted as Maoists: Chu Teh, Lin Po-ch'ü, and Fang Chih-min. Lin Po-ch'ü (Lin Tsu-han) had been a member of Mao's first communist group in Hunan in the early 1920's, and had worked with him during the period of cooperation with the KMT. However, he cooperated with the Returned Students to some extent by joining the CC Party Affairs Committee at the Fifth Plenum. Fang Chih-min was a veteran guerrilla fighter in the northeast Kiangsi area, whose policies were identified with those of Mao.²¹⁴ On the other hand, four men can definitely be identified as members or supporters of the Returned Student group. These were Hsiang Ying, Lo Fu, Po Ku, and Chou En-lai. In addition, Teng Fa and Lo Mai (Li Wei-han) may well have supported this faction. Teng Fa had been a supporter of Mao at least up to 1931, when he was made chief of the new Political Security Bureau. By 1934, however, it was this Bureau which reportedly guarded Mao if and when he was under house arrest at Yütu.²¹⁵ Furthermore, when Mao replaced Chou En-lai as Chairman of the RMC at the time of the Tsunyi Conference in January 1935, Teng Fa was dropped from membership of the RMC.²¹⁶ Nor was he re-elected to the CCP Central Committee in 1945. Lo Mai also seems to have allied himself with the Returned Student leadership by joining in their attack on Lo Ming and the "Lo Ming line."²¹⁷ Also, after having been removed from the CCP Politburo at the Fourth Plenum, he was re-elected to CC membership by the Fifth Plenum.²¹⁸ Ch'en Yun can be classified with the Returned Student group, as he delivered a major report to the Fifth Plenum of the CC in January 1934, and was elected as a Politburo Standing Committee

²¹² *CEC Report*, p. 115.

²¹³ Presence at the Congress is assumed from the fact of the individual in question having spoken at the Congress, or because he was a member of the Congress Presidium. Examination of the data available on this body points to the fact that its members were present to carry out the function of a Steering Committee. There is no evidence that any one of the members was not present. Ability to attend meetings is assumed because all CEC Presidium members came from the Juichin, Kiangsi, Fukien area.

²¹⁴ Rue, *Mao in Opposition*, pp. 205, 240, 269.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 267; also see Schram, *Mao Tse-tung*, p. 177.

²¹⁶ Rue, *Mao in Opposition*, p. 270, quoting Wales, *Red Dust*, p. 67. As Rue notes (p. 338), the list of members of the Revolutionary Military Council cited in *Red Dust*, from which Teng is missing, is referred to only as containing the *chief* members so it cannot be certain that Teng was deprived of his position.

²¹⁷ Hsiao, Vol. II, pp. 671-2.

²¹⁸ *Issues and Studies*, Vol. IV, No. 1 (October 1967), p. 38.

member.²¹⁹ It is not known which faction, if any, was backed by Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai or Liu Shao-ch'i. Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai cannot definitely be identified as a Maoist, nor can he be classed as a supporter of the Party leadership, since they had removed him from the Politburo or CC at the Fourth Plenum. In any case, he had only been in the soviet areas for a month.²²⁰ Liu Shao-ch'i seems to have steered clear of becoming involved in the factional disputes, although he became a member of the CC Party Affairs Committee at the Fifth Plenum. Of the remaining three members, Teng Chen-hsun, Chou Yueh-lin, and Chu Ti-yuan, nothing is known. The Maoists therefore commanded only four men, as opposed to a probable seven for the Returned Students.

On examination, the conclusion must be that the Returned Student leadership gained control of the CEC Presidium, and therefore of the government apparatus. Mao's chairmanship of the Presidium stood him in little stead for the Returned Students could always vote him out if necessary. However, although their supporters out-numbered those of Mao, there were so many unknown personalities present who could have tipped the balance one way or the other that this fact cannot be as conclusively substantiated as in the case of Mao's control of the soviet government in November 1931. Even so, it is clear that, compared with the First Congress, Mao's power had suffered a substantial decline.

The Council of People's Commissars originally set up at the time of the First Congress, had a membership of eleven made up of eight commissars, plus the Council chairman, and the heads of the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate and State Political Security Bureau. This was enlarged at the Second Congress by the addition of two new commissariats for Food, and National Economy. Only four members of the original body remained in 1934. Wang Chia-hsiang retained Foreign Affairs, Chu Teh Military Affairs, and Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai Education (a post which he was now able to take over actively since his arrival in the soviet areas in December 1933). Hsiang Ying retained his place on the CPC, but he was transferred from Labor to head the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate.

Mao Tse-tung, the Chairman of the CPC in 1931, was dropped from the Chairmanship and from membership of the CPC in 1934. His place was taken by a member of the Returned student leadership, Lo Fu. Like Mao in 1931, Lo Fu had no Commissariat but, unlike Mao, he did not have two vice-chairmen under him.

In addition to Mao, five others lost their places: Teng Tzu-hui, Chang Ting-ch'eng, Chou I-li, Chang Kuo-t'ao, and Ho Shu-heng. Teng Tzu-hui had become identified with the "Lo Ming line" and was no longer even a full member of the CEC. Chang Ting-ch'eng had been criticized

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ *Hung-ch'i p'iao-p'iao* (Red Flags Fluttering), 5 (December 15, 1957), p. 101.

for “right opportunism” in November 1933. Chang Kuo-t’ao was no doubt replaced because he showed no sign of ever coming to the Central Soviet District. He was in O-yü-wan at the time of the First Congress and had moved to Szechuan by the Second Congress. Chou I-li, who had been appointed Chief Editor of *Red China* in 1931, lost the post of Internal Affairs Commissar and his place on the CEC. Ho Shu-heng ceased to be head of the Workers and Peasants Inspectorate but did retain a seat on the CEC. The operation of both these Commissariats (and Education) had been criticized in an article by Lo Fu in August 1933.²²¹ There were eight newcomers to the CPC—Teng Chen-hsun, Kao Tzu-li, Lin Po-ch’ü, Wu Liang-p’ing, Ch’en T’an-ch’iu, Liang Po-t’ai, Lo Fu, and Tseng Shan—all of whom, with the single exception of Tseng Shan, were elected to the CEC for the first time.²²² As far as is known, all of the CPC members were present at the Second Congress, and all were drawn from the Juichin-Kiangsi-Fukien area.

In looking at the total membership of the CPC from the point of view of factional divisions, five men can be identified as supporters of the Returned Student leadership and four as supporters of Mao Tse-tung. Into the former category fall Wu Liang-p’ing, Lo Fu, Wang Chia-hsiang, Hsiang Ying, and Liang Po-t’ai;²²³ and into the latter category fall Lin Po-ch’ü, Ch’en T’an-ch’iu,²²⁴ Tseng Shan,²²⁵ and Chu Teh. As before, the loyalties of Ch’ü Ch’iu-pai remain uncertain, and those of Teng Chen-hsun and Kao Tzu-li are unknown.

With the balance of forces about equally divided (at least among the known personalities), it cannot be clearly ascertained who had final control over the affairs of the CPC. It should be noted, however, that compared with the 1931 CPC, the power of the Maoists had diminished considerably. In 1931 the Maoists had an overwhelming majority on the CPC, with only two Returned Student members, Wang Chia-hsiang and Hsiang Ying, present. Furthermore, all the CPC members who lost their positions in 1934 were Maoists (with the exception of Chang Kuo-t’ao,

²²¹ *TC*, 21 (August 12, 1933), p. 12.

²²² However, Lin Po-ch’ü and Liang Po-t’ai had been CPC members since mid-1933.

²²³ There is evidence that Liang was probably a member of the Returned Student group. As acting head of the Internal Affairs Commissariat he was in charge of electoral proceedings for the Second Congress, and he had replaced two of Mao’s supporters, Chou I-li and Ho Shu-heng who had had the position before him. [See *HSCH*, 46 (January 7, 1933), p. 4; also *HCVT*, 2 (September 10, 1933), pp. 6–8.] Furthermore, he was made Secretary General of the Second Congress.

²²⁴ Ch’en, like Teng Tzu-hui and others, was attacked for supporting the “Lo Ming” line. Just prior to the Congress the CC had recommended that Ch’en be dismissed from his position as Secretary of the Fukien Provincial Party Committee. See *TC*, 43 (January 19, 1934), p. 2.

²²⁵ Tseng had been an associate of Mao’s in Kiangsi for some years, was Chairman of the Kiangsi Provincial Soviet Government, and helped Mao put down the Fut’ien rebellion.

who played no role in the proceedings).²²⁶ Even if the CPC were in the hands of Mao's supporters, the provisions of the Organization Law required that all major policies be referred to the CEC or its Presidium, which, as has been shown, were probably in the hands of the official Party leadership.

On the basis of the available evidence, it would appear that Mao, having lost control over the Party in the soviet areas prior to the First Congress, then lost command of the government apparatus in 1933, and that one of the reasons for convening a Second Congress was to enable the Returned Student group to formalize their control over the soviet government. Although no precise date can be set for Mao's loss of control over the government, many of his supporters found themselves dismissed or criticized in mid-1933. That some of Mao's supporters turned up in positions of prominence at the Second Congress was no doubt due to the same reasons that Mao was there—they agreed to "toe the Party line" and, trained and experienced men being few in the soviet areas, they were allowed positions of responsibility.

SUMMARY

Once the soviet government was formally established in Juichin at the close of 1931, it successfully extended its authority over the other soviet areas, including those not contiguous to the Central Soviet Area. After the First Congress, the Party started to play a greater role in organizing a formal governmental and administrative structure that would bring the soviet leadership into closer contact with the soviet population. The Central Soviet Area began to take on more of the characteristics of a formal state and to appear less like a guerrilla encampment. With this change, the process of social mobilization continued, with only marginal success at first in 1932, but showing improvement during 1933 as measured by the degree of participation by the people in soviet work and elections. This improvement however, seems to have been largely confined to the Central Soviet Area. The administrative apparatus of the soviet government expanded with the creation of two new commissariats and an enlarged CEC, which can be seen as a response by the government to the demands of the population—demands which were themselves engendered by the propaganda of the communists.

In 1933, the control by the Returned Students over the soviet administrative apparatus and the machinery for soviet elections, plus the activities of the Party fractions placed in each delegation to the Second Congress by the Party leadership, guaranteed that the program of the Congress would be as laid down by the Central Committee of the CCP and the Twelfth Plenum of the ECCI. Control was also exercised over the

²²⁶ Teng Tzu-hui, Chang Ting-ch'eng, Ho Shu-heng, Chou I-li, and Mao himself.

governmental structure through a network of electoral committees and the Internal Affairs Department of the CPC.

At the Second Congress, far greater emphasis was placed on Party leadership over the soviet government and its policies than was the case in 1931. This was also noticeable in the attendance at the Second Congress: of the 1579 observers and delegates, nearly 50 percent were Party or Youth League members.

The year 1933 had witnessed the progressive loss of control by Mao and his supporters over the organs of the soviet government. The new soviet government elected at the Second Congress bore witness to this. It formalized the control over the government apparatus of the Returned Student leadership, who now commanded all three power structures—Party, military, and governmental—in the soviet areas. At the Second Congress, there was a marked turnover of personnel: Maoists such as T'an Chen-lin and Teng Tzu-hui were removed from full membership of the CEC, while many of the Returned Students obtained places for the first time. In addition, a new Presidium of the CEC was created as the supreme governmental organ of the soviet regime. Here the Maoists were outnumbered. Mao was dropped from his chairmanship of the highest administrative organ of the state, the Council of People's Commissars, and did not even remain as a member. Many of his supporters were also removed from the CPC and replaced by others loyal to the Returned Student leadership. Although the balance of forces on the new CPC appeared roughly equal (as compared with the overwhelming dominance of the Maoists in 1931), it was under the control of the newly-established Presidium of the CEC, which was controlled by the Returned Students and who therefore asserted their authority over the soviet government. Mao and his supporters, in return for public acquiescence to the official Party line, were allowed a substantial role at the Congress and in the new government.

The Second Congress vindicated the claim of the soviet government to be a government of *all* the soviet territories. Many soviet areas were represented on the official steering committee (presidium) in charge of the arrangements of the Congress and on the new CEC. However, the claim of the Congress to be a national "All-China" event was not as well substantiated. Out of a total of 693 delegates, only 17 came from the "White" areas. In addition, *de facto* control over the government was in the hands of the CEC Presidium, the vast majority of whose members came from the Kiangsi-Fukien area, as was also the case with the steering committee of the Congress.

The Second Congress manifested the heady optimism of most of the Returned Student leadership, which saw the struggle against the Kuomintang entering a new stage. They wished to sum up and capitalize on the experiences of running the revolutionary base areas for two years, so as

to improve the economic situation, coordinate military action to crush the fifth “bandit encirclement” campaign, and, ideally, to capture towns and link up the Central Soviet District with the outlying soviet areas. Although their optimism proved unjustified, the much-publicized Second Congress did continue their claim, however briefly, that “*in the Chinese Soviet Republic all conditions and elements of a modern state, worthy of being called a civilized people’s republic, already exist.*”²²⁷

²²⁷ Wang Ming and K’ang Sheng, *Revolutionary China*, p. 20 (emphasis in original).

V

Conclusion

The major significance of the two National Soviet Congresses as a focal point for analysis is the light they shed on an extremely obscure period in the history of the CCP, with particular reference to the analysis of the two interrelated themes of power relations and political processes.

Also, since the Kiangsi experience was basically one of failure ending with the flight of the communists on the Long March, it is especially important to test some of the assumptions of the retrospective survey of the period, made after the end of the Long March, which purport to define Mao Tse-tung's role at the time.

The first efforts towards establishing a soviet government were made in 1930 by the Chinese Communist Party under the leadership of Li Li-san. It was believed that such a government would centralize and consolidate the opposition to the Kuomintang, particularly in the military sphere. Furthermore, the CCP believed that the government would be able to win the support of the people by giving them political rights, and depriving the landlords and other "exploiting" groups of their political and economic power. Li also wanted to enforce his own policies on the soviet area leaders and, in so doing, extend his authority over the revolutionary base areas.

Preparations for a Congress to create a central government reached an advanced stage, but were halted by the political demise of Li Li-san in November 1930. The ensuing struggle for supremacy within the Party, in conjunction with the poor military situation with which the communists were faced, preempted the policy of constructing a government.

The policy of the CCP and Li Li-san was based on directives from the Comintern in Moscow. In spite of allegations to the contrary from the Comintern, there was basic agreement on strategy between the two. Li, however, was caught in a tactical "error" when he continued to insist that the soviet government should be formed in a city after the Comintern had decided that the countryside was a safer place. Li was accused at the Fourth Plenum of the CC of having neglected the task of establishing a strong central soviet government. Although he had in fact put a great deal of effort into preparations for creating a government, he had delayed its actual establishment while he attempted to take a key city with the Red Army.

The year 1931 saw a switch in emphasis of CCP operations from the city to the countryside. Mao was preeminent in the central soviet area and

successfully employed guerrilla tactics against the KMT. In the field of civil administration, however, he also tended to employ military organizations, did little to create an efficient governmental and administrative apparatus which would have drawn the people into political activity, and at the same time was probably hindering attempts at reform.

The Returned Student leadership went ahead with preparations for the First National Soviet Congress, which was eventually convened in November 1931 at the soviet capital of Juichin, Kiangsi, in the rural hinterland of China. The main aim of the Returned Student leaders in calling the Congress was to use it as a vehicle for extending their own authority over Mao Tse-tung in the soviet areas. But despite the fact that many of the Returned Students moved from their headquarters in Shanghai to Juichin so as to attend the Congress, Mao and his supporters, because of their entrenched influence in the soviet administrative and electoral machinery, won control of the government created by the Congress. The Returned Students, however, clearly won command of the Party apparatus in the Central Soviet Area.

The Chinese Soviet Republic, formally inaugurated by the First Congress, was of tremendous propaganda value to the communists in support of their claim to be an "alternative road" for the Chinese people to that offered by the Kuomintang. In addition, it institutionalized the shift in the operations of the Party from the city to the countryside of China, and set about the task of centralizing the previously fragmented administration of the widely-scattered rural soviet areas. After the close of the Congress, and going into 1932, the authority of the government in Juichin was extended over the other soviet districts.

The Returned Students became dominant in military affairs by the spring of 1933 at the latest and were able to abandon Mao's techniques of guerrilla warfare in their fight against the KMT's fourth campaign. At the same time as Mao had lost power in the Party and military structure, his predominance in the government structure was under attack, and many of his supporters were criticized or dismissed in mid-1933. It is significant that the call for a Second Congress was issued by the government in June 1933, indicating that the Returned Student leadership was able to enforce its will on the governmental apparatus by that time. By putting their own followers in charge of the electoral machinery, they reversed the situation of 1931 and ensured the production of a Congress which, this time, would be responsive to their wishes. This was done by Party control over the Council of People's Commissars, particularly its Internal Affairs Department, and by influencing the composition of the electoral committees. In this way, Party fractions were inserted in each delegation to the Second Congress.

The Congress was preceded by a massive propaganda barrage directed toward the inhabitants of the soviet areas, designed to show off the record

of the soviet government and win support for the Red Army in its struggle to defeat the military campaigns of Chiang Kai-shek. By mid-1933, a primitive state apparatus had been created, which in spite of its imperfections was nevertheless able to function as a two-way transmission belt between people and government, implementing Party policy and listening to the reactions of the population as well as encouraging a few to play an active political role. The 1933 election campaign for the Second Congress was therefore far more successful in drawing the masses into political participation than its predecessor had been.

The Congress was also designed to formalize the victory of the Returned Students over the Maoist government in the soviet areas. The laws and resolutions approved by the Congress were an enumeration of the policies passed by the CCP's Fifth Plenum in January 1934 (based on the line laid down by the ECCI's Twelfth Plenum), and displayed the over-optimistic view of the situation characteristic of the Returned Student leaders. When the Second Congress actually convened the same month, the Returned Students emerged in control of the new government elected by the assembled delegates, though not to the same overwhelming extent that marked the victory of the Maoists in 1931. Mao and his followers publicly echoed the line of the Fifth Plenum, and in return for their acquiescence in the policies of the Returned Students, they were permitted to retain a substantial role in soviet affairs. Mao himself was the dominant personality at the Congress.

The composition of the delegates to the Second Congress, and the composition of the Central Executive Committee, attested to the claim of the CCP that the soviet government was representative of all "soviet China." However, its representation and authority extended only in the smallest degree outside the territorial enclaves controlled by the CCP and the Red Army. It therefore existed only as a *potential* national government.

To a large extent, the evidence offered by an analysis of the two Soviet Congresses tends to corroborate the statements made by Mao's machine in 1945 concerning power relations during the Kiangsi soviet period, although there are numerous discrepancies between Mao's later statements and his public remarks at the time. Mao is correct in stating that the Returned Student leadership usurped his Party and military leadership. They controlled the leading positions of the Party in the soviet areas by November 1931, and won control over the Red Army during the period from the Ningtu Conference of August 1932 to the appointment of Chou En-lai as Red Army Political Commissar in May 1933.

Mao never explicitly refers to his loss of control over the soviet government, no doubt because he was its formal head throughout the entire period of the dominance of the "third Left line." By mid-1933, however, he had lost effective control over the government, a situation

which was formalized by the Second Congress. It is significant that the CCP's Fifth Plenum, held just prior to the Second Congress, is described by Mao as marking "the peak of the development of the third 'Left' line." The First and Second National Soviet Congresses therefore, far from being stepping stones on Mao's road to power, were in reality evidence of his temporary decline.

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